



ISLANDS TRUST CONSERVANCY

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Introducing Moss Mountain covenant - one of Salt Spring Island's newest protected areas

Lək̓ʷəŋən, METULIYE/Victoria, B.C. — Islands Trust Conservancy celebrates the protection of nearly 50 hectares of land (112 acres) on Salt Spring Island thanks to the placing of a conservation covenant by islander Gay Young. This new protected area protects a critical wildlife corridor between Salt Spring Island and Vancouver Island.

Salt Spring Island resident Gay Young has worked with Islands Trust Conservancy to place a conservation covenant that protects 45.4 ha (112.2 acres – *approximately the size of 10 BC Place Stadiums*) of private land along Sansum Narrows – a critical wildlife corridor between Stoney Hill Regional Park on Vancouver Island, and Burgoyne Bay Provincial Park and Mill Farm Regional Park Reserve on Salt Spring Island. Young placed the conservation covenant on this property to ensure it would be protected in perpetuity.

The land is protected through the [Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program](#) (NAPTEP), a program unique to Islands Trust. For qualifying properties, NAPTEP provides landowners with a 65% property tax reduction for the portion of the property protected by a conservation covenant.

“Given the current climate crisis it seemed like a great way to contribute,” says Gay Young. “It was a family decision between me and my three grown-up children. We felt the land needed to be protected forever.” When asked what they wanted to protect most she answered – the trees. “We had 112 acres of mature trees. I don’t want them to be destroyed – they are so important and do a great service for us as carbon sinks. It was our job to protect them.’

The Moss Mountain covenant contains a range of ecosystems including mature forests, seasonal creeks, wetlands, mossy bluffs, prairie oak and arbutus woodlands, and rocky shoreline. It protects three documented species at risk of extinction (two birds, one bat), and nine provincially listed ecosystems - including the federally endangered Little Brown Bat, which was detected during summer bat surveys in 2021.

“Conserving land is a direct action individuals can take to prevent biodiversity loss and increase islands’ resiliency to climate change,” says Kate-Louise Stamford, Chair, Islands Trust Conservancy Board.

More than 65% of land on islands in the Salish Sea is privately owned – meaning that individual landowners’ voluntary conservation actions are critical to protecting biodiversity and addressing impacts from climate change in the region. Conservation covenants provide many benefits to island communities and can be used to conserve areas of natural and cultural significance. Forests and wetlands help purify air and water and actively remove and store carbon. Beaches and shorelines provide scenic landscapes, important habitat for fish and birds, and storm protection in the face of climate change.

The Islands Trust Conservancy website provides information and resources to help you determine if a conservation covenant is right for you and your property. Visit <https://islandstrust.bc.ca/conservancy/protect-nature/conservation-covenants/> for more information.

Protecting Islands in the Salish Sea

About Islands Trust Conservancy & NAPTEP

[Islands Trust Conservancy](#) is the conservation land trust for over 450 islands of the Salish Sea and is a part of Islands Trust. Since 1990, Islands Trust Conservancy has protected 113 properties, covering more than 1,375 hectares of island ecosystems. This success is thanks to the vision, support, and generosity of our donors and partners.

This property was protected through the [Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program](#) (NAPTEP). For qualifying properties, NAPTEP provides landowners with a 65% property tax reduction for the portion of the property protected by a conservation covenant. Since launching in 2005, NAPTEP has resulted in 27 covenants, totalling more than 150 hectares of land on islands throughout the Salish Sea.

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Press Assets

High-resolution images and video featuring Gay Young's story and property have been made available for download to support this news release. You can [access these assets here](#).

Please use only in the images and video files identified in the **Islands Trust Conservancy Media Assets** gallery in support of this story with credit to appropriate authors (in file name).



Quick Facts

- A conservation covenant is a legal agreement between a landholder and a conservation organization, protecting habitat by preventing certain types of activities on a property. The covenant binds all future landholders, and is monitored—and enforced if necessary—by the conservation organization.
- B.C. is the most biologically diverse province in Canada— but it is also a hotspot for biodiversity loss.
 - More than 300 species are listed as being at risk of extinction in the Islands Trust Area. Protecting habitat is one of the best ways to prevent species from becoming at risk of extinction and aid in the recovery of those currently at risk.
- The Coastal Douglas-fir biogeoclimatic zone (CDF zone) is the smallest ecological zone in BC, and contains the most species and ecosystems at risk of extinction ([Coastal Douglas-Fir Conservation Partnership, 2022](#)).
 - A quarter of BC's CDF zone is located in the Islands Trust Area.
 - The CDF zone has been negatively impacted by human activities, resulting in natural areas that are highly fragmented and threatened from increased development and urbanization.

Contacts available for media:

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