



News Release

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Trust Council Asks Travelers and Locals to Continue COVID-19 Prevention Measures

Lekwungen, METULIYE/Victoria, BC—BC's Restart Plan has entered Phase 3, allowing people to participate in smart and safe travel within BC, including the Islands Trust Area, which includes the Gulf and Howe Sound Islands.

As the Province moves into this new phase and heads into the July long weekend, the Islands Trust Council reminds visitors and island residents to continue using COVID-19 prevention measures to protect themselves and others. If you are sick, stay home. Please wash your hands often, practice physical distancing, wear masks when distancing isn't possible, and minimize community interactions, as recommended by our Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry, and the BC Centre for Disease Control.

"Everyone needs to be respectful, safe, smart and use extra caution when they travel, including Island residents who go on and off the islands," shared Peter Luckham, Chair of the Islands Trust Council. "Until a vaccine is available, we will continue to be cautious and safe to avoid a COVID-19 outbreak. On most islands, the majority of our population is over sixty. Our medical resources are limited. In most cases, it is volunteers who offer first response, and we don't want to put them at risk. We're all in this together, let's take care of each other."

BC Ferries suggests if you have flexible travel plans, consider taking a ferry at less busy times of the day. When onboard, remain in your vehicles, maintain physical distance from other passengers, and have a face covering in the event physical distancing is not possible.

Island Trust staff working in land use planning, bylaw enforcement, and nature protection are once again travelling to the islands for their work. All Islands Trust staff are trained in COVID-19 prevention and take the necessary precautions to protect themselves and the public.

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The Islands Trust works to preserve and protect over 450 islands in the Salish Sea through land use planning, the Islands Trust Conservancy, and Trust Council programs and services. The Trust Area, located within Coast Salish territory, is the homeland of over 28,000 Coast Salish Peoples who have called this area home since time immemorial. Covering 5,200 square kilometres between the British Columbia mainland and southern Vancouver Island, the Trust Area has 26,000 residents and 10,000 non-resident property owners. The region features many Indigenous archaeological and culturally significant sites, and some of the world's most endangered ecosystems.

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*Preserving **island** communities, culture and environment*

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