
To: Trust Council **For the Meeting of:** November 30, 2021
From: Lisa Wilcox, SIPA **Date Prepared:** November 12, 2021
SUBJECT: Engagement and Intergovernmental Relations between Islands Trust and First Nations and Other Agencies – Quarterly Report August 2021 to mid-November 2021

PURPOSE: The purpose of this briefing is to provide a Quarterly Report that outlines the facilitation and work that was undertaken by the Islands Trust to create understanding and mutually respectful relationships within the Islands Trust Area with Indigenous and non-Indigenous community and families, First Nations representatives, governments, and Treaty Alliances, along with interagency collaboration and meetings. Each quarter the Islands Trust staff and various trustees may engage in early and meaningful dialogue with First Nations governments and their representatives at a government-to-government level.

BACKGROUND:

As part of the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action¹ it is the responsibility of government bodies to seek to implement reconciliation within their communities. There is no blueprint for reconciliation; it is a long-term commitment to understanding truth, and reconciling past wrongs. Many government bodies are seeking different approaches guided by the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action (TRC) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP), and the provincial Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA). The Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) has encouraged local government to implement reconciliation principles and move forward with building relationships with First Nations and Indigenous communities². As well, both the federal and provincial government have outlined principles for all civil and public servants to guide their engagement and interactions³.

As we move forward on the journey of reconciliation there is an expectation by First Nations to engage at a government-to-government level to address past wrongs, collaborate on land use decision making, and for local governments to implement UNDRIP. Within the Islands Trust Area there is a diverse range of First Nations governments⁴, treaty organizations and alliances⁵ with whom the Islands Trust has a

¹ Call to Action #47. We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous peoples and lands, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius, and to reform those laws, government policies, and litigation strategies that continue to rely on such concepts.

² <https://www.ubcm.ca/policy-areas/reconciliation-relationships>

³ https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/careers/about-the-bc-public-service/diversity-inclusion-respect/draft_principles.pdf (provincial principles) <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/principles-principes.html> (federal principles)

⁴ First Nations governments: BOKÉĆEN, K'ómoks, Lək'wəŋən, Lyackson, MÁLEXEL, Qualicum, Quw'utsun Tribes, scəwəθən məsteyəxʷ, Scia'new, səilwətaʔ, SEMYOME, shishálh, Sḵwəwú7mesh, Snaw-naw-as, Snuneymuxw, Spune'luxutth, SʔÁUTW, Stz'uminus, ʔaʔəmen, toq qaymıxʷ, Ts'uubaa-asatx, Wei Wai Kum, We Wai Kai, WJOLELP, WSIKEM, Xeláltxw, Xwémalhkwu/ʔop qaymıxʷ, and xʷməθkʷəyəm

⁵ Treaty Alliances and Organizations: Cowichan Tribal Alliance Cowichan Tribes Stz'uminus (Chemainus) First Nation Halalt First Nation Penelakut Tribe Lyackson First Nation Naut'sa mawt Tribal Council (NmTC) Halalt First Nation Xwémalhkwu (Homalco) First Nation Klahoose First Nation K'ómoks (Comox) First Nation MÁLEXEL (Malahat) Nation Tla'amin (Sliammon) Nation Snaw-

responsibility, in collaboration with Ministry of Municipal Affairs, to engage with and build relationships. Each of these diverse First Nations may have different approaches to engagement, may be at different stages of the treaty process, or may have historic treaties or modern treaties in place. First Nations may also have varying levels of capacity to work with local governments or the province and may only seek to engage on certain concerns and not others. As well, many First Nations have reserves within the Islands Trust area, which are either occupied or unoccupied. These reserve areas fall under federal jurisdiction.

The Islands Trust as part of its reconciliation commitment moved forward with a Reconciliation Declaration⁶, a Reconciliation Action Plan 2019-2022⁷, and began the process of enacting the TRC Calls to Action #57⁸. The Islands Trust authored several discussion papers⁹ and reports¹⁰ acknowledging past wrongs and the commitment the Islands Trust was undertaking to move forward in a good way toward mutually respectful relationships build on reconciliation principles. Through this process it was clearly stated to the Islands Trust that past land use decisions had greatly impacted First Nations; had resulted in the desecration of ancestral resting places; had destroyed village sites, and cultural areas; and contributed to a lack of trust between First Nations and the Islands Trust.

The Islands Trust also began, during this time, to understand and hear about the historical connections that Indigenous people living on islands had with First Nations and their kinship ties to those Nations. Many of the Indigenous people living on the islands have connections to the First Nations governments within the Islands Trust area but those connections have been lost due to the Indian Act, enfranchisement¹¹, and marriage to non-Indigenous settlers who moved to the islands from the 1800s to present¹².

Although the Islands Trust has no statutory obligation to engage on a government to government level with individual Indigenous people it is important to ensure that we are reflecting the spirit of reconciliation in the work that we undertake and listening and understanding all constituents both Indigenous and non-Indigenous who call the islands home.

ENGAGEMENT:

- Working directly with Inlailawatash on engagement frameworks, methodology, and design of Heritage Preservation Overlay initiative August 2021 – 2 meetings;
- Facilitated site visit to Galiano Islands August 9, 2021 to re: ancestral resting places;

naw-as (Nanoose) First Nation Stz'uminus (Chemainus) First Nation scəwəθən məsteyəx^w (Tsawwassen) səilwətaʔt (Tsleil-waututh) Nation T'Sou-ke Nation W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council Society W̱JOLELP (Tsartlip) First Nation W̱ SIKEM (Tseycum) First Nation S̱ÁUTW̱(Tsawout) First Nation

⁶ Reconciliation Declaration: <https://islandstrust.bc.ca/about-us/reconciliation/>

⁷ Reconciliation Action Plan: https://islandstrust.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/tas_2019-05-10_reconciliationactionplan_pl_final.pdf

⁸ Call to Action #57. We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills- based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

⁹ Discussion Paper: https://islandstrust.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/TC-2021-03-09_PSAP-Discussion-Paper-Trust-Object-Past-Present-Future-with-appendices_RPT_FINAL.pdf

¹⁰ Reconciliation Report: <https://islandstrust.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Reconciliation-Report-2019-2021-Final.pdf>

¹¹ Definition of enfranchisement under the Indian Act: <https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/enfranchisement/>

¹² See the book “On the Cusp of Contact” by Jean Barman (two copies are available in the Islands Trust Reconciliation library for chapters on the history of marriage between Indigenous and non-Indigenous islanders

- Meeting with CRD senior staff re: First Nations relationship building and implementation of the TRC Calls to Action August 20, 2021;
- Meeting with K'ómoks First Nations representatives re: cultural areas, K'ómoks Cultural Heritage Permit, Islands Trust policy statement August 23, 2021;
- Meeting with Snuneymuxw First Nations re: Policy Statement and cultural areas August 26, 2021;
- Dialogue with Adam Olsen re: cultural protocol within WSANEC territory September 1, 2021;
- Meeting with Stz'uminus First Nation representatives re: Ganges Village Plan September 3, 2021;
- Mailing of Policy Statement letters with capacity funding to First Nations and treaty alliances September 7, 2021;
- Meeting with Minister Rankin, Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation facilitated by UBCM September 8, 2021;
- Meeting with Naut'sa mawt Event Management re: Youth and Elder Engagement initiatives September 10, 2021;
- Meeting with Forests Lands Natural Resources and Rural Development Executive Director re: crown land agreements and interagency collaboration September 22, 2021;
- Southern Gulf Islands Forum September 24, 2021;
- Meeting with Ministry of Municipal Affairs staff September 24, 2021;
- Screening of Dust n Bones with reconciliation talk on Denman Island facilitated by Denman Local Trust Committee September 26, 2021;
- Meeting with ministry staff re: First Nations engagement and marine use and crown land tenures September 28, 2021;
- Meeting with Tla'amin First Nation representatives re: Policy Statement September 17, 2021;
- Islands Trust staff facilitated a meeting on Galiano Island on October 6, 2021 with Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members and First Nations Elders, Cultural Knowledge Holders, and Hereditary Chiefs;
- Dialogue with Gabriola Housing Society re: reconciliation and MMIWG Calls for Justice recommendations October 18, 2021;
- Workshop with Galiano and Mayne Islands Housing Societies re: reconciliation within the Islands Trust Area and the MMIWG Calls for Justice recommendations October 20, 2021;
- Meeting with Indigenous community members from Salt Spring Island October 25, 2021;
- Meeting with Community of Practice Committee Indigenous Relations staff from Capital Regional District, Greater Victoria Harbour Authority, Parks Canada, Department of Fisheries November 2, 2021;
- Meeting with Tsawout First Nation Chief and representatives November 9, 2021;
- Meeting with Tla'amin First Nation representatives re: policy statement November 10, 2021;
- Meeting with Tsawout Elder re: protocol and treaty area November 10, 2021.

ATTACHMENT(S): none

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