



News Release

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ISLANDS TRUST CELEBRATES 45 YEARS OF PRESERVING & PROTECTING

Lekwungen territory, Victoria—June 5th was the anniversary of the creation of the Islands Trust and the designation of the Islands Trust Area as a protected region. The Government of British Columbia took this important and progressive measure in recognition of the spectacular beauty, vital ecosystems, and island communities that make the region internationally renowned.

“Looking back to the early seventies, I think about the people in British Columbia—particularly the island communities—who brought attention to the threat of overdevelopment that existed at that time,” said Islands Trust Council Chair, Peter Luckham. “Their campaigning subsequently led the province to create an agency with the specific mandate to preserve and protect this beloved region. Few in 1974 could have imagined the growth of the surrounding urban areas, the impacts of climate change, or the external pressures such as increased shipping through the region. Facing these new challenges, our work continues and is perhaps even more critical than it was 45 years ago. As we mark this anniversary, we do so with humility as we recognize that the opportunity we have now to protect these island ecosystems is possible because of the stewardship of First Nations over thousands of years that created a lasting, natural legacy throughout the islands.”

The mandate of the Trust is defined as follows:

To preserve and protect the trust area and its unique amenities and environment for the benefit of residents of the Trust Area and of the province generally, in cooperation with municipalities, regional districts, improvement districts, other persons and organizations and the Government of British Columbia.

The Islands Trust achieves this mandate through three activities:

Land Use Planning: the Trust Area is divided into fourteen different areas, each with an elected, local trust committee or island municipality that makes sure decisions about the use of land supports the **preserve and protect** mandate.

Land Conservation: working with others, the Islands Trust Conservancy **preserves and protects** natural landscapes across the Trust Area. Through voluntary covenants and land donations, the Conservancy protects over 1,270 hectares.

Advocacy & Regional Collaboration: through the regional Trust Council, the Islands Trust advocates and works collectively to **preserve and protect** the area for future generations, responding to the issues that unite the region.

In March of this year, the Islands Trust Council unanimously passed a Reconciliation Declaration. Over the coming years, the Trust will begin the work needed to acknowledge, recognize, and enact the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission into its planning, conservation, and collaboration, fully recognizing that the place we call home has been the homeland of Indigenous peoples since time immemorial.

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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 5200 square kilometres.

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