



Statement

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July 14, 2021

Statement in Support of Penelakut Tribe Community

Lək'wəḡən, METULIYE/Victoria, B.C. – On July 8, 2021, Chief Brown and representatives of the Penelakut Tribe confirmed in a statement the undocumented and unmarked graves of 160 children at the site of the Kuper Island Industrial School. Kuper Island Industrial School was located on Penelakut Island within the Islands Trust Area.

All of us at the Islands Trust join the statement made by Chief Brown and the Penelakut community representatives to raise awareness of the devastating history and legacy of residential schools. This is a time of grief and mourning and our hearts are with the residential school survivors, their families, and community.

The residential school system was an act of genocide, and it is the responsibility of all Canadians to learn about the history and legacy of residential schools. Kuper Island Industrial School operated from 1890 to 1975 and was one of the first residential schools to open in British Columbia. Children were forcibly taken from communities on the Gulf Islands, Vancouver Island, and the Lower Mainland. The school earned the name “Alcatraz” due to its isolation and the horrors that occurred there.

Let us come together, and not overlook or silence the history and ongoing impacts of residential schools. Let us all commit to implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action at all levels of government to honour the children, the lost loved ones who deserved to grow up within the care and love of their families and community.

Penelakut Tribe has invited communities and allies to join them in a March for the Children on August 2, 2021 starting at the Salish Sea Market in Chemainus at 9 a.m., to witness and honour the children.

If you would like to learn more about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the commitments being undertaken at the Islands Trust, please email reconciliation@islandstrust.bc.ca.

View the letter from Penelakut Tribe <https://bit.ly/3z09yjE>.

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About Islands Trust

Islands Trust is a federation of special-purpose local government bodies representing 26,000 people living within the Islands Trust Area and another 10,000 non-resident property owners. The Islands Trust Area is located within Coast Salish territory and is the homeland to over 28,000 Coast Salish Peoples who have called this place home since time immemorial. Islands Trust is responsible for preserving and protecting the Islands Trust Area's unique environment and amenities by planning and regulating land use, development management, education, cooperation with other agencies, and land conservation. The area covers the islands and waters between the British Columbia mainland and southern Vancouver Island. It includes 13 major islands and more than 450 smaller islands covering 5,200 square kilometres.

Contact:

Peter Luckham, Chair, Islands Trust Council 250.210.2553

Preserving and protecting over 450 islands and surrounding waters in the Salish Sea

Bowen, Denman, Gabriola, Galiano, Gambier, Hornby, Lasqueti, Mayne, N. Pender, Salt Spring, Saturna, S. Pender, Thetis
