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March 3, 2025

File No.: 11-5020-30-10

Via email: [DFO.Minister-Ministre.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:DFO.Minister-Ministre.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca)  
[TC.MinisterofTransport-MinistredesTransports.TC@tc.gc.ca](mailto:TC.MinisterofTransport-MinistredesTransports.TC@tc.gc.ca)

The Honourable Diane Lebouthillier, MP  
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the  
Canadian Coast Guard  
Fisheries and Oceans Canada  
200 Kent Street, Station 15N100  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0E6

The Honourable Anita Anand, MP  
Minister of Transport and Internal Trade  
Transport Canada  
330 Sparks Street, 29th Floor  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0N5

**Re: Expansion of the Wrecked, Abandoned or Hazardous Vessels Act program in the Islands Trust Area**

Dear Ministers Lebouthillier and Anand:

On behalf of Islands Trust Executive Committee, I am writing to request that Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Transport Canada increase available funding through the *Wrecked, Abandoned or Hazardous Vessels Act* (WAHVA) to deal with hazardous vessels in the Islands Trust Area (southern Strait of Georgia and Howe Sound), and that the period to action vessels found to be in violation of WAHVA be reduced.

There are many wrecked, abandoned and hazardous vessels throughout the Islands Trust Area between Vancouver Island and mainland British Columbia. These vessels are located in harbours and bays of the islands in the Salish Sea, a rich and diverse ecosystem under increasing threat from population growth, increased shipping, and climate change.

As we understand it, Part 2 of the *Wrecked, Abandoned or Hazardous Vessels Act* sets out specific enforcement timelines for various contraventions, notifications, and prohibitions under the Act that range from 30 and 60 days and up to two years. We understand that these timelines must elapse before Transport Canada can determine that a vessel is in violation of the abandoned or dilapidated prohibition. In the sensitive ecosystems of the Islands Trust Area, Islands Trust Council views these timeframes to be too long as weather conditions and vessel conditions can change rapidly, risking the release of hazardous materials into the marine and foreshore environments.

We consider the number of wrecked, abandoned and hazardous vessels in the Islands Trust Area to be disproportionate to the rest of British Columbia and Canada. As such, we believe more funds are

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required to address this ever-increasing problem. We greatly appreciate the work already done by the Government of Canada to reduce the number of such vessels in our waters – more than 100 vessels removed since WAHVA came into force in 2019 – but find that much more needs to be done to curtail their environmental threat.

Islands Trust is a special-purpose government representing over 30,000 people living within the Islands Trust Area and 10,000 non-resident property owners. Islands Trust is responsible for preserving and protecting the Islands Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment through conservation-oriented land use planning and regulation, education, and cooperation with First Nations and other agencies. Islands Trust will continue to exercise its own authorities to regulate uses on the water, but we rely on support from other government agencies, including Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Transport Canada to help us fulfil this special mandate for the benefit of all British Columbians. As such, we call on your Ministries to consider reducing the timelines for dealing with wrecked, abandoned and hazardous vessels and to provide more funding to address the problem.

Thank you for your leadership on this longstanding issue and we look forward to continuing our work together with all partners who care about this urgent matter.

Yours sincerely,



Peter Luckham  
Chair, Islands Trust Council  
[pluckham@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:pluckham@islandstrust.bc.ca)

Cc:  
British Columbia Minister of Municipal Affairs  
Islands Trust Area MPs  
Ryan Greville, Manager, Navigable Waters Protection for Transport Canada.  
Islands Trust Council  
Bowen Island Municipality  
Islands Trust website

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