

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 22, 2026 10:32 AM
To: SSIInfo <ssiinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca>
Subject: revision of policy statement

Dear Trustees,

I have sent the following letter to Minister Christine Boyle:

Dear Minister Boyle,
As a long-time resident and property-owner on Saltspring Island (since 1975) I am both disappointed in and alarmed by the proposed revisions to the Islands Trust Policy Statement. As we have known for decades, the Trust's mandate is to "preserve and protect the unique amenities and environment of the Trust Area." It is not the Trust's job to "foster ... communities," as the new policy states.

The thrust of the housing, growth and development policies appears to be encouragement, not discernment. Trustees are asked only to "consider" environmental and protected areas when determining land use. They are to "identify" where current zoning might allow development and "direct" residential and industrial growth into "suitable" areas. The requirements of such areas are not defined.

"Housing, livelihoods, ... and tourism," as the Trust Council announced, in September 2023, are to be included as unique amenities. This is wrong.

While housing may be considered an amenity, livelihoods and tourism cannot; they are legitimate aspects of life and planning but they are not amenities. And not one of these is unique to the Trust Area.

The amenities of the islands include clean air and water, healthy trees, unpolluted clams and fish, undisturbed soil, intact ecosystems and maximum biodiversity of animals, birds and vegetation. These are elements the human species needs in order to survive. And these elements need to be protected not just for the benefit of local and BC residents but to help the world toward a livable future as the climate changes rapidly.

One of the best ways to mitigate the heating of the planet, for instance, is to encourage and expand native grasses and forests; if we can do that in this sought-after area of Canada, it can be done elsewhere. So we are a test case, a pilot project, to show that human needs take precedence over profit-driven development.

Please -- value natural surroundings over subdivisions, and do not approve the current revision of the Islands Trust Policy Statement.

Yours truly,

Marlyn Horsdal

Saltspring Island