



News Release

200 - 1627 Fort Street Victoria B.C. | V8R 1H8

Telephone 250.405.5151 | FAX: 250.405.5155

Toll Free via Service BC in Vancouver 604.660.2421 | in B.C. 1.800.663.7867

information@islandstrust.bc.ca | www.islandstrust.bc.ca

July 26, 2022 – for immediate release

2022-15-IT

Notice of annual proactive enforcement of unlawful vacation rentals on Salt Spring Island

Lək'wəḡən, METULIYE/Victoria, B.C. – In response to the ongoing housing crisis, the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee authorizes annual proactive bylaw enforcement for Short Term Vacation Rentals (STVRs), which are potentially removing accommodation from the island's long-term housing market.

In accordance with the Islands Trust policies regarding bylaw investigations and enforcement, enforcement actions are primarily triggered when the Islands Trust receives complaints from community members that indicate that individuals or corporations are not complying with the land use regulations. In August 2019, the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee (SSI LTC) initiated proactive enforcement measures when dealing with STVRs. Bylaw staff has since been actively reviewing and investigating online advertisements for STVRs and issuing fines for unlawful operations on an annual basis.

“Islands Trust has heard from the public about growing concerns over the impacts of STVRs on their lives and the community at large,” said Peter Luckham, Chair of the SSI LTC. “In addition to the very real concerns that these unlawful STVRs are affecting the amount of long-term rental housing available for island residents, we’ve also heard about impacts on water resource use, noise disturbance in neighborhoods, and problems with traffic and parking from these operations.”

Official Community Plan policies are developed in consultation with island communities in an effort to protect the environment, cultural heritage, and the quality of life in the Trust Area. They are designed to maintain a balance between home businesses that accommodate sustainable tourism, while ensuring housing stock is available for local long-term rentals.

On Salt Spring, property owners are permitted to operate a bed and breakfast as a home-based business where the property owner lives in the dwelling, and breakfast meals are provided to guests who have been provided with overnight accommodation. Unlike a bed and breakfast use, short term vacation rentals are not a permitted use in any residential zones, and are considered unlawful, under section 3.13.6. of the Land Use Bylaw.

The Islands Trust Area is within treaty and territorial lands and waters of many First Nation governments, which may have their own requirements related to land use or applications. Engagement with First Nations may be required. Islands Trust land use policy supports greater protection of cultural heritage sites, ancestral resting places, and culturally significant areas.

- 30 -

About Islands Trust

Islands Trust is a special-purpose government representing over 30,000 people living within the Islands Trust Area and 10,000 non-resident property owners. The Islands Trust Area is located within Coast Salish territory and is the homeland to many 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 amenities and environment through conservation-oriented land use planning and regulation, education, and cooperation with First Nations and other agencies. The Islands Trust 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

Russ Hotsenpiller, Chief Administrative Officer, Islands Trust, via Lori Foster, Executive Coordinator: 250.405.5161

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