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December 23, 2020

File No.: 5720-30-10

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

The Honourable Ravi Kahlon
Minister of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation
PO Box 9071 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Kahlon:

Re: Inclusion in Islands Coastal Economic Trust Region

Congratulations on your appointment as Minister. We look forward to working with you as we work to advance the Islands Trust's mandate to preserve and protect the environment and amenities of the Islands Trust Area. I am writing to advise you that on Tuesday, December 15, 2020 a resolution was passed by the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee requesting that the Salt Spring Island and Southern Gulf Island electoral areas be included within the Central and South Island Region in the *North Island-Coast Development Initiative Trust Act*.

It has been a long-standing concern that the Salt Spring Island and Southern Gulf Islands electoral areas and Bowen Island have been ineligible for economic development and infrastructure programs intended for rural communities due to their inclusion within the Capital Regional District (CRD) and Metro Vancouver Regional District. The decision to exclude these rural areas from rural programs and funding does not reflect the islands' rural character, geography, land use or capacity to sustain services. Without access to these funding sources, rural island communities find it difficult to sustain community resiliency in the face of social and economic changes and to execute projects that improve community infrastructure. We appreciate that the islands are now eligible for the Rural Dividend Program but would like an update on our request regarding inclusion in the Islands Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) region.

The last time the Islands Trust Council heard from the Province on this request was in an [August 9, 2018 letter](#) from an Assistant Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development. At that time we were advised that ICET falls within the mandate of the Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology (JTT), and that JTT staff had begun engaging with ICET to explore a possible regulation change to include the Capital Regional District electoral areas of Juan de Fuca, Salt Spring Island and Southern Gulf Islands in the ICET service area. We were told that this process would involve extensive consultations with both ICET and other stakeholders in the region. There has been no update since then.

There are many questions in island communities about why Salt Spring Island, the Southern Gulf Islands and Bowen Island were excluded from the December 20, 2020 order that included the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area in the ICET service area.

.../2

Minister Kahlon
December 23, 2020
Page 2

We would very much appreciate an update about our 2018 request and would be pleased to welcome you or a Ministry representative to our virtual March 9-11, 2021 Islands Trust Council meeting to discuss the status of the request.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Luckham". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and a long, sweeping underline.

Peter Luckham
Chair, Islands Trust Council
Chair, Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee
pluckham@islandstrust.bc.ca

cc: Island Trust Area MLAs
Bowen Island Municipal Council
Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee
Southern Gulf Island Local Trust Committees
Islands Trust Council
Islands Trust website