

Friends of the Gulf islands

Presentation as a Delegation to Islands Trust Council

November - December 2021 Quarterly Meeting

Friends of the Gulf Islands is a collaborative effort by those who love the Gulf Islands and want to see their rural character maintained, not overdeveloped or urbanized, and their fragile ecosystems respected and protected. We include voices from Denman, Gabriola, Salt Spring, Mayne, North and South Pender and Galiano. On November 2, 2021, we delivered a first installment of 500 signatures on a petition to the Trust Council, respectfully asking that the Trustees and the staff of the Islands Trust give clear priority to the protection of the natural environment in its revision of the Trust Policy Statement and in all land use decision-making.

We encourage the Islands Trust to carry out its mandate “to preserve and protect” during these times of ever-increasing development pressures and the climate crisis. We believe that in order to do this, the Islands Trust must prioritize the environment over development. Our objective is to share information throughout the Gulf Islands and with BC residents generally about how well the Islands Trust is carrying out its mandate.

The Gulf Islands, one of British Columbia’s natural wonders, are in crisis due to over-development, deforestation, freshwater depletion, pollution, foreshore degradation and climate change. Hope that the islands will survive as a rural area, distinct from the urban centres that surround them, is fading fast as people-pressure mounts and the health of both land and marine ecosystems deteriorates.

The Islands Trust, the unique local government created by the BC legislature in 1974 to stop unrestrained development and protect the islands for ALL British Columbians, continues to approve more development despite widespread water shortages, repeated warnings of unsustainability, and a large number of yet-to-be-developed lots throughout the archipelago.

You are currently considering amending the Policy Statement, the document that is supposed to protect the islands into the future. Unfortunately, the new draft document is full of contradictions, conflicting objectives, and escape clauses. Most notably, it no longer makes environmental protection a top priority; social, economic and environmental goals are on an equal footing, just like in any unprotected area.

I am here today to highlight the presentation to you of the first 500 signatories of our petition.

The petition requests that the Trust Policy Statement effectively implements the following policies:

- **That the Islands Trust’s top priority is to protect the natural environment of the islands and surrounding waters, and to preserve rural character.**
- **That no further rezoning be allowed in areas where overall ecosystem health is threatened, or where the quantity or quality of freshwater supplies for already-approved development may be adversely affected.**

- **That all decisions relating to more intensive use of land and water be guided by independent, up-to-date scientific data and traditional Indigenous practices.**

The petition can be found on our website:

<https://www.friendsofthegulfislands.wordpress.com>

For further information, contact **friendsofthegulfis@gmail.com**

Jennifer Margison for Friends of the Gulf Islands

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Attached are the first 500 signatures on this petition to the Islands Trust Council regarding the Trust Policy Statement.

The petition is on the Action Network website at this link:

[https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/help-save-the-gulf-islands-2?source=direct link&](https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/help-save-the-gulf-islands-2?source=direct_link&)

For further information contact friendsofthegulfis@gmail.com

Help Save the Gulf Islands!

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Trust Council, the political branch of the Islands Trust, is currently amending its Policy Statement, the document that is supposed to protect the islands into the future. Unfortunately, the new draft document is full of contradictions, conflicting objectives, and escape clauses. Most notably, it no longer makes environmental protection a top priority; social, economic and environmental goals are on an equal footing, just like in any unprotected area.

Please support our vision for the Gulf Islands by signing the petition.

AN ENVIRONMENT-FIRST PETITION TO THE ISLANDS TRUST COUNCIL

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- **That all decisions relating to more intensive use of land and water be guided by independent, up-to-date scientific data and traditional Indigenous practices.**

The “Help Save the Gulf Islands!” petition has been posted to the [Islands 2050](#) webpage at the following link:

https://webfiles.islandstrust.bc.ca/islands/local-trust-areas/01-Islands%202050/Public%20Correspondence/2021-11-02_HelpSaveTheGulfIslands-Petition_R.pdf