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**Sent:** Thursday, January 29, 2026 6:21 PM  
**To:** Islands2050  
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**Subject:** Draft Trust Policy Statement

I have strong concerns that the draft TPS does not carry out the mandate of the Trust. In fact, it seems to permit a significant abandonment of the primary reasons for the Trust being created in the first place. These islands are of exceptional natural, ecological value as unique and irreplaceable ecosystems, containing the major portion of Canada's rarest Garry Oak Ecosystem that's still intact, and of course much else besides. Yet the draft Trust Policy Statement, as presented currently, is clearly in need of a major re-think in relation to such issues. Steps needed immediately should include at least the following:

- Protecting the islands from over-development by enforcing meaningful island limits on growth and development, as the current TPS does, not "manage development" as stated in the draft TPS.
- Define the word "Environment" as referring to the natural environment. Although used throughout the document, this word is not defined. A Glossary is not in any way a substitute for proper legally-binding definitions of key terms such as this.
- Wetlands, riparian areas, and all types of marine and land-based native ecosystems should be protected against further degradation and adverse impacts of development. The declines we've already seen occurring must not be repeated or permitted to continue. Those ecosystems have received proper care and not been destroyed by human presence over thousands of years until recently, so there's no reason to permit them to be lost or damaged in a short period now. We can be just as capable at protecting what is of such fundamental value as previous generations have been.

But our laws, bylaws and policy statements must be effective in achieving that, not lukewarm, ambiguous and wishy-washy, as one can see in this current draft, in places.

The Trust was established to ensure further mistakes of inappropriate and over-development did not occur as had happened shortly before. Those original good initiatives to preserve and protect these unmatched island places and all they contain, must not be squandered and discarded through the short-sightedness of a small cadre of representatives with apparently little understanding of where they live and what their responsibilities are to the islands. Our future water-supply, surroundings, ability to feed ourselves and to meet basic needs of life are all at risk if wrong choices are permitted to be set in place. It's essential to understand that the climate and the world around us will be a very different and more challenging place we find ourselves in, a couple of decades down the road from now. Presently we are driving at it at pace, disregarding the clear warnings of a brick wall up ahead. It would be foolish for us to continue making the same mistake.

The value of the Trust Area does not lie in how profitable it could be to exploit financially. The real value is that there is nowhere else in Canada (or maybe North America) that is like it. Many other locations can be turned into a rural-suburban sprawl - why waste what is here, on turning the Trust Area into that?

In the near future, the benefit to humanity will be widely recognised of having here within the islands of the Trust Area an intact, extant, surviving model of an entire ecosystem that for thousands of years past has been able to provide sustenance, shelter, clothing, and such a rich life to the population that they evolved possibly the most capable, deep and meaningfully developed culture in the whole of North America. That was feasible

through their careful stewardship, through many generations, of what these islands and the marine areas adjacent provided. Why would we sacrifice that opportunity for us all, from scientists to everyday folk, to come to understand how we all can live in a sensible and appropriate relationship with our environment? And then go forward in such a way that we too steward these lands and waters for all they are, and all they can provide, once there's willingness to open to that learning.

With every area of the islands that is lost to clearance, tarmac, and needless inappropriate development, removing native ecosystems, there is also a loss of something we have already wiped out elsewhere in much of mainstream Canada - a functioning and ongoing ecology that's already shown over many hundreds/thousands of years its ability to provide a richly rewarding life to (relatively) great numbers of people.

The Salish Sea was one of the most densely populated areas of human residence between here and the Mayan homelands in the Yucatan, a thousand years ago. These are lessons for us, in how to adjust the ways we live to fit the carrying capacity of the land and waters around us. Yet how much of our society's patterns of development give even a passing thought to the destructive impacts upon the actual future faced by us ourselves and the coming generation? We've already wasted so much of what's available to us. Are we capable of waking ourselves up to the results of our present actions?

Some of the declines we can see and already know about - staggering, unprecedented collapses over just 10 or 20 years in many natural indicators, throughout systems including climate metrics; biodiversity; wildlife populations of previously common species; abundance/lack in insect numbers; salmon & herring returns; native & agricultural plant health and adaptability under developing stressors. Many other aspects are only just beginning to be noticed or studied, including rapid declines in the sense of connectedness with nature among members of the public, children & youth especially; familiarity with natural processes and cycles, general knowledge of wildlife around the. Research shows that people who routinely have too little contact with nature and green-space in their immediate surroundings are more susceptible to mental health problems, and are less likely to be comfortable in natural environments, thus compounding those issues for themselves - particularly young adults. One might imagine that that's not an issue in the ITA, but regrettably not so.

Therefore it is even more important that the nature we depend on is not constantly reduced and reduced around us, on every side, in ways sometimes obvious, sometimes incremental and unnoticed. For all these reasons, it's vital for natural areas, native ecosystems - forests, wetlands, even roadsides and areas of vegetation surrounding development and within communities - to be preserved and not lost to ubiquitous mowing, paving, unmindful removal, invasive species and developmental conversion. Once that happens, it is almost always a one-way transition, only rarely getting rescued back into being natural space or original ecosystem once again.

The Trust Policy Statement is a significant tool that will clearly show just how awake or blinkered our representatives have been in the policies they enshrine for our future. I wonder if they will be proud of their results once we reach 2050. Hey Trustees, why not surprise us all with how far-sighted and wise you could show yourselves to be, rather than narrow and profit-focused? That's not an unreasonable ask.

The lessons are there to learn.

- Directives must be **MANDATORY**, or the document is little more than advice that islands can disregard.
- A Directive (requirement) is needed to ensure that any increases in density permitted for the construction or set up of affordable and workforce housing, result in housing that carry permanent binding agreements in

order to ensure that 'affordable' units do actually remain affordable in the long run.

Thank you for reading my submission, and for the opportunity to address Trust Council on these important matters.