



Mairead Boland, Saturna Island

As a trustee, I would balance the needs of the community and protection of the environment. I am concerned that people who live on the islands continue to have a strong voice in determining the future of their islands and their own place in that. The Official Community Plans were created by islanders through a collaborative community effort and they have stood the test of time. Hopefully my skill in project finance would contribute to the long overdue reform of the Trust budgeting process.

Change is coming to the Islands Trust and I hope that it will be embraced by trustees, staff and residents. If that happens, community energy will be a positive force for good and everyone will benefit.

Born in Ireland, I qualified as a geologist. In my early career I explored for minerals in Ireland and later worked as a petrophysicist for an energy company. My career involved a number of international assignments and my most memorable experiences of my postings are bound up in the landscape, environment and people – in exploring the flora and fauna of the location.

One of my proudest memories is of helping the Malaysian Nature Society (MNS) to create a 100ha nature reserve in the Sarawak Province of Borneo. The reserve protected an area of particular biodiversity with inland coastal forest and sandy beach vegetation. Another MNS project I worked on led to the preservation of the Kuala Baram Wetlands which cover 600ha of marshland near the mouth of the 400km long Baram River, the second longest in Sarawak. My contribution to these projects involved campaigning with local stakeholders, including the Orang Asli (Borneo's first nations), fund raising, lobbying local government and helping with a baseline catalogue of the flora and fauna of the nature reserves.

We have had our home on Saturna since 2009. Since I retired in 2015, I have thrown myself into some of the very many activities on Saturna. Highlights include being an active volunteer for Saturna Island Marine Research and Education Society - for several years I organised their annual Intertidal Safari. I have sold veggie burgers, teddy bears and cider and beer at our famous community fundraiser – the Saturna Lamb BBQ. In the last few years, I've counted starfish and mapped kelp beds. My garden is fenced against deer and full of drought tolerant perennials and I use collected water for irrigation. I like the strong sense of community on Saturna and the attitude (common on all the islands) of self sufficiency and a willingness to help and support each other.