

Share Your Views

on the

Draft Islands Trust Policy Statement

islands 2050

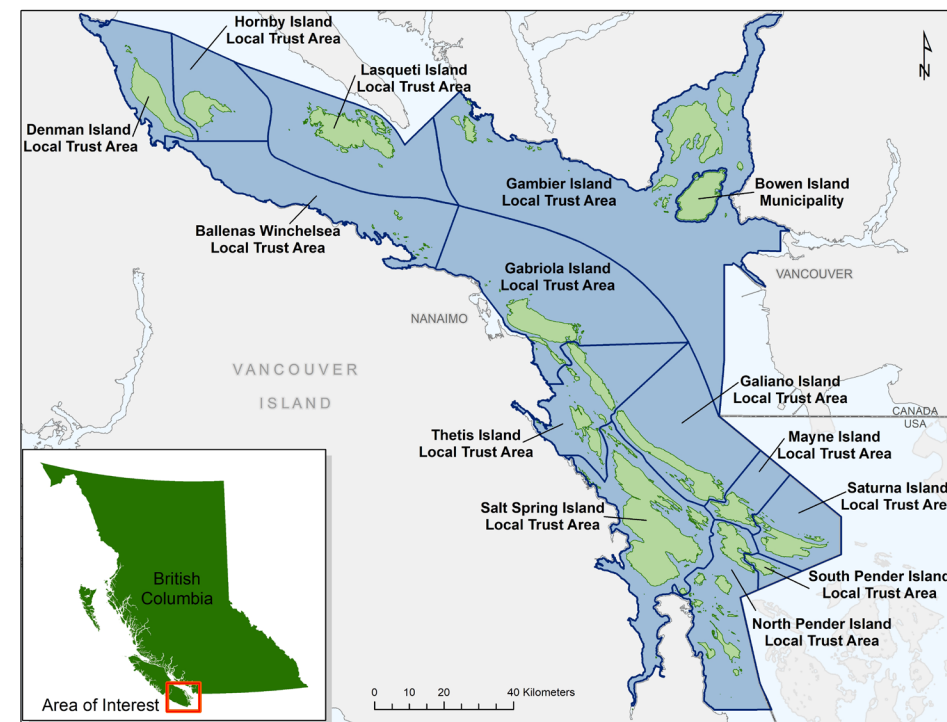
PRESERVING AND PROTECTING OVER 450 ISLANDS AND SURROUNDING WATERS IN THE SALISH SEA

What is Islands Trust?

Islands Trust is a special-purpose government responsible for planning and land use management decisions in the Islands Trust Area, which is comprised of 13 major islands and more than 450 smaller islands and the surrounding waters in the Strait of Georgia and Howe Sound.

Islands Trust was created in 1974 through the *Islands Trust Act* with a legislated mandate (object):

The object of the trust is 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.



What is the Policy Statement?

The Islands Trust Policy Statement is a document required by provincial legislation that sets out the Islands Trust Council's principles and its policy framework for planning and land use management within the lands and waters of the Island Trust Area.

It guides the development of the official community plans and land use bylaws of local trust committees and Bowen Island Municipality, and the development of Trust Council's Strategic Plan.

It is the guiding document that Trust Council uses to carry out the preserve and protect mandate for this special part of British Columbia.

Why is the Policy Statement being updated?

The Islands Trust Policy Statement is being updated for the first time in more than three decades so that Islands Trust can better manage today's challenges and opportunities. The draft Policy Statement puts a needed focus on reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, the housing needs of current and future residents, and responding to climate change. The draft Policy Statement reaffirms the Islands Trust's enduring mandate to preserve and protect this unique region.

How was the draft Policy Statement developed?

In 2019, Islands Trust launched the Policy Statement Amendment Project—**Islands 2050**—to update the Policy Statement. The draft Policy Statement was developed through public engagement, and input from Indigenous Governing Bodies and government agencies. The resulting document reflects a broad range of perspectives and is now ready for your feedback.

Where can I learn more about the draft Policy Statement?

Read more online at:
www.islandstrust.bc.ca/programs/islands-2050/



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How will the draft Policy Statement impact me?

The Islands Trust Policy Statement is not a set of regulations. It does not change how land in the Islands Trust Area may be used under existing regulations. The Policy Statement contains policies that local trust committees and island municipalities will use to guide decisions about future policy and regulatory change at the local level, and that Island Trust Council will use it to guide decisions at a regional level.

The Policy Statement *may* affect how land in the Islands Trust Area can be used in the future when a local trust committee or island municipality amends its bylaws to bring official community plans and land use bylaws into alignment with the goals of the Policy Statement.

Does the draft Policy Statement enable the Islands Trust to preserve and protect the natural environment?

While the draft Policy Statement includes policies meant to help address community challenges related to housing, it retains its focus on protecting the ecosystems of the Islands Trust Area.

How will the draft Policy Statement help with housing challenges on the islands?

The draft Policy Statement offers support for islands to move beyond the large single-detached dwellings that characterize most of the current housing stock toward a range of housing types that better reflect today's affordability challenges and the diverse needs within island communities.

How will the draft Policy Statement advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples?

In 2019, Islands Trust Council passed a Reconciliation Declaration through which the organization commits “to establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples.” The draft Policy Statement addresses matters of importance to Indigenous Governing Bodies and Indigenous Peoples such as protection of Indigenous heritage and culturally significant areas, ecosystem protection, housing, and commits the organization to ongoing engagement.

How will the draft Policy Statement help address climate change on the islands?

The draft Policy Statement is full of policies that direct local trust committees and island municipalities to protect the health of island ecosystems, which is one of the best ways to reduce the impacts of climate change on island communities.

However, we also know that climate change is already happening, and that raises risks for community members. To respond to these risks, the draft encourages local trust committees and island municipalities to identify and restrict development in areas that are more likely to experience flooding, sea level rise, erosion, or wildfires. It directs local trust committees and island municipalities to ensure that watersheds are protected and freshwater resources are maintained. The draft also supports planning for transportation networks that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

How will the draft Policy Statement be implemented?

The Policy Statement helps ensure that local planning decisions on each island support the overall vision of Islands Trust. Section 15 of the *Islands Trust Act* requires the Islands Trust Executive Committee to assess whether proposed amendments to official community plans and land use bylaws are consistent with the Policy Statement. At the regional level, the Policy Statement guides Islands Trust Council in setting priorities.

What’s next for the draft Policy Statement?

Islands Trust Council gave first reading to the draft Policy Statement on July 29, 2025. Phase 4 of public engagement on the Policy Statement has begun, and will be open until February 2026. During that time, Islands Trust will also be referring the draft Policy Statement to Indigenous Governing Bodies, government agencies, and other organizations for their input. After that, Islands Trust Council will consider all feedback received to inform further amendments to the draft Policy Statement before advancing it further.

Steps In The Process



Goals and Policy Directions

The draft Policy Statement is organized around five goals. Directive policies are outlined within each goal area and can be viewed in the full draft Policy Statement.



GOAL 1: Advance Reconciliation

The policies to achieve this goal aim to acknowledge the history, legacy and continuing relationship of Indigenous Peoples to the area since time immemorial, to recognize and respect the interests of Indigenous Governing Bodies regarding planning and land use management decisions that impact their territories, and to build foundations for collaborative governance and shared decision making.

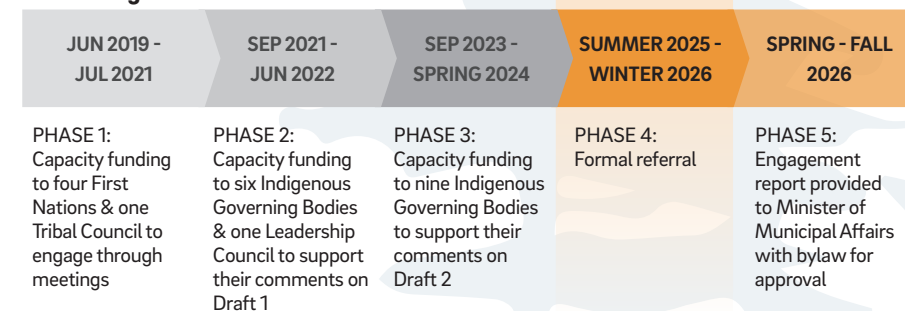
GOAL 2: Preserve and Protect Indigenous Cultural Heritage and Culturally Significant Areas, Sites, and Species

The policies to achieve this goal lay out general types of Indigenous cultural heritage and culturally significant areas, sites, and species that should be identified and protected in each local planning area; this should be guided by Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous Governing Bodies and Indigenous Knowledge Holders and undertaken in a culturally sensitive manner that respects protocols around the sharing of Indigenous Knowledge.

GOAL 3: Preserve and Protect Healthy and Biodiverse Ecosystems

The policies to achieve this goal aim to identify and protect key ecosystem types and characteristics that safeguard biodiversity and promote resilience to climate change.

Engaging with Indigenous Governing Bodies



GOAL 4: Foster Sustainable, Inclusive, and Resilient Communities

The policies to achieve this goal support the preservation and protection of unique island character and aim to foster sustainable, inclusive, rural and resilient island communities.

GOAL 5: Foster Sustainable Stewardship of Lands and Waters

The policies to achieve this goal promote sustainable land and water use to sustain the long-term health of ecosystems and sustainability of freshwater.



Get Involved!



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Your input on the draft Policy Statement matters!

The multi-year process to amend the Policy Statement marks the first comprehensive update in over 30 years, and we want to know - have we got it right?

Share your views!

Visit the Islands 2050 webpage to:
Complete the online survey

Attend an on-island engagement event (where offered)

Participate in the virtual Town Hall on September 10, 2025

www.islandstrust.bc.ca/programs/islands-2050/

Email:

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Call:

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