



News Release

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ISLANDS 2050: THE FUTURE OF THE TRUST AREA

What will the Islands Trust Area of British Columbia look like in 30 years?

Lekwungen territory, Victoria — Today, the Islands Trust announced the launch of Islands 2050, a major public engagement process designed to help the Trust plan for the challenges and opportunities that the Islands Trust Area will face in the next 30 years, particularly as it prepares for the realities of climate change.

In communities throughout and around the Trust Area, the Islands Trust will engage the public and First Nations through open houses, community events, onboard BC Ferries and online conversations. Opportunities to provide input on questions relevant to climate change and the public's vision for the future of the Islands Trust Area will be available through www.islandstrust.bc.ca/islands2050.

The goal is to give everyone with an interest in the Islands Trust Area opportunities to have their say. From September through November, Islands Trust will be visiting communities to seek opinions.

Findings of the Islands 2050 engagement process will help the Islands Trust update the Policy Statement, the foundational document that guides the preserve and protect mandate of this special-purpose government. The document guides policy decisions about island landscapes and the waters surrounding them. It includes recommendations to other levels of government. Notably, it informs how local official community plans (OCPs) and land use bylaws are created – changes to this document could affect local OCPs.

“It’s been 25 years since the Islands Trust last reviewed the Policy Statement,” explained Peter Luckham, Chair of the Islands Trust. “That was a generation ago and the world has changed dramatically. Globally, we’re confronting a climate crisis; locally, we’re experiencing changes in island demographics. The Salish Sea, which unites all the islands in the Trust Area, is at increasing risk from pollution and industrial uses, including increased numbers of freighters and oil tankers.

“These changes will have impact on the environment and our way of life. So, the question we’re asking now is: are the policies of 1994 the right ones to guide us into a changed world?”

Encompassing the waters and islands of the Salish Sea between southern Vancouver Island and the mainland, the Trust Area of British Columbia features spectacular beauty, vibrant communities, and some of the world’s most endangered and precious ecosystems. The special nature of this region was recognized when the B.C. Government, in 1974, designated the region as a protected area.

The Policy Statement contains policies that must be addressed when local trust committees and Bowen Island Municipality are developing or amending official community plans. The current Policy Statement contains no mention of the climate crisis and does not appropriately acknowledge First Nations or the Islands Trust Council’s commitment to Reconciliation.

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Preserving *island* communities, culture and environment

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

The Islands Trust is a federation of local government bodies representing 26,000 people living within the Islands Trust Area and another 10,000 non-resident property owners. The Islands Trust is responsible for preserving and protecting the unique environment and amenities of the Islands Trust Area through planning and regulating land use, development management, education, co-operation 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.

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