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March 18, 2022

File No.: 0400-30 Ministries/MLA

Via email: MAH.minister@gov.bc.ca; nathan.cullen.MLA@leg.bc.ca

The Honourable Nathan Cullen
Minister of Municipal Affairs
PO BOX 9056,
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Victoria BC V8W9E2

Dear Minister Cullen:

Re: 2022 Appointment Congratulations/Introduction to Islands Trust

On behalf of Islands Trust Council, I would like to congratulate you on your recent appointment as Minister of Municipal Affairs for the Government of British Columbia.

As the Minister responsible for Islands Trust, we are delighted that you bring such a wealth of experience in sustainable development and climate action. We look forward to working closely with you and your ministry staff on a wide range of issues in the days ahead. The following are a few key topics we hope to work with you and your staff on this year:

- Islands Trust Council had [requested](#) the Ministry of Municipal Affairs consider a suite of changes to the *Islands Trust Act*. Many of those amendments have been brought in to law and we are grateful.
- We have been in discussion with your staff regarding an Islands Trust Council [request](#) that the Province enhance the Trust's jurisdiction over tree cutting bylaws. This is an ongoing interest and we look forward to further discussions on this topic.
- We are also working to [update the Islands Trust Policy Statement](#) to reflect reconciliation and DRIPA, and new realities and policy priorities relating to climate change and affordable housing. We have just launched an enhanced 3rd phase of public engagement, are continuing with early and meaningful engagement with First Nations, and I know that your staff have received comment from the public on this topic.
- On March 8th, Trust Council received a [consultant's report](#) concerning a review of Islands Trust's governance and operations. The review excluded consideration of the Islands Trust Conservancy and Bowen Island Municipality. The goal was to assess current performance and seek input on options for strengthening the Islands Trust so it can better fulfil its preserve and protect mandate into the future. Trust Council will be considering next steps regarding the consultant's recommendations in June 2022.

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As your staff may advise you, there is a volume of correspondence that has been directed to your Ministry in recent months regarding our Policy Statement work and our 2022/23 budget recommendations. We would be more than happy to meet with you to discuss any of this communication and points of view respecting the Islands Trust and our priorities as described above.

As Chair of the Islands Trust Council, I should highlight that we are a unique form of government. The Islands Trust was created in 1974 through the provincial [Islands Trust Act](#). As a special purpose government the Islands Trust has a statutory mandate to fulfill the Islands Trust Object:

“to preserve and protect the unique environment and amenities of the Islands Trust Area for the benefit of the residents of the Trust Area and of British Columbia generally, in cooperation with municipalities, regional districts, improvement districts, other persons and organizations and the government of British Columbia” (Islands Trust Act).

This mandate is provincially-decreed, regionally-focused, locally-enacted and globally-significant. The elected twenty-six trustees work to fulfill this mandate primarily through sustainable land use planning and regulation, conservation, advocacy and education. The Islands Trust Conservancy Board, comprised of three trustees and three Ministerial appointees, protects 111 properties (32 nature reserves and 79 conservation covenants). Our work is undertaken in cooperation with others, including First Nations, provincial and federal ministries, regional districts, and other partner agencies.

Located in the islands and waters of the Salish Sea, between the British Columbia mainland and southern Vancouver Island, the Islands Trust Area encompasses more than 450 smaller islands, covering 5,200 square kilometers. The area is home to the highest density of species at risk in Canada and diverse and sensitive marine ecosystems. The region’s rich forests, soils, wetlands and ocean vegetation act as important carbon sinks, mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and buffering communities against the impacts of climate change.

The Islands Trust Area is located within Coast Salish territory and is the homeland to over 28,000 Coast Salish Peoples who have called this place home since time immemorial. In 2019, Islands Trust Council passed a Reconciliation Declaration and committed to a [Reconciliation Action Plan](#) as per the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action. We are committed to building meaningful relationships with First Nations in the Trust Area, protecting cultural heritage, and upholding the principles embodied within the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the BC *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA); the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action; and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Calls for Justice. Islands Trust Council recognizes that the work of reconciliation is key to preserving and protecting this place for generations to come.

We note that your mandate letter includes many of the same priorities, such as working towards lasting and meaningful reconciliation and a better future through fighting climate change. We look forward to working together with you on these common goals.

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Our Chief Administrative Officer, Russ Hotsenpiller (rhotsenpiller@islandstrust.bc.ca), is available to your staff to schedule a meeting with myself and our Executive Committee virtually or in person if you would like to meet. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Luckham".

Peter Luckham
Chair, Islands Trust Council
pluckham@islandstrust.bc.ca

cc: Islands Trust Council