



Islands Trust Conservancy - Executive Committee

Liaison Meeting Agenda



Date: Wednesday, July 13, 2022
Time: 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Location: Islands Trust Victoria Boardroom
200-1627 Fort Street, Victoria, BC

Pages

1. CALL TO ORDER

1.1. Introductions and Context for Annual Meeting

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

3. MINUTES

3.1. July 13, 2021 ITC-EC Liaison Meeting Minutes (Approved October 2021)

3 - 6

4. BUSINESS

4.1. Items for Information

4.1.1. ITC 2021/22 Year in Review (presentation)

- Regional Conservancy Plan Update
- Property Management Update
- Reconciliation with First Nations
- Species at Risk Program
- Climate Change Project
- Donor Engagement

4.1.2. 2021/22 Executive Committee Updates (verbal)

- Governance Report Follow Up
- Trust Council Update
- Policy Statement Update

4.2. Roundtable: Focus on Collaboration

4.3. Items for Collaboration

4.3.1. ITC Plan (2023-2025) – Briefing

7 - 31

4.3.2. Communications with Trustees/LTCs (verbal)

4.3.3. Governance Review Opportunities (verbal)

4.3.4. Working with Crown Agencies to Protect Forests (verbal)

4.3.5. Species at Risk Program Update - Briefing

32 - 35

4.3.6. Working with First Nations (verbal)

4.3.7. Biologist Support for Regional Planning Committee - Briefing

36 - 37

4.3.8. ITC Information for Ministry Staff (verbal)

5. NEXT MEETING

To be determined in late 2022

6. ADJOURNMENT



**Islands Trust Conservancy - Executive Committee
Liaison Meeting
Minutes of Regular Meeting**



Date: Tuesday, July 13, 2021
Time: 1:00 pm
Location: Electronic Zoom Meeting

ITC Board Members Present Kate-Louise Stamford, Chair
Sue Ellen Fast, Vice Chair
Doug Fenton
Linda Adams

EC Members Present Dan Rogers, Vice-Chair
Laura Patrick, Vice-Chair
Peter Luckham, Chair
Sue Ellen Fast, Vice Chair

Regrets Donald Clarke

Staff Present Carla Funk, Acting Fundraising Specialist
Clare Frater, Director, Trust Area Services
Corlynn Strachan, Administrative Assistant/Recorder
Devin Hentschel, Conservation Technician
Erin Coulson, Acting Communications Specialist
Kate Emmings, ITC Manager
Kathryn Martell, Ecosystems Protection Specialist

Regrets Russ Hotsenpiller, Chief Administrative Officer

1. CALL TO ORDER

1.1 Introductions and context for annual meeting

Chair Stamford called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm, acknowledged that the meeting was being held on the territory of many Coast Salish peoples and noted it is important to speak to the devastating yet sadly unsurprising news that 160 undocumented and unmarked graves have been discovered on the grounds of the old Kuper Island residential school, on what is now Penelakut Island. She stated that she hopes we can find ways as an organization, and as part of our island communities, to acknowledge the effect of the ongoing trauma that the residential school system has had on our friends, neighbours, staff and community members who are First Nations. She stated that we should never become immune to these atrocious discoveries.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

By **general consent** the agenda was approved.

3. MINUTES/COORDINATION

3.1 Review of the July 14, 2020 meeting minutes.

4. BUSINESS

4.1 Items for Information

4.1.1 ITC 2020/21 Year in Review (presentation)

Islands Trust Conservancy staff provided a presentation on the following topics:

- Islands Trust Conservancy staff and board
- Regional Conservation Plan updates
- Species at Risk Program
- covenant and nature reserve management
- restoration activities
- communications – social media, new website, Heron newsletter, annual report
- fund development and donor engagement
- climate change project
- engagement and reconciliation with First Nations

Executive Committee members thanked staff for their work and discussed:

- ways local trust committee chairs can do a better job of spreading key messages, about the Conservancy and sharing Conservancy communication products such as the Heron newsletter
- Islands Trust Conservancy topics are lost in local trust committee meetings and that Islands Trust Conservancy staff could attend local trust committee meetings annually to increase exposure
- role of the Islands Trust Conservancy in the BC Parks Foundation acquisition of Saturnina Island in the Gabriola Island Local Trust Area
- timeline of Sandy Beach Nature Reserve management plan development
- potential Islands Trust Conservancy involvement in the Howe Sound UNESCO Biosphere Reserve project
- mapping, habitat creation and wetland restoration, watershed protection
- the importance of providing opportunities for Islands Trust Conservancy to have exposure in local communities in ways other than local trust committee meetings
- impact of climate change

4.1.2 2020/21 Executive Committee Updates (verbal)

Director Frater provided the following updates:

- Provincial Funding Request

There has been no new action since the last liaison meeting, Trust Council passed a model fees bylaw which should strengthen any ask that does take place. We are in a good position to make a request but due to other Trust Council and Executive Committee priorities, work has not been completed on this. Executive Committee members expressed their support for continued work and will pursue as opportunity arises.

- **NAPTEP Exemption Increase**
No further work has not been done on this due to a lack of staff time. Next steps would be a potential budget request for next year for development of a business case to provide to affected governments and the Province. Contract assistance may be required. The change would be a regulation change compared to an act change, which could be achieved quickly.

4.2 Roundtable - Focus on Collaboration

4.3 Items for Collaboration

4.3.1 Strategic Fund Development – Briefing

The Acting Fundraising Specialist highlighted that the Conservancy is on a quest for relationship building to help people understand what the Conservancy is achieving, and goals for the future.

Executive Committee members recognized Carla Funk for her great work and for bringing national attention, discussed results and the importance of developing long term connection, and suggested using a simple graphic that shows the Conservancy does not compete with local conservancies but works in partnership to protect the land.

4.3.2 Working with Crown Agencies for Forest Protection

Director Frater advised we are continuing to work with Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development Ministry staff to talk about developing an updated protocol agreement and letter of understanding, and merge the ones the Islands Trust already has in place. This is an ongoing process in relationship building. This is at the introductory stage with intent to achieve something within the year.

4.3.3 Policy Statement Amendment Project (verbal)

Director Frater advised Trust Council received a draft new Policy Statement and recommend it be put forward to public engagement, referral agencies, and First Nations, with intent to be consider First Reading in December.

Board members and staff discussed assistance with communications, Islands Trust and Islands Trust Conservancy connection, potential negative brand implications, and Board members offered positive feedback on the Conservancy being acknowledged in the draft new Policy Statement.

Executive Committee members encouraged the Conservancy to provide feedback on what they feel is important to maintain, and why.

4.3.4 Islands Trust Strategic Plan / Regional Conservation Plan Overlap – Briefing

The Islands Trust Conservancy Manager presented the briefing and highlighted six areas of overlap.

Discussion ensued on:

- Coastal Douglas-fir forest protection
- Conservancy education
- carrying the stewardship message
- collaborative items across Trust Area, what the Conservancy can contribute
- planners have conversations with landowners and offer ITC resources
- the need to build a case for particular ask to Province in respect to tree cutting

4.3.5 Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund Grant Application – Briefing

Director Frater presented the briefing noting more details will be released in the fall, including eligibility and selection criteria and highlighting that staff are currently at maximum capacity for managing initiatives, so would need to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to do any funded work.

5. NEXT MEETING

To be determined in late 2021.

6. ADJOURNMENT

By **general consent**, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.

Kate Louise Stamford, Chair

Certified Correct:

Corlynn Strachan, Recorder



BRIEFING

To: ITC/EC Liaison Meeting

For the Meeting of: July 13, 2022

From: Staff

Date Prepared: June 30, 2022

SUBJECT: ITC Plan (2023-2025)

PURPOSE: To provide an update to the members of the Executive Committee regarding the revision of the ITC Plan.

BACKGROUND:

The *Islands Trust Act* requires that the ITC prepare and submit to the Minister, at least once every five years, a Trust Fund Plan (ITC Plan), including policies on acquisition, management, and disposal of property, investment of money, goals for major acquisitions, and other matters as required. The current ITC Plan will run until the end of 2022 and the ITC Board has been considering steps for drafting the next ITC Plan.

The ITC Plan is administrative in nature, and includes policies on land acquisition, management and disposition of land, and investment of funds. More recently, it has also summarized the goals of the draft Regional Conservation Plan¹.

ITC policy requires that the ITC Plan be referred to every local trust committee and island municipality as well as to Trust Council for comment but is silent with respect to referral to First Nations. At its March 2022 meeting, the ITC Board directed staff to investigate options for extending the current ITC Plan to allow the ITC Board to more fully engage with First Nations in the drafting of the next ITC Plan. Staff investigated options with Ministerial staff and were advised that the Minister does not have the discretion to approve an extension without the support of an Order in Council. Ministerial staff provided the following two options for consideration:

1) S. 44 (1) of the [Islands Trust Act (ITA)] states that the IT Conservancy must prepare a plan at least once every 5 years, which means that you could prepare a plan under a 5-year timeline. One option would be to pass a shorter-term plan in the meantime, continue to engage with First Nations, and then create another plan within a few years' time that takes into account that engagement and the results of the Policy Statement.

2) S. 54 (2) (b) allows the Lieutenant Governor in Council to "provide an exception to or a modification of a requirement or condition established by an enactment." This would allow the LGIC to, by regulation, vary the s.44 (1) requirement that the ITC prepare and submit a plan at least every 5 years. [Planning and Land Use Management] staff will need to prepare an Order in Council to grant the extension, which we can aim to have ready for one of the later spring

¹ It is important to distinguish between the Trust Fund Plan, which requires Ministerial approval under the *Islands Trust Act*, and the Regional Conservation Plan, which provides science-based operational direction to the Islands Trust Conservancy Board and its staff. The documents are complementary, but serve different functions.

Cabinet dates. It could take a few months before you have confirmation of the extension. If this is the option you would like to pursue, we can discuss it further.

Excerpt from Email, dated April 4, 2022,
Anna Shortly, Senior Planning Analyst, Planning and Land Use Management Branch

Ministerial staff indicated that they would not be able to provide any confirmation of an extension for option 2 until June and that pursuing this option would take up agenda time that might delay other business items.

ITC Plans are typically five-year plans. With direction from the ITC Board, staff proceeded to draft a shorter ITC Plan for 2023-2025 (three years), as per option 1, that would continue current work of the ITC and enable ITC to engage with First Nations more fully in drafting a 2026-2030 ITC Plan. At its May 2022 meeting, the ITC Board considered a draft 2023-2025 ITC Plan and passed the following resolutions:

ITC-2022-023

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board approve the draft ITC Three-Year Plan and direct staff to refer it to local trust committees, the Bowen Island Municipality, Trust Council and First Nations and to bring a final draft to the Board for approval at its November 2022 meeting.

ITC-2022-025

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board direct staff to prepare a Project Charter for the next ITC Five-Year Plan (2026-2030) with an emphasis on First Nations engagement.

ITC will begin referral of the draft ITC Plan (2023-2025) to LTCs, Bowen Island Municipality, Trust Council and First Nations in July, 2022. Trust Council will receive the draft ITC Plan at its September meeting and the ITC Plan is provided at the ITC/EC liaison meeting to allow for early discussion and questions.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Draft ITC Plan (2023-2025)

FOLLOW-UP: Staff will begin the referral process for the draft ITC Plan (2023-2025). Discussion at the ITC/EC Liaison meeting will inform the briefing provided with the draft ITC Plan.

Prepared By: Kate Emmings, Manager Islands Trust Conservancy



ISLANDS TRUST CONSERVANCY THREE-YEAR PLAN 2023-2025



ISLANDS TRUST CONSERVANCY

CoNTENTS

1. Introduction.....	3
2. The Islands Trust Conservancy Mandate, Mission and Vision	4
3. Goals and Objectives of the Islands Trust Conservancy.....	6
4. Islands Trust Conservancy Policies	11
5. Conclusion	17
Appendix A: List of Islands Trust Conservancy protected areas, by fiscal year	18
Appendix B: Complete List of Islands Trust Conservancy Policies.....	22

I. INTRODUCTION

Islands Trust Conservancy¹ manages over 1,350 hectares of diverse island ecosystems in 112 protected areas, in collaboration with private landholders, land trusts and other conservation partners. The Islands Trust Conservancy recognizes that the ability to protect these island ecosystems is possible because of the thousands of years of stewardship by the First Nations with interests in the lands and waters in the Trust Area, which has created a lasting natural legacy throughout the islands.

Islands Trust Conservancy was created by the Province of British Columbia in 1990 as a regional land trust and conservation arm of the Islands Trust to protect in perpetuity some of the most ecologically and culturally significant places in the Islands Trust Area. To do so, the Islands Trust Conservancy works closely with partners to protect sites through land donation, conservation covenants, land purchase and public education.

Islands Trust Conservancy plays an important role in preserving and protecting the unique and fragile ecosystems found in the Strait of Georgia and Howe Sound. The area is among the most biologically diverse regions in the Province of British Columbia and is globally significant with respect to the at-risk Coastal Douglas-fir biogeoclimatic zone. The Islands Trust Area holds 25% of British Columbia's Coastal Douglas-fir zone, the largest percentage of any local government jurisdiction in the province. Within regional districts and biogeoclimatic zones found within the Islands Trust Area, there are a total of 197 red-listed (extirpated, endangered, or threatened) species (25% of the provincial total) and 158 blue-listed (special concern) species (14% of the provincial total) (BC Conservation Data Centre, 2022).²

There are also a high proportion of the province's red and blue-listed ecological communities. The Islands Trust Area supports some of Canada's last remaining Garry Oak ecosystems and the associated rare plants, mosses, butterflies and reptiles. Island coastlines support eelgrass meadows, forage fish habitat, glass sponge reefs and other extraordinary marine environments. These numerous rare and endangered species and ecosystems will not survive unless sufficient habitat is protected and carefully managed for its ecological integrity. The Islands Trust Conservancy's work encouraging and assisting private landholders to protect ecologically valuable land in this region is vital to the provincial government's efforts to protect these important and imperiled ecosystems.

Since the adoption of the previous Islands Trust Conservancy Plan in 2017, Islands Trust Conservancy has deepened its learning about the connection of Indigenous Peoples to the land and waters of the islands. Typically, Islands Trust Conservancy adopts Five-Year Plans to guide its work; however, Islands Trust Conservancy has not had sufficient time to engage with First Nations regarding its strategic directions to be able to submit a 2023-2027 Plan. Consequently, Islands Trust Conservancy Board has elected to create a short Three-Year Plan that is substantively an update of the 2017-2022 Plan. The Three-Year Plan will guide the work of Islands Trust Conservancy while it conducts early and meaningful First Nations engagement prior to adoption of a 2026-2030 Plan. By meaningfully engaging First Nations in the development of the 2026-2030 plan, Islands Trust Conservancy hopes to

¹ Previously known as the Islands Trust Fund Board. Name change effective May 31, 2018

² B.C. Conservation Data Centre. 2022. BC Species and Ecosystems Explorer. B.C. Minist. of Environ. Victoria, B.C. Available: <https://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/eswp/> (accessed May 7, 2022).

create a Five-Year Plan that advances the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) and the supports the outcomes in the provincial Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Action Plan 2022-2027.

2. THE ISLANDS TRUST CONSERVANCY MANDATE, MISSION AND VISION

The Legislated Mandate of the Islands Trust Conservancy

In 1974, the Province of British Columbia recognized the islands between Vancouver Island and the mainland as a special place within the province where the unique beauty, rural character and rare ecosystems should be protected from overdevelopment. Through the *Islands Trust Act*, the province established the Islands Trust, with the following mandate (known as the Object of Islands Trust):

*To preserve and protect the trust area and its unique amenities and environment for the benefit of the residents of the trust area and of British Columbia generally, in cooperation with municipalities, regional districts, improvement districts, First Nations, other persons and organizations and the government of British Columbia.*³

In 1990, through the enactment of a section of *Islands Trust Act*, the Islands Trust Conservancy (at that time, the Islands Trust Fund) was established as a conservation land trust to assist in carrying out the “preserve and protect” mandate. Part 6 of the *Islands Trust Act* establishes the corporate status, responsibilities, and governance structure of the Islands Trust Conservancy.

The Islands Trust Conservancy is one of 16 corporate entities⁴ charged to uphold the Object of the Islands Trust. It carries out the preserve and protect mandate through the conservation of land as nature reserves, nature sanctuaries, conservation covenants and other interests in land, and public education.

Under the *Islands Trust Act* (Section 44)

1. The Islands Trust Conservancy must prepare and submit to the Minister, at least once every five years, a plan for the trust fund respecting
 - a) policies on acquisition, management and disposal of property of the trust fund,
 - b) policies on investment of money of the trust fund,
 - c) goals for major acquisitions of property by the trust fund, and
 - d) other matters as required by the Minister
2. The Islands Trust Conservancy must not, without the prior approval of the Minister, acquire, hold or dispose of land except in accordance with a trust fund plan under subsection (1) that has been approved by the Minister.

³ In November 2021, the Province of BC passed the Municipal Affairs Statutes Amendment Act (No. 2), 2021 (Bill 26), which included specific reference to First Nations in the Islands Trust’s Object.

⁴ The Corporate entities charged to uphold the Object of the Islands Trust include the Trust Council, the Executive Committee, thirteen local trust committees and the Islands Trust Conservancy.

The Mission and Vision of the Islands Trust Conservancy

The **mission of the Islands Trust Conservancy** is to protect special places by encouraging, undertaking, and assisting in voluntary conservation initiatives within the Islands Trust Area.

The **vision of the Islands Trust Conservancy** is for a network of protected areas that preserve in perpetuity the natural systems of the islands in the Salish Sea.

Reconciliation Declaration

In July 2019, the Islands Trust Conservancy approved a Reconciliation Declaration:

The **Islands Trust Conservancy acknowledges** that the islands and waters that encompass the Salish Sea have been home to Indigenous Peoples since time immemorial. We recognize that we are all intertwined in the ecosystems that are the lands, waters, culture, and ecology that embody this place.

The **Islands Trust Conservancy will strive** to create opportunities for knowledge-sharing, understanding and collaboration as people come together to preserve and protect the special nature of the islands within the Salish Sea.

The **Islands Trust Conservancy is committed** to the protection and preservation of this place through processes that respect and honour reconciliation and mutually respectful relationships with Coast Salish Indigenous Peoples. We express our recognition for the past, present, and future stewardship and knowledge that has been shared by Indigenous Peoples and are humbled and grateful.

3. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ISLANDS TRUST CONSERVANCY

Building on Achievements

Protected Lands

Since its inception in 1990, the Islands Trust Conservancy has protected 1,365 hectares (3,370 acres) of ecologically-significant natural area on the islands. As of November 2022, the Islands Trust Conservancy manages 34 Nature Reserves, and works with island landholders to steward 78 conservation covenants for a total of 112 protected areas. Twenty-seven of these protected places are certified as Ecological Gifts by Environment and Climate Change Canada.

In the next three years: The Islands Trust Conservancy will continue to refine the knowledge used for its decision making by developing a renewed 10-year Regional Conservation Plan to ensure that the organization's time and resources are directed towards high-priority land protection projects.

The Islands Trust Conservancy will continue to pursue new and innovative sources of funding to ensure that it can seize time-sensitive land securement opportunities and prevent further loss of the rare and fragile ecosystems of the Islands Trust Area. The Islands Trust Conservancy also intends to increase funding available for property management and restoration of its protected lands.

See Appendix A for a list of properties protected by the Islands Trust Conservancy.

Collaboration

The Islands Trust Conservancy works in partnership with land trusts, conservation groups, First Nations, parks agencies and others focused on conservation in the region. Islands Trust Conservancy staff participate in the Coastal Douglas-fir and Associated Ecosystems Conservation Partnership, the Land Trust Alliance of British Columbia, and the Species and Ecosystems at Risk Local Government Working Group to further the organization's conservation mandate.

The Islands Trust Conservancy supports and enhances the capacity of the local island-based land trusts by providing grants from its Opportunity Fund, working collaboratively on projects, and facilitating education and networking opportunities. The Islands Trust Conservancy's Opportunity Fund is funded by private donations and has provided more than \$105,000 in grants to local land trusts, helping protect more than 525 additional hectares of land, since it was developed in 2005.

In the next three years: The Islands Trust Conservancy will seek to establish and deepen relationships with First Nations and will work towards building trust by finding opportunities to collaborate with First Nations to integrate Traditional Ecological Knowledge into management planning, reconnect youth with island ecosystems and other mutually beneficial initiatives. Islands Trust Conservancy will also meaningfully engage First Nations in the development of the 2026-2030 plan to create a Five-Year Plan that advances the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) and the supports the outcomes in the provincial Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Action Plan 2022-2027.

Financial Sustainability

The administration of the Islands Trust Conservancy is funded by the Islands Trust Council, through property taxes collected from the residents and landholders of the Islands Trust Area.

Land securement and any other projects outside of core operations must be funded through external sources, including grants and private donations.

Grants: Because of the density of rare species found in the Islands Trust Area, Islands Trust Conservancy has been successful in negotiating over \$600,000 in federal funding between April 2020 and March 2023 to support land protection and management for species at risk. Islands Trust Conservancy intends to work with the Government of Canada to continue conservation for species at risk.

Private Donations: To augment its ability to protect and manage land, the Islands Trust Conservancy approved a Fund Development Strategy in early 2020. To support the Strategy, a part-time Strategic Fund Development Specialist position was created in 2022. In 2022, the Islands Trust Conservancy was successful in raising over \$100,000 in donations, including being the recipient of two bequests.

Current Funds: Islands Trust Conservancy holds three geographically-restricted funds dedicated to land acquisition – the Lasqueti Island Acquisition Fund, the Gambier Island Acquisition Fund, and the Thetis Island Acquisition Fund – and has guidelines to assist with the future development of other geographically restricted funds. Additionally, Islands Trust Conservancy has a Covenant Management and Defense Fund, and Property Management Fund and two property-specific land management endowments.

In the next three years: The board will continue to promote legacy gifts as a way to fund the protection and stewardship of ecologically significant lands in the region.

Encouraging Private Land Stewardship

Islands Trust Conservancy's innovative tax incentive program for private landholders to place conservation covenants on their properties, the Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program (NAPTEP), provides a permanent 65% reduction on property taxes on the portion of an eligible property protected by a conservation covenant.

In the next three years: Islands Trust Conservancy will continue to promote its programs to island landholders, focusing its outreach efforts on the highest priority landscapes. Islands Trust Conservancy Board will welcome conversations with the provincial and federal governments about new or innovative tools that might motivate increased land stewardship in this region and will look to these governments to partner on such programs.

Planning for Regional Conservation

In January 2018, Islands Trust Conservancy Board approved a 10-Year Regional Conservation Plan. The Regional Conservation Plan is the tool used by Islands Trust Conservancy to focus its resources on areas with the highest biodiversity values and greatest need for conservation. Islands Trust Conservancy has designed the Regional Conservation Plan as an information resource for citizens and organizations working towards conservation of biodiversity within the Islands Trust Area.

Based on scientific information and other forms of knowledge, the Regional Conservation Plan identifies areas of interest for conservation within the Islands Trust Area and strategies for achieving better levels of land conservation. Some of the strategies involve land acquisition and conservation covenants with willing landholders. Other strategies involve working with First Nations, partner agencies, local trust committees and Bowen Island Municipality to increase our knowledge base, encouraging protection of ecologically significant land within the Islands Trust Area and managing existing conservation lands effectively.

Goals of the 2018-2027 Regional Conservation Plan

The 2018-2027 Regional Conservation Plan sets out four high level long-term goals that reflect the enduring ambitions of Islands Trust Conservancy to work with island landholders and conservation partners to protect the rich biodiversity of the Islands Trust Area:

1. Identify, investigate and communicate about important natural areas to generate action on conservation priorities

In order to contribute to effective conservation of biodiversity and ecological integrity in the Islands Trust Area, Islands Trust Conservancy needs an understanding of the status of ecosystems and species in the region. Additionally, Islands Trust Conservancy manages over 1,350 hectares of land and can use data to improve and inform its land stewardship. Islands Trust Conservancy will continue to invest in research and data acquisition that supports the conservation of island ecosystems.

2. Strengthen relationships with First Nations to identify and collaborate on shared conservation goals

The Islands Trust Area is in the traditional territories of many First Nations. As part of its current practice, Islands Trust Conservancy invites comment from First Nations in management planning processes and refers public conservation proposals to First Nations where archaeological sites are identified. Islands Trust Conservancy seeks to establish and deepen relationships with First Nations and will work towards building trust and finding opportunities to collaborate with First Nations on projects and policy development where there are opportunities for shared benefits.

3. Continue to secure and manage Islands Trust Conservancy lands and conservation covenants to maximize ecological integrity

The core work of Islands Trust Conservancy is to maintain and contribute to protected area networks which preserve ecological function and high levels of biodiversity in the Islands Trust Area. Islands Trust Conservancy will continue to acquire new nature reserves and conservation covenants as well as use other tools for conserving nature while ensuring that it cares for the lands that it is trusted to manage. Securing adequate funding to pursue new acquisitions as well as manage all protected lands responsibly will be an area of considerable focus for Islands Trust Conservancy.

4. Continue to build internal and shared organizational strength and resilience to ensure long-term nature conservation in the Islands Trust Area

Islands Trust Conservancy was established in 1990. It has been a consistent presence in conservation of species and ecosystems in the Islands Trust area for almost thirty years. As it moves into the fourth decade of its work, Islands Trust Conservancy will ensure that it can responsibly care for its management responsibilities and participate effectively in partnership opportunities into the future. It will also work to be resilient enough to gracefully navigate change, both on the landscape and as an organization.

The 2018-2027 Regional Conservation Plan is posted on Islands Trust website:

islandstrust.bc.ca/conservancy/conservation-planning/

4. ISLANDS TRUST CONSERVANCY POLICIES

Below is a summary of key Islands Trust Conservancy policies affecting the public interest. A full list of policies, hyperlinked to the Islands Trust website, can be found in Appendix B.

Section 1: Fundraising, Investment and Financial Accountability

General Accounting

The financial transactions of Islands Trust Conservancy are managed using standard accounting procedures and are subject to an annual independent audit. The Audited Financial Statements of Islands Trust Conservancy are available on the Islands Trust website.

To ensure financial accountability, Islands Trust Conservancy will:

- follow the procurement policy established by Islands Trust Council;
- require prior approval of the board for expenditures in excess of \$10,000 unless a prior resolution from the board approves a plan, project or policy authorizing such an expenditure;
- require all financial transactions related to approved projects to be authorized by the Islands Trust Conservancy Manager;
- direct the Islands Trust Conservancy Manager to act on behalf of the board to oversee the management of the bank accounts and investments of the board; and,
- review an updated financial report at each regular board meeting.

Islands Trust Conservancy will not incur any liabilities without the prior approval of the Minister responsible for the Islands Trust.

Fundraising and Investment of Funds

Islands Trust Council approves an annual budget for the administrative operations of Islands Trust Conservancy. This funding covers operating expenses including, but not limited to, board meetings and training, staff salaries and benefits, conservation planning, land and covenant negotiations, communications, fundraising, legal counsel and property management costs. However, the operating budget is not used for direct acquisition of properties (i.e. purchase costs). Accordingly, to purchase land or contribute to acquisitions by other agencies, Islands Trust Conservancy must raise additional funds. The *Islands Trust Act* provides Islands Trust Conservancy with the ability to raise funds in a variety of ways.

The board and staff will solicit funds for the purposes outlined in existing Fund Guidelines⁵ and Fund Agreements⁶. Islands Trust Conservancy will not solicit funds for purposes outside of those approved in Fund Guidelines or Fund Agreements unless it has first reviewed and approved the additional fundraising activity. Islands Trust Conservancy currently manages ten funds.

⁵ As of November 2022, Islands Trust Conservancy has Fund Guidelines for the following funds: Opportunity Fund, Geographically Restricted Funds, Property Management Fund and Covenant Management and Defense Fund.

⁶ Fund Agreements are negotiated agreements with donors regarding the specific use of a restricted donation

Islands Trust Conservancy will not engage in commission-based fundraising, and will not employ contractors utilizing this method for fundraising activities. Islands Trust Conservancy will reserve the right to decline to accept a donation at its discretion.

Islands Trust Conservancy routinely requests cash endowments with land conservation projects associated with development applications. Islands Trust Conservancy invests these endowments only in accordance with the requirements of the *Trustee Act* for the investment of trust property by a trustee. The board ensures that it invests only in forms of property or security in which a prudent investor might invest, and which enable retrieval of the full investment if required.

Islands Trust Conservancy is a corporation that is, for all purposes, an agent of the provincial government, and accordingly is a qualified donee and can issue receipts for income tax purposes for donations. Islands Trust Conservancy is exempt from paying property taxes on its lands.

Section 2: Acquisition, Management and Disposition of Property

General

Under the *Islands Trust Act*, Islands Trust Conservancy can accept donations and grants of land, conservation covenants, other interests in land, cash, securities and other real property in support of the protection of the Islands Trust Area. Islands Trust Conservancy is an approved recipient of gifts of land and interests in land through Environment and Climate Change Canada's Ecological Gifts Program.

When considering proposals, the board will give priority to those proposals that protect larger areas of land, and may defer or decline smaller proposals. The board will only consider accepting covenants and land acquisitions of less than two hectares (4.9 acres) if specific significant features are present.

The board will assess the need for the ongoing management and future legal defense of conservation properties and may, as part of an approval, request or require an endowment or donation to cover management and defense costs associated with the land or covenant.

Land Acquisition

Islands Trust Conservancy will normally only consider the acquisition of lands that meet the Board's definition of Nature Reserve: *an area that has been set aside because it has regionally significant natural ecosystems (landscape units with little or no human development) and may contain nationally and provincially identified ecosystems and species that are considered endangered, threatened or of special concern. The primary purpose of a Nature Reserve is the preservation and protection of the natural ecosystem. The size of a Nature Reserve should be sufficient to ensure that these ecosystems remain viable over the long term. Activities permitted on a nature reserve will have minimal impact on the land and in general will only include hiking and only in areas that are considered not sensitive to this activity. The location and extent of hiking trails will be determined through the management plan process.*

With every land acquisition proposal, Islands Trust Conservancy will evaluate any risks that may hamper the organization's ability to protect the land's natural values in perpetuity. Islands Trust Conservancy will only consider accepting land that needs extensive ecological restoration or substantial management if:

- a) Islands Trust Conservancy has adequate staff resources to manage the on-going requirements;
- b) a substantial cash donation that is adequate to cover on-going restoration and/or management costs is provided; or,
- c) Islands Trust Conservancy has adequate funds available to undertake immediate restoration and/or management requirements.

Islands Trust Conservancy will not accept or acquire any lands where there is an obligation to maintain buildings or structures. The Conservancy may accept and acquire lands that have buildings on-site that can be removed or maintained at the board's discretion.

As a further measure of protection, Islands Trust Conservancy may develop and register a conservation covenant on each of its nature reserves if an appropriate conservation agency can be found to hold the covenant and if the values on the land warrant the investment of staff time and legal fees.

Conservation Covenants

Islands Trust Conservancy will encourage landholders within ecologically significant areas or with significant characteristics or values to protect their land using binding conservation covenants and will work with interested landholders to achieve protection of significant areas.

Islands Trust Conservancy will continue to work with Trust Council to promote and administer the Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program (NAPTEP). The program provides a property tax incentive for landholders who register conservation covenants on their lands to protect the natural features and values of their properties.

Islands Trust Conservancy may refuse to acquire properties with existing conservation covenants or other charges on title that include rent charges⁶. Rent charges will not be included in covenants to be registered on Islands Trust Conservancy owned properties as the Conservancy cannot incur liabilities without ministerial approval.

Management of Property and Covenants

The acquisition of land or registration of conservation covenants does not by itself guarantee the long-term protection of significant features and values. Active management of protected areas is also necessary. Islands Trust Conservancy's primary objectives in managing its properties are to protect public safety and ecological values. Lands held by Islands Trust Conservancy are not parks but are nature reserves and nature sanctuaries, and this concept is considered in acquisition discussions, management planning, insurance and land use zoning.

³ "Rent charge" is similar to a fine and is a charge registered against the land to enable enforcement of a breach of a covenant agreement.

To effectively manage ecologically significant areas, Islands Trust Conservancy works cooperatively with First Nations, landholders, contractors, partner conservation groups and other government agencies. Qualified staff, partners and contractors develop management plans for all lands held by Islands Trust Conservancy. Management plans provide long-term direction regarding allowable public use, the reduction of risk to public safety, and the reduction of risk to ecological values and other significant features.

When Islands Trust Conservancy receives donations of land, it consults with the donor(s) regarding any specific wishes they might have for the property and considers these wishes in the management planning process.

Generally, management plans will address the following matters:

- purpose and objectives for the site;
- background information including the site history;
- First Nations input and engagement;
- environmental inventory;
- management issues such as the extent and nature of protection required, appropriate uses and level of use, research guidelines, risk management, signage, and special needs at the site;
- strategies and actions to achieve the purpose and objectives for the site and to address management issues and needs; and
- traditional use and protection of cultural/archaeological sites.

Islands Trust Conservancy will seek assistance from partners to implement management plans and, where appropriate, will request partners to enter into contracts with Islands Trust Conservancy regarding management operations and responsibilities.

Islands Trust Conservancy monitors all of its lands and covenanted areas regularly to assess the character and key features of the sites, evaluate the effectiveness of the management program, identify any new issues that need to be addressed, and identify and respond to any breaches to the terms of a covenant or trespasses on protected lands.

Islands Trust Conservancy will request, where necessary, that local trust committees or island municipalities rezone Nature Reserves and Nature Sanctuaries to the most appropriate designation and zone for nature protection when it is reviewing Official Community Plans and/or Land Use Bylaws and will work with local trust committees or island municipalities to determine the most appropriate designation and zone.

Disposition of Property

Islands Trust Conservancy intends to maintain its protected areas in perpetuity. However, there are circumstances where Islands Trust Conservancy will consider transferring property (or interests in a property, such as a conservation covenant) it has acquired to another agency.

If Islands Trust Conservancy receives an unrestricted donation of land with little or no ecological value, and if no other barriers to disposition exist, Islands Trust Conservancy may sell the land and place the proceeds in a fund of Islands Trust Conservancy to be decided by the board.

If Islands Trust Conservancy receives a proposal to transfer an ecologically significant property (or an interest in land) to another conservation agency, and determines that there is no legal barrier to transfer and that the proposal is worthy of consideration, Islands Trust Conservancy will direct staff to conduct and prepare a thorough assessment of the proposal for consideration by the board.

Islands Trust Conservancy will only dispose of a fee simple title or an interest in ecologically significant land if it can be determined that the recipient agency has the expertise and long-term financial resources to manage the property or interest as well as, or better than, the board. If the land, or interest in land, was acquired as an Ecological Gift, Islands Trust Conservancy will notify Environment and Climate Change Canada of the disposition.

The board will consider the following tools to ensure that any transferred land and associated values will be protected in perpetuity for the residents of the Trust Area and the people of British Columbia:

- a) Islands Trust Conservancy may transfer land on condition that it be used for conservation purposes, or transfer land as determinable fee simple providing that the land will revert to Islands Trust Conservancy if the land is no longer being used for the specified purposes.
- b) Islands Trust Conservancy may register a conservation covenant on title to land before a transfer, to ensure the protection of the land's ecological values, provided an appropriate agency can be found to hold the covenant, and the recipient agency has the legal authority to accept the encumbrance.

Section 3: Communication, Cooperation and Liaison

Communication

Islands Trust Conservancy board members and staff conduct activities in a manner that enhances Islands Trust Conservancy's reputation as an organization that works proactively, constructively and collaboratively to advance Islands Trust Conservancy Three-Year Plan.

Islands Trust Conservancy's land conservation negotiations are confidential and will be treated as such by all board members and staff of the Islands Trust Conservancy. Generally, information about on-going covenant and land donation projects will not be discussed or announced publicly until the project is complete, unless the project is associated with a development application, or the applicant has specified that the project may be discussed publically.

Collaboration

Islands Trust Conservancy works collaboratively with other agencies, First Nations and individuals to promote conservation in the Islands Trust Area. Staff and Board members participate regularly in partnerships with various levels of government, non-profit organizations, community groups and other agencies to further preservation of nature in the Islands Trust Area. Islands Trust Conservancy wishes to maintain good communications with First Nations and other agencies working in the region. The approach to First Nations engagement will be consistent with Islands Trust First Nations Engagement Principles Policy 6.1.1.

Advocacy

Islands Trust Conservancy will ensure that its advocacy positions are consistent with Islands Trust Conservancy Three-Year Plan and Islands Trust Advocacy Policy 6.10.3 and are supported by a resolution of the board. Advocacy letters from Islands Trust Conservancy to elected officials will be signed by a board member.

5. CONCLUSION

Guided by the Regional Conservation Plan, Islands Trust Conservancy will continue to pursue its mandate in accordance with its policies and in partnership with individuals, island communities and First Nations, as well as local, regional, provincial and national conservation and government agencies.

Islands Trust Conservancy will continue to strive for organizational excellence, and to eliminate barriers to its continued success. With excellent working relationships with the island-based and regional land trusts and strong connections to local and regional governments, the Islands Trust Conservancy is well positioned to take a lead role in the protection of the ecologically significant areas found in Canada's islands in the Salish Sea.

Islands Trust Conservancy looks forward to the next three years of conservation successes, inspired by the generosity and perseverance of our partners, collaborators and supporters, and the endless beauty of fragile island ecosystems.

APPENDIX A: List of Islands Trust Conservancy protected areas, by fiscal year

FISCAL YEAR	PROPERTY NAME	HECTARES PROTECTED	ISLAND	
1992-1993				
Nov. 1992	Scott Covenant Lands	1.00	Salt Spring	
Dec. 1992	Inner Island Nature Reserve	9.40	Denman	
Dec. 1992	Deep Ridge Nature Reserve	14.20	Salt Spring	
			Hectares Protected:	24.60
1993-1994				
Jun. 1993	Enchanted Forest Regional Park Covenant	4.20	South Pender	
Dec. 1993	Coats Millstone Nature Reserve	0.25	Gabriola	
Feb. 1994	Cunningham Covenant	12.17	Salt Spring	
Feb. 1994	Cyril Cunningham Nature Reserve	3.95	Salt Spring	
			Hectares Protected:	20.57
1995-1996				
Jun. 1995	Medicine Beach Nature Sanctuary	8.00	North Pender	
			Hectares Protected:	8.00
1996-1997				
Jun. 1996	Lower Mt. Erskine Nature Reserve	22.00	Salt Spring	
Mar. 1997	Tate Covenant	72.20	Salt Spring	
			Hectares Protected:	94.20
1997-1998				
Jan. 1998	Cable Bay Covenant	61.51	Galiano	
Jan. 1998	Kwel Nature Sanctuary	21.00	Lasqueti	
			Hectares Protected:	82.51
1998-1999				
Jun. 1998	South Winchelsea Island Covenant	10.28	South Winchelsea	
Mar. 1999	Reid Chapman Covenant	0.54	Gabriola	
Mar. 1999	Ledingham Covenant	1.10	North Pender	
			Hectares Protected:	11.92
1999-2000				
Jun. 1999	Retreat Island Covenant	1.60	Galiano	
Jul. 1999	McIntyre Covenant	1.20	Bowen	
Nov. 1999	Dennis Covenant	0.40	North Pender	
Dec. 1999	Singing Woods Nature Reserve	9.00	Bowen	
Dec. 1999	Terminal Creek Covenant North	0.30	Bowen	
Dec. 1999	Terminal Creek Covenant South	0.85	Bowen	
Jan. 2000	Brooks Point Regional Park Covenant	4.00	South Pender	
			Hectares Protected:	17.35

2000-2001

Dec. 2000	Floating Cattails Marsh Covenant	1.92	Saturna	
Dec. 2000	Strand-Dohan Covenant	0.52	Saturna	
Feb. 2001	Trincomali Nature Sanctuary	12.00	Galiano	
			Hectares Protected:	14.44

2001-2002

Jun. 2001	Lindsay Dickson Nature Reserve	52.40	Denman	
Jul. 2001	Green Frog Farm Covenant	24.30	Galiano	
Jul. 2001	Longini Covenant	8.00	Galiano	
Aug. 2001	Burnt Snag Covenant	6.60	Sidney	
Aug. 2001	Dragonfly Pond Covenant	4.40	Sidney	
Aug. 2001	Kingfisher Pond Covenant	1.40	Sidney	
Aug. 2001	Sandbanks Covenant	3.01	Sidney	
Aug. 2001	Sunrise Covenant	0.47	Sidney	
Aug. 2001	Windthrow Covenant	26.60	Sidney	
Aug. 2001	Woodpecker Pond Covenant	0.94	Sidney	
Oct. 2001	Lot 31 Covenant	67.43	Salt Spring	
Jan. 2002	Ruffed Grouse Covenant	11.5	Salt Spring	
Feb. 2002	Ruby Alton Nature Reserve	1.60	Salt Spring	
Feb. 2002	Horton Bayviary Nature Reserve	0.52	Mayne	
			Hectares Protected:	209.17

2002-2003

Aug. 2002	Keough Covenant	0.66	Salt Spring	
Sept. 2002	Where 'Ere You Walk Covenant	0.34	Salt Spring	
Dec. 2002	Winter Wren Wood Covenant	2.50	Denman	
Jan. 2003	Loretta's Wood Nature Reserve**	40.00	North Pender	-40.00
Mar. 2003	Manzanita Ridge Covenant	20.00	Salt Spring	
			Hectares Protected:	63.50

2003-2004

Dec. 2003	Cottonwood Creek Covenant	4.31	North Pender	
Dec. 2003	Treetop Covenant	10.22	Sidney	
Feb. 2004	Old Point Farm Covenant	8.89	Saturna	
			Hectares Protected:	23.42

2004-2005

May 2004	Laughlin Lake Covenant	11.00	Galiano	
May 2004	Sharp-tailed Snake Covenant	0.03	North Pender	
Jan. 2005	Brigade Bay Bluffs Nature Reserve	5.14	Gambier	
Jan. 2006	Long Bay Wetland Nature Reserve	38.00	Gambier	
			Hectares Protected:	54.17

**transfer of Loretta's Wood to Parks Canada, March 2005

2005-2006

Mar. 2005	Meadow Valley Covenant	1.40	Thetis
Nov. 2005	Bachmann Covenant	2.07	Gabriola
Oct. 2005	Shacum Covenant	4.00	Salt Spring
Oct. 2005	Walter Bay NAPTEP Covenant	2.38	Salt Spring
Oct. 2005	Owls Call NAPTEP Covenant	3.31	Salt Spring
Oct. 2005	Leader NAPTEP Covenant	1.80	Salt Spring
Oct. 2005	Arthur Lineham NAPTEP Covenant	23.69	Salt Spring
Dec. 2005	Mount Trematon Nature Reserve	57.87	Lasqueti
Jan. 2006	Morrison Marsh Nature Reserve	51.73	Denman
			Hectares Protected: 148.25

2006-2007

May 2006	Vogt Covenant	29.74	Salt Spring
May 2006	Elder Cedar (S'ul-hween X'pey) Nature Reserve	64.67	Gabriola
Jul. 2006	Little D'Arcy NAPTEP Covenant	8.15	North Pender LTA
Oct. 2006	Barrineau NAPTEP Covenant	1.76	Galiano
Nov. 2006	David Otter Nature Reserve	3.04	Bowen
			Hectares Protected: 107.36

2007-2008

Aug. 2007	Oscar's Landing Covenant	0.69	North Pender
Aug. 2007	Richardson NAPTEP Covenant	1.75	Salt Spring
Oct. 2007	My Whim NAPTEP Covenant	2.20	Salt Spring
Oct. 2007	Polden NAPTEP Covenant	3.39	Salt Spring
			Hectares Protected: 8.03

2008-2009

May. 2008	Mount Artaban Nature Reserve	107.00	Gambier
Oct. 2008	Wennanec NAPTEP Covenant	1.64	Salt Spring
Oct. 2008	Frog Haven NAPTEP Covenant	3.60	Salt Spring
Oct. 2008	Woodwinds NAPTEP Covenant	0.76	North Pender
Oct. 2008	Lot 16 NAPTEP Covenant	0.31	North Pender
Oct. 2008	Lot A NAPTEP Covenant	0.95	North Pender
			Hectares Protected: 114.26

2009-2010

Oct. 2009	Steil's Woods NAPTEP Covenant	1.49	North Pender
Nov. 2009	Westbourne NAPTEP Covenant	1.69	Galiano
Mar. 2010	McRae NAPTEP Covenant	7.37	Gabriola
			Hectares Protected: 10.55

2010-2011

Jul. 2012	Fairy Fen Nature Reserve	18.10	Bowen
Oct. 2010	Frog Song Forest Covenant	1.78	North Pender
			Hectares Protected: 19.88

2011-2012

Nov. 2011	John Osland Nature Reserve	66.37	Lasqueti
Aug. 2011	Lot 44 (Ogden Road)	0.76	North Pender
Dec. 2011	Great Beaver Swamp Covenant	10.20	Galiano
Sep. 2011	Lot 45 (Ogden Road) Covenant	0.86	North Pender
Oct. 2011	Lot 16 addition NAPTEP Covenant	0.18	North Pender
Oct. 2011	Garry Oaks NAPTEP Covenant	0.50	North Pender
			Hectares Protected: 78.87

2012-2013

Oct. 2012	Nighthawk Hill NAPTEP Covenant	0.91	North Pender
Oct. 2012	Myra Powers NAPTEP Covenant	4.69	Hornby
Oct. 2012	Valens Brook Nature Reserve	3.74	Denman
Dec. 2012	Laughlin Lake Nature Reserve addition	0.50	Galiano
			Hectares Protected: 9.84

2013-2014

Apr. 2013	Mount Tuam Covenant	13.40	Salt Spring
Apr. 2013	Vanilla Leaf Land Nature Reserve	40.50	Galiano
May 2013	Burren's Acres Nature Reserve	2.03	Gabriola
Sep. 2013	Stanley Point Covenant (Lot 21)	1.31	North Pender
			Hectares Protected: 57.24

2014-2015

Sep. 2014	Old Divide NAPTEP Covenant	0.81	Salt Spring
Oct. 2014	McFadden Creek Nature Sanctuary	5.09	Salt Spring
Feb. 2015	Goldenback Fern Covenant	0.29	Salt Spring
			Hectares Protected: 6.19

2015-2016

May 2015	Finlay Lake Covenant	6.73	Galiano
Oct. 2015	Wallace Point NAPTEP Covenant	1.63	North Pender
Nov. 2015	Clam Bay Farm Covenant	8.26	North Pender
			Hectares Protected: 16.62

2016-2017

Aug. 2016	Fischer Covenant	6.12	Hornby
Feb. 2017	Moore Hill Nature Reserve	21.04	Thetis
Mar. 2017	Isabella Point Covenant	2.15	Salt Spring
			Hectares Protected: 29.31

2017-2018

Sep. 2017	Settlement Lands Covenant	63.25	Denman
Jan. 2018	Fairyslipper Forest Nature Reserve	16.60	Thetis
			Hectares Protected: 79.85

2018-2019

Sep. 2018	Swift Family Link Island NAPTEP Covenant	19.30	Link	
Dec. 2018	Valens Brook Nature Reserve Addition	2.55	Denman	
Hectares Protected:				21.85

2019-2020

Jul. 2019	Salish View Nature Reserve	11.47	Lasqueti	
Hectares Protected:				11.47

2020-2021

Dec. 2020	Sandy Beach Nature Reserve	3.30	Keats	
Feb. 2021	Lisa Baile Nature Reserve	4.05	North Pender	
Hectares Protected:				7.35

2021-2022

Jul. 2021	Earl Batista Covenant	0.86	Salt Spring	
Sep 2021	Saturnina Island Nature Sanctuary (Lease)	4.05	Saturnina	
Oct. 2021	Woodpecker Forest NAPTEP Covenant	3.73	North Pender	
Oct. 2021	Moss Mountain NAPTEP Covenant	45.43	Salt Spring	
Hectares Protected:				54.07

2022-2023

April 2022	Link Island Nature Sanctuary	21.45	Link	
Hectares Protected:				21.45

Total Hectares Protected: 1366.7

Notes: Properties called Nature Reserves or Nature Sanctuaries are owned or leased by Islands Trust Conservancy.

NAPTEP - Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program

APPENDIX B: Complete List of Islands Trust Conservancy Policies

BYLAW #2 [A Bylaw to Regulate the Meetings of the Islands Trust Conservancy Board and Committees of the Islands Trust Conservancy Board](#)

POLICIES Policies are online at islandstrust.bc.ca/about-us/accountability/policies/

SECTION 1 ORGANIZATIONAL

- 1.1 Islands Trust Conservancy Board Member Appointments, Reappointments and Elections
- 1.2 Board and Committee Elections
- 1.3 Islands Trust Conservancy Board Roles and Responsibilities
- 1.4 Board Standards of Conduct
- 1.5 Board Member Attendance and Participation and Member Removal
- 1.6 Annual Budget Submissions
- 1.7 Fundraising and Donations
- 1.9 Funds For Partnership Acquisition Projects Policy

SECTION 2 LAND TRANSACTIONS AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

- 2.1 Board Approval of Projects and Transactions
- 2.2 Assessing Conservation Proposals
- 2.3 Acquisition and Management of Land
- 2.4 Conservation Covenants
- 2.5 Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Covenants
- 2.6 Heritage Forest Land Acquisition and Protection
- 2.7 Disposition of Land
- 2.8 Covenant Enforcement
- 2.9 Management Plan Costs

SECTION 3 COMMUNICATIONS, COOPERATION AND LIAISON

- 3.1 Islands Trust Conservancy and Local Planning Services Coordination
- 3.2 Communicating Information Regarding Covenant and Acquisition Projects
- 3.3 Relationships with External Groups
- 3.4 Islands Trust Conservancy Role in Partnership Acquisition Projects
- 3.5 Consulting Trust Council, Local Trust Committees, Island Municipalities, and Local Trustees on Islands Trust Conservancy Board Matters
- 3.6 Research
- 3.7 Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy – Routinely Released Information
- 3.8 Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy
- 3.9 Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy – Designation of Fees



BRIEFING

To: ITC/EC Liaison Meeting **For the Meeting of:** July 13, 2022
From: Staff **Date Prepared:** June 22, 2022
SUBJECT: Species at Risk Program Update

PURPOSE: To provide Islands Trust Conservancy Board and the Executive Committee with an update regarding the Species at Risk Program in order to provide background for discussion of a trustee learning program following the October 15, 2022 civic elections.

BACKGROUND:

The Islands Trust Area contains one of the highest levels of biodiversity in British Columbia and is home to more than 140 red-listed (endangered or threatened) species (24% of the provincial total) and more than 135 blue-listed (of concern of becoming extirpated or extinct) species (14% of the provincial total). There are also 50 red-listed ecological communities and 22 blue-listed ecological communities.

Species at Risk (SAR) are important indicators of the health of natural systems. They are the species most sensitive to degradation of habitats and are the first to be lost when a natural system is not in balance. They are also species that are frequently at the edges of their range and as our climate shifts, they will be important to ensuring biodiversity in the new ecosystems that will emerge. If they are lost, the biodiversity of the future is threatened.

In 2017, following presentation by federal and provincial staff on species at risk, Trust Council passed the following resolution:

TC-2017-029

MOVED by Trustee Stamford, SECONDED by Trustee Grove,

that Trust Council request that the Trust Fund Board [Islands Trust Conservancy Board] investigate options for increased use of federal or provincial stewardship agreements for species at risk in the Islands Trust Area.

The Islands Trust Conservancy (ITC) Species at Risk Program resulted from conversations between Islands Trust and Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) staff regarding federal stewardship agreements and funding opportunities.

Species at Risk Program Funding:

The Species at Risk Program was launched in July 2020, and is funded by a grant awarded to ITC from ECCC through the Canada Nature Fund, Species at Risk Stream for Priority Places. The original grant awarded was \$597,000 for a three-year SAR Program (July 2020 – March 2023). This amount was subsequently increased to \$643,000 in May 2021. In May 2022, ECCC offered to increase year 3 funding by \$25,000 (agreement amendment pending), bringing the total first 3 years to \$668,000. Also in May, Environment and Climate Change Canada offered to extend the funding another three years to March 31, 2026, bringing the total project funding for the 6 years to \$1,328,000. The ITC Board agreed to accept the funding offers and extend the program at its May 24, 2022 meeting, passing the following resolution:

ITC-2022-026**It was MOVED and SECONDED,**

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board direct staff to draft and sign an amended contribution agreement with Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), extending the existing Species at Risk Program funding until March 31, 2026, including a budget increase for the 2022/23 fiscal year of \$25,000 and the addition of \$220,000/year in funding for the next three fiscal years (2023/24 through 2025/26).

Program Objectives and Actions to Date:

1. Create framework to deliver a Species at Risk (SAR) Program
 - Hired SAR Coordinator & 2021 Summer Coop Student
 - Completed SAR Program work plan, updated charter, finalized budget
 - Managed SAR projects on ITC Properties
 - Hosted a [“Gathering for SAR” Workshop](#), March 17, 2022 for 70 participants
 - Secured contractors to support staff in early engagement
 - Delivered pre-workshop survey to inform agenda development
 - Received positive feedback from participants in post-event survey
2. Coordinate the compilation & analysis of SAR data for the Islands Trust Area
 - Added and updated SAR data on TAPIS (internal property information and mapping system)
 - Confirmed through workshop/survey that there is a desire for ITC to be a hub for data and information sharing on SAR in the Islands Trust Area. Staff will review this option with ITC Board.
3. Inventory, monitor & manage SAR & SAR habitat in ITC protected areas
 - Conducted SAR surveys and monitored SAR:
 - Sharp-tailed Snake: five conservation areas (Salt Spring, Galiano, North Pender, Thetis)
 - Western Screech Owl: four conservation areas (Link Is., Lasqueti, Thetis)
 - Bats, including Little Brown Myotis: four conservation areas (Salt Spring, Thetis)
 - Pollinators and rare plants (multiple): one conservation area (Salt Spring)
 - Wetland surveys (plants, invertebrates, birds): one conservation area (Gambier)
 - Restored Garry oak and wetland habitats on four conservation areas (Lasqueti, Sidney, Salt Spring) and removed invasive species on fifteen conservation areas
 - Planted over 12,000 native plants and sowed over 2 million seeds
 - Installed habitat structures to increase habitat opportunities for SAR (Denman, Links Is., Salt Spring, Lasqueti)
4. Deliver SAR outreach to landowners & Islands Trust staff and elected officials
 - Partnered with Gabriola Nature Trails & Trust (GaLTT) to deliver outreach materials and present a webinar to Gabriola Island landowners with land identified as having ecological values for GaLTT’s new Nature Stewards Program
 - Promoted SAR-related projects and information on social media, the Heron newsletter and on the website
 - Engagement and outreach to over 280 land managers, SAR biologists, local conservancies, First Nations and all levels of government in the Islands Trust Area through advertising the workshop and survey
5. Develop relationships with First Nations for more effective SAR Program delivery
 - Contracted Naut'sa mawt Tribal Council to provide First Nations engagement opportunities and assist ITC staff in ensuring the “Gathering for SAR” Workshop was inclusive of Indigenous audiences
 - Identified a scope for mapping of cultural features on ITC Properties through the Islands Trust’s contract with Inlailawatash – a First Nations company that provides cultural and renewable resource services.

6. Increase land securement with a focus on SAR protection & recovery
 - Conducted land survey, ecological baseline and appraisal for Moss Mountain NAPTEP covenant
 - Contributed funds to register two additional conservation covenants and the Saturnina Island Lease

Sensitive ecosystems and SAR habitat protected, including three provincially red-listed and critically imperilled (G1) communities, Common Nighthawk habitat, *Species at Risk Act* listed species such as Western Grebe, Phantom Orchid, Little Brown Myotis, Barn Swallow and more.

Internal Learning Program:

The funding agreement with ECCC includes funding to promote internal learning about Species at Risk to trustees and staff. ITC staff are proposing a:

1. one-hour learning session with new and returning trustees at Trust Council early in the 2022-2026 term and are seeking feedback from ITC and EC regarding the timing and feasibility of such a learning session;
2. learning session with planners and Islands Trust staff in the fall of 2022; and
3. speaker series to share information on SAR topics of interest (open to trustees, staff and the public), with possible added series of “field sessions” that will showcase Species at Risk projects in the Islands Trust Area.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. 2021-2023 SAR Program Project Charter
2. [Gathering for SAR: Workshop Summary Report \(link\)](#)

FOLLOW-UP:

Staff will follow up as directed regarding the proposed one-hour learning session with new and returning trustees at Trust Council early in the 2022-2026 term.

Islands Trust Conservancy plans the following activities for the 2022/23 fiscal year:

1. Expand SAR Program goals and work planning to 2026
2. Continue to build relationships with First Nations and seek out partnership opportunities
3. Continue to build relationships with local conservancies, governments and others working with SAR in the Islands Trust Area
4. Continue work to conserve and manage lands with Critical Habitat for SAR
5. Develop a SAR data information and data sharing plan for the Islands Trust Area
6. Consider establishing a working group to address challenges related to species and ecosystems at risk (including culturally significant species and ecosystems)
7. Provide SAR educational opportunities to Islands Trust staff and trustees
8. Coordinate and produce a Speaker Series to share information on SAR topics of interest, with possible added series of “field sessions”
9. Create a database of expertise (by topic and geographic area)
10. Consider options for an online interactive map showing who is working where, on what projects

Prepared By: Wendy Tyrrell, Species at Risk Program Coordinator

Reviewed By/Date: Kate Emmings, ITC Manager / June 25, 2022
Clare Frater, Director, Trust Area Services / June 27, 2022

Species at Risk Program - Project Charter

Islands Trust Conservancy

Date: November 23, 2021

Purpose To implement a Species at Risk program for the Islands Trust Conservancy that contributes to the recovery of species at risk and the conservation of wildlife and habitat in the Islands Trust Area.

Background In June 2017 Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) presented to Trust Council regarding the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) and local government responsibilities in the Islands Trust Area (ITA). ECCC staff described federal government responsibilities on private and public lands under SARA. Trust Council requested that Islands Trust Conservancy (ITC) investigate options for increased use of federal or provincial stewardship agreements for species at risk in the ITA. Through discussions with ECCC, in July 2020, the Islands Trust Conservancy (ITC) was awarded a grant of \$597,000. On May 4, 2021 the grant was increased to \$643,000 and is payable up until March 31, 2023. Funds are provided through the Canada Nature Fund, Species at Risk Stream for Priority Places, to implement a Species at Risk (SAR) Program in the ITA.

Objectives

- Create framework to deliver a SAR Program
- Coordinate the compilation & analysis of SAR data for the ITA
- Inventory, monitor & manage SAR & SAR habitat in ITC protected areas
- Deliver SAR outreach to landowners & Islands Trust staff and officials
- Develop relationships with First Nations for more effective SAR Program delivery
- Increase land securement with a focus on SAR protection & recovery

In Scope

- Additions to ITC staffing
- SAR data consolidation & analysis
- SAR monitoring & inventory in ITC protected areas
- SAR management on ITC protected areas
- Outreach to Islands Trust elected officials & staff
- Focussed SAR outreach
- Land securement costs
- First Nations Engagement

Out of Scope

- Work on lands where ITC and Islands Trust have no legal interest
- General SAR outreach programs
- Enhanced collaboration with Island Conservancies and biologists for SAR
- Funding for direct land acquisition (i.e., land cost)

Workplan Overview

Deliverable/Milestone	Date
Program initiation	July 22, 2020
Program Implementation	August 2020—February 2023
Hire SAR Program Coordinator	July, 2021
Program Planning	October, 2021
Mid-program evaluation	December 2021 / January 2022
Project Wrap Up and Evaluation	March 31, 2023

Project Team

ITC Manager	Project Champion
SAR Program Coordinator	Project Manager
Property Management Specialist / Covenant Management Specialist	Property Management Leads
Ecosystem Protection Specialist	Land Securement Lead
Communications Specialist / Outreach Specialist	Outreach/ Communications Leads
Admin. Services (Islands Trust)	Mapping & Admin .

Approved by:

ITC Board

Endorsement:

Res. #: 2021-051

Date: Nov. 23, 2021

Budget

Sources: ECCC (\$643,000) & Islands Trust—ITC Budget (\$958,120)

Item	Cost
Salaries	\$864,448
Property Management	\$138,668
Land Securement	\$106,705
Species Inventories and Mapping	\$198,588
Outreach/Communications/First Nations Liaison	\$69,900
Admin./Equipment/Travel/Other	222,811
Total	\$1,601,120



BRIEFING

To: ITC/EC Liaison Meeting **For the Meeting of:** July 13, 2022
From: Staff **Date Prepared:** June 28, 2022
SUBJECT: **Biologist Support for Regional Planning Committee**

PURPOSE: To provide background information to support a discussion about biologist support for Regional Planning Committee (RPC).

BACKGROUND:

At its June 8, 2022 meeting, Executive Committee (EC) reviewed the proposed agenda for the ITC/EC Liaison meeting and requested the addition of an item regarding biologist support for RPC. ITC staff have provided an overview of current support and some discussion of needs. This information is preliminary and doesn't include a robust investigation of the needs of LPS or RPC.

Current ITC Support for LPS/RPC

ITC staff do not currently have direction from the ITC Board to support LPS or RPC. ITC staff manage projects and programs identified in the Regional Conservation Plan and the ITC Five-Year Plan. Many of these projects and programs offer benefits to LPS and RPC; however, ITC staff do not provide analysis or support to LPS or RPC to determine how ITC projects and programs might support LPS and RPC priorities. ITC communicates about its projects through briefings and regular ITC Reports to local trust committees, Bowen Island Municipality and Trust Council.

ITC staff review referrals from local trust committees (LTCs), Trust Council and Trust Council committees as outlined in existing policy and agreements. When reviewing referrals, ITC filters its responses based on interests identified in the Regional Conservation Plan and impacts to ITC managed conservation areas. For example, a referral of a Land Use Bylaw (LUB) will be reviewed primarily for impacts to ITC managed conservation areas. ITC does not provide a full review of impacts of the LUB on the ecology of the island.

Biologist Support for RPC and LPS

Planners and trustees frequently seek professional guidance regarding impacts of applications and projects to the ecology of the islands. Below is a timeline of professional support for Local Planning Services:

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Pre 2007 | Prior to November 2007, the Ecosystem Protection Specialist (EPS) position included a 0.25 FTE allocation to assist Local Planning Services with applications and OCP/LUB work. At that time, the EPS assessed conservation proposals, did conservation planning, negotiated covenants and administered property management, in addition to its support of LPS. An example of project support offered to LTCs at that time is the technical support provided to the North Pender Local Trust Committee to bring in Development Permit Areas for sensitive ecosystems. |
| 2008 | ITC work had grown and the 0.25 FTE for LPS was removed from the EPS job description. No added support was provided to planners and the EPS continued to provide some support, where possible, and where there was overlap with the goals of the Regional |

Conservation Plan. There was continued demand, but no clear support for LPS staff and trustees.

2010 (approx.) Trust Council increased the contract funding available to LPS with \$40,000 earmarked for “Scientific and Technical” contracts. The intent was to use the funding to provide expertise to planners for a variety of technical needs. The budget wasn’t fully used and much of it went to surplus or to other costs.

April, 2014 The Scientific and Technical budget was reduced to \$15,000.

April, 2021 The Scientific and Technical budget was eliminated.

Professional Biologist Support for LPS and RPC

ITC staff are able to provide some basic resources and training to LPS staff regarding the ecology of the Islands Trust Area, but do not have capacity to act as a significant resource to LPS and do not provide any support to RPC. A full review of the needs of LPS and RPC has not been conducted, but the observed needs identified by ITC staff include:

1. Acting as an general information resource to planners, including coordination of training;
2. Coordination and management of strategic projects, such as eelgrass mapping and forest contiguity mapping;
3. Participation in and support of OCP and LUB review teams;
4. Support for LTC projects;
5. Application reviews as needed for LTCs;
6. Review of professional reports submitted to LTCs by applicants; and
7. Support for integration of Islands Trust priorities for major projects (i.e. overlap of First Nations, Water Conservation and Ecological priorities).

Staff have not been in contact with Bowen Island Municipality to determine if there might be similar needs for staff and Council on Bowen.

ATTACHMENT(S): None.

FOLLOW-UP: Staff will follow up as directed.

Prepared By: Kate Emmings, Manager, Islands Trust Conservancy