



News Release

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A surge of development applications slows processing time at Islands Trust

Lək̓ʷəŋən, METULIYE/Victoria, B.C. – Fitting with the province-wide trend of people looking to develop their properties, buy new properties, and tackle home improvement during the pandemic, Islands Trust is experiencing an increase of development applications. This increase is resulting in longer processing times.

Compared to the Islands Trust five-year average, in the first quarter of this year, development applications more than doubled on Salt Spring Island to 105%. In the rest of the southern islands, applications went up 90%, and they also increased by 56% in the northern islands.

Members of the public considering development applications are advised of long wait times and asked for understanding and patience.

"Staff is working to maximum capacity," shared Peter Luckham. "Unfortunately, due to budget restrictions, we cannot hire additional staff, so we are asking applicants for their understanding and patience. Applications are up substantially, and people should expect processing time delays. We remind everyone that moving ahead on development without authorization can cause serious additional delays, disrupt fragile ecosystems, and destroy cultural heritage sites. Islands Trust bylaws implement our preserve and protect mandate, and they will be enforced when work is started without appropriate permits. The Islands Trust preserve and protect mandate requires deliberate, informed, and thoughtful work. This important work cannot be rushed or bypassed. We thank all applicants for their patience during this time. "

The Islands Trust Conservancy is also processing an increased number of proposals for conservation covenants and land donations. Island property owners are encouraged to explore opportunities to protect ecological features and to benefit from income tax and property tax incentives. Learn more at <https://islandstrust.bc.ca/conservancy/protect-nature/>

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Islands Trust is a federation of special-purpose local government bodies representing 26,000 people living within the Islands Trust Area and another 10,000 non-resident property owners. The Islands Trust Area is located within Coast Salish territory and is the homeland to over 28,000 Coast Salish Peoples who have called this place home since time immemorial. Islands Trust is responsible for preserving and protecting the Islands Trust Area's unique environment and amenities by planning and regulating land use, development management, education, cooperation 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.

Preserving and protecting over 450 islands and surrounding waters in the Salish Sea

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

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