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September 5, 2019

File No.: 0400-20; 0400-30; 5590-30

Via email: CITZ.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Via Email: ised.minister-ministre.isde@canada.ca

The Honourable Jinny Sims
Minister of Citizens' Services
PO Box 9068, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9E2

The Honourable Navdeep Bains
Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada
235 Queen Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0H5

Re: Internet Accessibility and Connectivity throughout the Islands Trust Area

Dear Minister Sims and Minister Bains:

I am writing on behalf of the Islands Trust to request further funding and support for the Islands Trust Area communities that have not been included in the Connect to Innovate and Connected Coast initiatives, namely Denman Island, Hornby Island, Gabriola Island, Thetis Island, Galiano Island, Mayne Island, South Pender Island, and Keats Island.

During the June 18-20, 2019 Islands Trust Council meeting, the following resolution was passed:

That Trust Council, by a letter signed by the Chair, request the appropriate agencies of Canada and the Province of British Columbia to take steps to facilitate and fund the safe and reliable improvement of internet connectivity throughout the Trust Area and in particular to encourage the provision of additional landing sites to service areas in the Trust Area that may request such service through the Connected Coast project.

Islands Trust supports the Connect to Innovate and Connected Coast initiatives and believes these programs will improve internet services to many residents within the Islands Trust Area; however, not all residents and communities are being reached. Islands Trust agrees with the underlying principles that improved, high-speed broadband internet connections for residents in rural and remote communities will in turn help to improve their quality of life. Improved connectivity can help community members to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions via reduced travel, access education and health services, participate in economic opportunities that are compatible with the conservation of island resources, and better participate in the decision-making processes of all levels of government.

Please note that we encourage a process whereby all service providers are required to prevent or lessen impacts on cultural, archaeological and sacred sites as per the Islands Trust Reconciliation Declaration.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Luckham
Chair, Islands Trust Council
pluckham@islandstrust.bc.ca

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cc: Michelle Stilwell, MLA – Parksville-Qualicum
Adam Olsen, MLA – Saanich North and the Islands
Nicholas Simons, MLA – Powell River-Sunshine Coast
Scott Fraser, MLA – Mid Island-Pacific Rim
Jordan Sturdy, MLA – West Vancouver-Sea to Sky
Doug Routley, MLA – Nanaimo-North Cowichan
Elizabeth May, MP – Saanich-Gulf Islands
Paul Manly, MP – Nanaimo-Ladysmith
Alistair MacGregor, MP – Cowichan Malahat-Langford
Gord Johns, MP - Courtenay-Alberni
Pamela Goldsmith-Jones, MP – West
Vancouver/Sunshine Coast
Murray Rankin, MP - Victoria
BOKÉĆEN (Pauquachin) First Nation
Cowichan Tribes
Halalt First Nation
Homalco First Nation
Klahoose First Nation
K'ómoks First Nation
Lake Cowichan First Nation
Lekwungen (Songhees) Nation
Lyackson First Nation
MÁLEXEŁ (Malahat) Nation
Penelakut Tribe
Qualicum First Nation
Scia'new (Beecher Bay) First Nation
SEMYOME (Semiahmoo) First Nation
shíshálh First Nation
Snuneymuxw First Nation
Nanwakolas Council
Naut'sa mawt Tribal
Te'mexw Treaty Association
Sk̓w̓x̓wú7mesh (Squamish) Nation
Snaw-naw-as (Nanoose) First Nation
STÁUTW (Tsawout) First Nation
Stz'uminus First Nation
SXIMEŁEŁ (Esquimalt) Nation
Tla'amin (Sliammon) Nation
Tsawwassen First Nation
Tsleil-Waututh Nation
T'Sou-ke Nation
Wei Wai Kum (Campbell River) First Nation
We Wai Kai (Cape Mudge) First Nation
WJOŁEŁP (Tsartlip) First Nation
W̓SIKEM (Tseycum) First Nation
x̓^wməθk̓^wəy̓əm Musqueam
First Nations Leadership Council
Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group
Laich-kwil-tach Treaty Society
Bowen Island Municipal Council
Islands Trust Council
Islands Trust website