

**From:** Risa Smith <vice-chair@galianoconservancy.ca>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 31, 2026 12:11 PM  
**To:** Islands2050  
**Cc:** GCA Board 2023-24; Ben Mabberley; Lisa Gauvreau; Laura Patrick; Timothy Peterson; rob.botterell.mla@leg.bc.ca; Pender Island Conservancy Association; ed@mayneconservancy.ca; clare@saltspringconservancy.ca; info@thetisislandnatureconservancy.org; Bowen Island Conservancy; info@galit.ca; mjechael@dunn.gmail.com; linc@laquetti.ca; vice-chair@galianoconservancy.ca; Denman Conservancy Association; Wendy Tyrrell  
**Subject:** Submission from Galiano Conservancy Association on Islands Trust Policy Statement 2025  
**Attachments:** ATT00001.htm; GCA Submission on ITP \_ Jan 31.docx

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Islands Trust Policy Statement 2025.

Attached is a covering letter from the Galiano Conservancy Board, Chair, and our specific comments.

Galiano Conservancy Association  
10825 Porlier Pass Rd, Galiano Island, BC, V0N 1P0  
Office: [\(250\) 539-2424](tel:(250)539-2424) | Mobile: [\(250\) 222-2442](tel:(250)222-2442)  
[www.galianoconservancy.ca](http://www.galianoconservancy.ca)

*Coast Salish Peoples have lived on and cared for the land now known as Galiano Island for millennia. Galiano Conservancy Association acknowledges that we live and work within the shared, asserted, unceded and traditional territories of the Hul'qumi'num-speaking First Nations Peoples and those who hold traditional rights, responsibilities, and Indigenous rights and title in and around what is now known as Galiano Island.*

**Recommended Changes to Trust Policy Statement, July 25, 2025**

Prepared by the Galiano Conservancy Association  
Board of Directors  
January 31, 2026

To: Islands2050@islandstrust.bc.ca

cc: execadmin@islandstrust.bc.ca, bmabberley@islandstrust.bc.ca, lgauvreau@islandstrust.bc.ca, lpatrick@islandstrust.bc.ca, tpeterson@islandstrust.bc.ca, rob.botterell.mla@leg.bc.ca, info@penderconservancy.org, ed@mayneconservancy.ca, clare@saltspringconservancy.ca, info@thetisislandnatureconservancy.org, info@bowenislandconservancy.org, info@galtt.ca, mjechael@dunn.gmail.com, linc@laqueti.ca, info@denmanconservancy.org, wtyrrell@islandstrust.bc.ca

From: Galiano Conservancy Association

Re: Draft Trust Policy Statement, July 25, 2025



To: Islands Trust - islands 2050@islandstrust.bc.ca

Re: Draft Islands Trust Policy Statement, July 2025

From: Galiano Conservancy Association.

January 29, 2026

Dear Island Trustees, Islands Trust Executive and Islands Trust Staff,

The Galiano Conservancy Association is a local conservancy based on Galiano Island. We have been protecting habitat, restoring damaged ecosystems, educating people of all ages about conservation, ecosystem integrity and sustainable living and demonstrating stewardship of our lands and water for over 35 years. We perceive the Islands Trust and particularly the Islands Trust Conservancy as valued partners who, like us, are concerned with preserving these treasured islands that we are privileged to live on.

In 2022 we participated, with conservancies from the other islands, in a review of an early draft of the policy statement. This new draft has changed significantly. We are pleased that many of the definitions around natural ecosystems and ecosystem integrity have been incorporated into this draft. However, we feel that there are many places in which the July 2025 draft does not adequately represent the trust object of 'preserve and protect' and in some cases misrepresents it.

We have provided detailed recommendations on the policies, directives, advisories and glossary, and hope that you are willing to incorporate these recommendations into the next version. We appreciate the tremendous amount of work that has gone in to getting us to this point. However, we also recognize that there is still a lot to do. We hope you will take the time to get it right.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nancy L Wilkin".

Nancy Wilkin, Chair

The recommended changes are highlighted in yellow and underlined. In some cases, we have also crossed out words that are currently in the draft policy statement and replaced those words, where we believe it is important.

Also Please note the Glossary of terms, as we believe that clear definitions are critical to this policy statement and we also believe that many terms used frequently are not defined, and some others are defined incorrectly or ambiguously.

### **1.1 - The Islands Trust Object**

Recommendations:

- add 'Trust area conservancies' after First Nations in the first paragraph

### **1.5 History and Context**

#### **Recommendation:**

Add a section, 1.5, on the history and context taken from the current Trust Policy Statement. We suggest that the information in the current policy statement is important and that without it people reading this document will not understand the context of an updated policy statement. We recommend a version of the section in the new Trust Policy Statement that is shorter.

An example of a shortened version, which we took from a submission made by some Galiano neighbours, is pasted below. We at the Galiano Conservancy are comfortable with this shortened version.

#### **History of the Trust Area**

The Trust area is an archipelago of 13 major islands and 450 smaller islands in southern British Columbia located between the two largest urban areas of the province, Vancouver and Victoria. It provides an exceptional example of B.C.'s Coastal Rainforest with: its mild climate, diverse and unusual natural features vegetation and wildlife, diverse Indigenous peoples, numerous areas of archaeological significance, an almost continuous tree cover, large undeveloped areas, tranquil rural areas, numerous sheltered bays and beaches and significant marine life.

Indigenous people have practised, since time immemorial, an overall sophisticated and sustainable harvest and management of plant, animal and water resources. The displacement of Indigenous people from their homelands and livelihoods by European settlers in the mid-19th century through the process of colonization, has led to the contemporary push for reconciliation with Indigenous people and restoration of their rights to lands, resources and self-government. Included are indigenous residents of the Trust area belonging to First Nations whose rights are protected under Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution, as well as descendants of indigenous families not formally part of federally-recognized bands.

Early European settlers took advantage of the sunny valleys and suitable soils they found on the islands to support homesteading and agriculture-related settlement. The shift over time, from subsistence living to commercial ventures such as logging, extensive farming and tourism has resulted in replacement of old growth forests by second and third growth forests and increasing commercial, residential and tourism development.

## **Establishment of the Islands Trust**

Concern about the future of these islands resulted in a temporary freeze on development, in 1969, until island communities could adopt their own plans and regulations to control growth. In 1974 the Islands Trust was created with the passing of the Islands Trust Act. The Islands Trust is a first of its kind land-use planning agency with the mandate "to preserve and protect the Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment for the residents of the Trust Area and of British Columbia...."

Although structural changes to the governance structure of the Islands Trust have been made since its formation, its original mandate and object has not substantially changed. A 1987 provincial review found overwhelming support for the Islands Trust and the Trust Object. A 1990 redrafting of the Act retained its original authority and its dual responsibility to both Trust Area residents and other British Columbians while broadening its functions and responsibilities. More detailed information on the Islands Trust and the functions of its corporate bodies can be found on the Islands Trust website at <https://islandstrust.bc.ca/about-us/governance/>.

## **The Challenge**

While populations, numbers of visitors and the demand for intensified use and residential development of the Trust Area can be expected to continue to grow, capacities of the Area's natural resources and ecosystems are limited. If the Area's environment and unique character are to be preserved and protected, priorities must be defined and management strategies established. The Islands Trust Act identifies the need for leadership in addressing this task and assigns this role to the Islands Trust. The policies of the Islands Trust established today, and in the years, ahead will be of fundamental importance to the well-being of this highly valued area.

## **The Islands Trust Policy Statement**

The Islands Trust Policy Statement has been developed in response to the need for preservation and protection of the Trust Area and its unique amenities and natural environment, to the need for leadership in achieving this objective, and to the legislated requirements of the Islands Trust Act. Goals and policies contained in the Policy Statement reflect values and concerns, as expressed by the public and Trust Council, on behalf of present and future generations, for the future of the environment and amenities of this very special place.

Under the Islands Trust Act, the Islands Trust Council is tasked with drafting a Trust Policy Statement. The current undertaking to draft a new Trust Policy Statement started in 2019. While it remained in draft form, Islands Trust Council asked for a provincial review of the Islands Trust Act in 2024 but the request was not taken up by the Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs.

## Part 2: Guiding Principles

### 2.1. General Building Principles

#### **Recommendations:**

##### **2.1.2 Prioritize Protection of Indigenous Cultural Heritage.**

To place priority on preserving, protecting and supporting restoration of Indigenous cultural heritage in all decision-making, as an overarching priority fundamental to updating the Trust Policy Statement.

2.1.x Note: add a new point that separates the current 2.1.2 into Environment and Indigenous Cultural Heritage. the recommended text underlined and highlighted. Currently the way that 2.1.2 reads it seems that we are only prioritizing Environmental Protection as it pertains to Indigenous Cultural Heritage.

##### **Prioritize Protection of the Natural Environment**

To place priority on preserving, protecting and restoring the natural environment in all decision making, as an overarching priority, fundamental to the Trust object.

2.1.x (New guiding principle) - note that although lack of attention to climate change is one of the driving forces behind the new policy statement it is lacking throughout the 2025 version.

##### **Prioritize Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation**

To take into account, in all land-use decisions, adaptation to the impacts of climate change already being experienced and anticipated for the future, and the need to enhance the ability of natural ecosystems to mitigate climate change through carbon sequestration and storage.

2.1.x (New guiding principles)

##### **Employ a Transparent, Inclusive Mechanism for Conflict Resolution**

Develop an inclusive, transparent mechanism to resolve conflicts.

##### **2.1.3 Limit the Rate and Scale of Development**

To define and maintain appropriate limits for the rate and scale of land development in order to preserve and protect the Trust Area and its unique amenities, and the in particular, the natural environment.

##### **2.1.5 Take Guidance from Follow the Precautionary Principle**

~~To be guided by~~ Follow the precautionary principle in all decision making to prioritize safeguarding the natural environment .....

2.1.6

~~To strive to~~ Account for cumulative effects of existing and proposed development to avoid detrimental effects on watersheds, groundwater supplies, culturally sensitive areas, cultural heritage sites, sensitive

ecosystems and species and their habitats.

2.1.7

#### **Foster Informed, Balanced and Transparent Decision Making**

Incorporate a broad range of sources in its decision-making processes, including Indigenous Knowledge, institutional knowledge, local community knowledge, and science, to support the belief of Trust council that open consultative public participation is vital to effective decision-making for the trust area

Note: (Source consolidated policy statement 2003). We believe this should not have been left out of the new policy statement.

## **2.2 Reconciliation Principles**

Recommended addition:

### **2.2.5 Advocate for a First Nations Representative on Trust Council**

Request the Province to appoint a First Nations representative to Trust Council.

#### **Trust Council's Cooperative Principles**

Recommended changes (note that we feel that working towards is weak language for principles:

### **2.3.3 Demonstrate Work Towards Collaborative Governance with Indigenous Governing Bodies**

#### **2.3.4 Demonstrate Work Towards Strategic Inter-Agency Coordination**

To work towards Establishing effective ....

### **2.3.5 Demonstrate Work Towards Accessible, Responsive, Reciprocal and Inclusive Public Communications and Engagement**

To work towards employ accessible, transparent, inclusive, reciprocal and responsive public communications ....

2.3.6 ..... unique amenities and natural environment, ....

## **Part 3: Goals and Policies**

### **Goal 1: Advance Reconciliation**

#### **Directive Policies - Reconciliation**

Recommended changes

3.1.1 **Engage with Indigenous Governing Bodies**, incorporate their concerns into decision-making and provide a public record of the engagement at time of bylaw submission.

#### **Advisory Policies - Reconciliation**

Recommended changes below

3.1.4 **Information Sharing.** Support and develop methods for regular and timely sharing of information with Indigenous Governing Bodies and ensure clear engagement with communities on the results of information sharing.

## **Goal 2: Preserve and Protect .... and Species**

No recommended changes to this section

## **Goal 3: Preserve and Protect The Health and Biodiversity of Natural Ecosystems, as a high priority**

**Highlighted changes recommended to the title.**

**Recommended changes;**

**Preamble.**

....(beginning OK) The policies in this section aim to identify and protect natural ecosystem types and characteristics that safeguard biodiversity, promote resilience to climate change and protect the ability of ecosystems to sequester and store carbon for climate change mitigation.

### **Directive Policies - Natural Environment and Ecosystem Integrity**

- Note: add the highlighted text to the title.

new 3.3.x - add to the directive policies

#### **Follow the Precautionary Principle**

Follow the precautionary principle in all decision-making to prioritize safeguarding the natural environment and cultural heritage where there is uncertainty about the potential for serious or irreversible damage from development.

#### **3.3.1 Protected Area Networks**

Identify, establish, and sustain a network of protected areas, encompassing a minimum of 30% of the land and water area of the Islands Trust by 2030, of sufficient size and distribution to preserve the environmental integrity of ecosystems in their planning area. (Source: Mandate letter to Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship, Dec. 7 2022, from BC Premier)

#### **3.3.2 Sensitive Ecosystems**

Add after woodland ... estuaries, tidal flats, salt-water marshes, lagoons, kelp and eelgrass beds.

#### **3.3.3 Forest Ecosystems**

Identify forest ecosystems and prioritize the preservation, protection, and restoration of unfragmented forest-ecosystems—with a particular focus on the maintenance and restoration of their ecological integrity.

#### **3.3.6 Marine Shorelines and Nearshore Areas**

Identify and prioritize the preservation, protection, and restoration of marine shorelines and nearshore areas such as eelgrass meadows, kelp forests, forage fish spawning areas, clam beds, estuaries, lagoons, tidal salt marshes, mud flats, and coastal wetlands.

Add **3.3.10 Noise Pollution (Note we have moved this from advisory policies as we feel it is something that can be done through land use planning.)**

Minimize noise pollution from industrial activity on land and in the marine environment.

## **Advisory Policies - Natural Environment and Ecosystem Integrity**

### 3.3.10

#### **Indigenous Ecosystem Management**

Through engagement with Indigenous Governing Bodies, incorporate support opportunities for - Indigenous-led incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing into ecosystem management

## **Goal 4: Foster Sustainable, Inclusive, Resilient and Rural Communities**

Recommendations:

### **Directive Policies - Managing Growth and Development**

Add a new directive policy at the beginning

#### 3.4.x Limit the Rate and Scale of Growth and Development

Define and maintain appropriate limits for the rate and scale of growth and land development in order to preserve and protect the Trust Area and its unique amenities and natural environment.

#### **3.4.1 Sustainable Development**

**Consider** Ensure that all development respects the ecological integrity of each island and the ability of natural ecosystems to support it, including site capabilities, environmental and protected areas, and existing development patterns, when determining the land use designation and appropriate locations and intensities of various uses of the land.

#### **3.4.2 Growth Management**

##### **Growth Management**

Manage community growth and its associated impacts by directing or limiting residential, commercial and industrial development into suitable locations, to prevent sprawl, minimize habitat fragmentation of forest and other ecosystems, and avoid adverse impacts to Indigenous cultural heritage, harvesting and hunting areas.

#### **3.4.3 Impacts of Development**

**Consider the aesthetic, environmental and social** Protect the ecosystems services provided by the natural environment from the impacts of development.

### **3.4.5 Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation**

Implement planning and land use management strategies, and promote nature-based solutions, to minimize greenhouse gas emissions, protect the ability of ecosystems to sequester and store carbon, and adapt to climate change-related vulnerabilities

### **3.4.7 Sustainable Economic Activities**

Support sustainable economic activities that are compatible with the preservation and protection of the Trust Area and its unique amenities (i.e. natural environment) community well-being, and future environmentally sensitive transportation and infrastructure.

Move 3.4.9 from Advisory Policies to Directives -

### **3.4.9 Existing Development Potential**

Identify land where current zoning or other land use regulations allow development that is inconsistent with the object of the trust, and require policy and regulatory options to reduce development potential or minimize the impacts of future development.

## **Advisory Policies - Managing Growth and Development**

### **3.4.10 Economic Development Opportunities for Indigenous Communities**

Through engagement with Indigenous Governing Bodies, support economic development opportunities for Indigenous communities that are compatible with the Islands Trust object.

**Directive Policies - Affordable Housing** (note affordable should be added before housing)

### **3.4.11 — Suitable Locations for Additional Housing**

Identify suitable locations that could support increased density for the development of safe, secure, diverse and attainable housing.

Remove this directive as we don't need suitable locations for additional housing - there is a lot of build out potential with the current zoning on all islands. What we need is affordable housing and this is articulated in 3.4.15. Note that the term attainable has no definition and no meaning and there has never been any public discussion on the need for 'attainable housing'. It is clearly affordable housing that is the need.

### **3.4.12 Housing Diversity**

Support a range of housing types and tenures to help meet the identified affordable housing needs of each island community and local Indigenous communities, that also respects the natural environment

### **3.4.13 Clustered Small Dwelling Units**

Support alternatives to conventional single-detached dwellings by establishing policies to permit clusters of small dwelling units in suitable areas

We recommend removing this point. We need affordable housing and there are many different approaches to that which should be left up to each island. This point on clustered small dwelling units is but one solution. 3.4.12 which identifies the need for a diversity housing - and we believe this should be diversity of affordable housing -, and 3.4.15 which identifies the need for affordable housing covers this point but leaves it more to the imagination of each island community to figure out how to create affordable housing that is suitable for their island. .

#### 3.4.14 **Floor Area and Lot Coverage Limits**

Set floor area and lot coverage limits, in addition to zoned density limits such as specific number of dwellings per a defined area, for residential development to minimize negative environmental impacts, including on land used for agricultural purposes. (Note: there has been much written on floor area coverage, which is a concept developed in urban areas to acquire amenities from developers. In rural areas it can result in counting the floor area out of context of the number of buildings and the impact of how those buildings are distributed across a property. Lot coverage limits better captures what is needed for rural areas).

#### 3.4.15 **Affordable and Special Needs Housing**

Prioritize the processing of rezoning applications from non-profit affordable housing providers and public agencies, in adherence with all application requirements, and require housing agreements to ensure security of tenure and affordability in perpetuity.

### **Advisory Policies - Affordable Housing**

#### 3.4.18 **Multi-Unit Residential-Affordable Housing Options**

Implement land use regulations for affordable and special needs housing to permit a range of potential site configurations compatible with the trust objective.

3.4.19 **Climate change resilient building materials and techniques** (note: It's important to encourage natural building materials and especially wood siding and roofs, which are not recommended for fire resilience. However , there are advantages, in a advisory policy, to encourage climate friendly materials).

Encourage construction of buildings and structures using climate resilient materials (i.e. fire-resistant materials), energy efficient technologies (i.e. solar, wind, electric heat pumps) and energy security technologies (i.e. battery back-up).

### **Directive Policies - Transportation**

#### 3.4.20 **Public and Active Transportation Networks**

Identify and establish appropriately-situated, safe, comfortable, and equitable transportation networks that reduce dependency on private automobile use, encourage zero emission modes of transportation, and support appropriate use of trail systems, public transportation, and active transportation, such as bicycle paths.

### 3.4.22 - **Road Systems - moved up from advisory policies**

Ensure that road location, design, construction and road systems are compatible with the preservation and protection of the Trust Area and its unique amenities and the natural environment.

### **Advisory Policies - Transportation.**

3.4.23 Cooperate with relevant agencies to plan local transportation networks.

### **Directive Policies - Waste, Emissions and Pollutants**

Add new directive taken which is in the current Trust Policy but has not been included in this proposed update.

#### 3.4.x **Hazardous and Industrial Waste Disposal**

Neither hazardous nor industrial waste should be disposed of in the Trust Area (note: this was 5.4.2 in the current policy and should be restored)

#### 3.4.25 **Disposal of Waste**

Where required, identify appropriate locations for recycling and waste transfer stations for the removal of waste from the Islands Trust Area.

#### 3.4.26 **Wastewater Disposal Systems**

Establish requirements for the location and siting of new wastewater disposal systems to mitigate adverse impacts on the Trust Area and its unique amenities and the natural environment, in particular avoiding Indigenous Peoples' cultural heritage sites and marine areas of importance for biodiversity and harvesting.

### **Directive Policies - Recreation**

#### 3.4.31 - Trail Systems

.... unique amenities and natural environment

#### 3.4.32 - Public Shoreline Access

... unique amenities and natural environment, .....

#### Add 3.4.35 - **Bridges Between Islands**

Prohibit building bridges between islands in the Trust Area. (note this is in the current trust policy statement and has probably been excluded inadvertently)

## **Goal 5: Foster Sustainable Use and Stewardship of Lands and Waters**

### **Directive Policies - Freshwater**

### 3.5.2 Freshwater Demand and Supply Projections

Existing, anticipated, and seasonal water demand and water availability must be determined before land use decisions are made

#### 3.5.x Freshwater Quality (Note moved from advisory policy to directive)

Maintain and remediate freshwater quality

#### 3.5.6 Freshwater Uses (Note moved from advisory policy to directive)

Strive to ensure that Maintain water quality in lakes, streams and wetlands. Freshwater use must not be to the detriment of other uses of the waterway such as fish and amphibian habitat uses, Indigenous cultural and spiritual uses, and aesthetic and recreational uses.

#### 3.5.7 Freshwater Storage (Note moved from advisory policy to directive)

Encourage Require freshwater storage in groundwater regions where the quality of quantity of groundwater is likely to be inadequate or its use unsustainable.

## **Advisory Policies - Freshwater**

Note: The 3 advisory policies are policies that should be directives, as they can be controlled by land-use planning and they are essential to Freshwater Sustainability.

## **Directive Policies - Forest Lands**

### 3.5.8 - .... unique amenities and natural environment

### 3.5.9 Consider Require siting of roads and utility corridors to minimize the habitat fragmentation of forest lands.

## **Directive Policies - Agricultural Lands**

### 3.5.x - Add a directive - Encourage food production and the expansion of ALR land to include productive agricultural land that is not currently in the ALR.

### 3.5.13 Consider siting of Site roads and utility corridors to minimize fragmentation of agricultural lands

3.5.14 .... unique amenities and natural environment

### **Advisory Policies - Agricultural Lands**

no comment

### **Directive Policies - Soil and Fill**

no comment

### **Directive Policies - Marine Shoreland**

#### **3.5.19 Aquaculture Tenures**

Prohibit Direct open-net commercial aquaculture tenures and encourage fin-fish aquacultural activities on land. Ensure other aquaculture tenures are directed to appropriate locations that will not adversely impact areas identified as culturally significant by Indigenous Governing Bodies, that provide critical habitat for species at risk, are of recreational significance or established or designated upland land uses, anchorages or moorages.

#### **3.5.23 Marinas**

Identify requirements for the location, size, and nature of marinas that are compatible with the preservation and protection of the Trust Area and its unique amenities and the natural environment.

### **Glossary of Terms**

Note that we have added terms that appear in the policy statement but were either not defined or were inadequately defined. We started with the glossary because the validity and credibility of the entire policy statement depends on how terms are defined. Accurately defining terminology is critical to ensure that the policy statement is not ambiguous and open to unintended interpretation. All changes are underlined and highlighted in yellow.

## Active Recreation

Active recreation means recreation that is of a formal nature, often performed with specific people or teams, requires specialized equipment or prescribed places, sites or fields, but excludes recreation that primarily involves the use of a power-driven conveyance.

## Affordable housing

Affordable housing is "housing costing 30% or less of a household's gross pre-tax income" (BC Housing, 2022). Affordable housing is intended to serve low-to-moderate income individuals and families, and often includes subsidized non-market options, purpose-built rentals below market rates, below-market housing for specific income groups or leasehold options.

## Affordable housing agreements

Affordable housing agreements are used to ensure that purpose-built affordable housing remains accessible to low-to-moderate income individuals over the short and long-term.

## Archaeological Sites

Archaeological sites consist of the physical remains of past human activity. All archaeological sites in British Columbia are protected under the [Heritage Conservation Act](#). This applies whether sites are located on public or private land, and whether the site is known or unknown. Protected archaeological sites may not be altered or changed in any manner without a permit. There are over 60,000 archaeological sites recorded in BC's Provincial Heritage Register including the remains of village and other habitation sites, as well as resource procurement activities such as fishing weirs and culturally modified trees. These sites may date anywhere from recent times to 14,000+ years ago, and studies continue to uncover new information. (Source: BC Archaeology Branch)

## Biodiversity

Biodiversity (biological diversity) is the variety of living things, including diversity within species (genetic diversity), diversity between species, and diversity of ecosystems. When biodiversity characteristics are assessed for any location or region, three attributes are considered:

- composition (describes the parts of each biodiversity component in that area — e.g. habitat types, species present, genetic diversity within species);
- structure (refers to the physical characteristics supporting that composition — e.g. size of habitats, forest canopy structure, etc.);
- function (means the ecological and evolutionary processes affecting life

within that structure — e.g. pollination, natural disturbances, predator-prey relationships). (Source: Biodiversity BC)

### **Colonialism**

Colonizers are groups of people or countries that come to a new place or country and steal the land and resources from Indigenous peoples, and develop a set of laws and public processes that are designed to violate the human rights of the Indigenous peoples, violently suppress the governance, legal, social, and cultural structures of Indigenous peoples, and force Indigenous peoples to conform to the structures of the colonial state. Historical and ongoing colonialism, including the dispossession of lands, has a deep and devastating impact on Indigenous people and communities. (Source: BC Addressing Racism Working Glossary; BC Office of the Human Rights Commissioner)

### **Community Heritage Site**

A community heritage site is real property that is considered to be of significant cultural, historical, natural, or scientific value, preserving aspects of the past for future generations (adapted from (UNESCO)).

### **Conservation**

Actions, legislation, or institutional arrangements that lead to the protection or preservation of a given species, group of species, habitat, natural area, or property or areas of heritage value or character.

### **Critical Habitat**

Under the federal *Species at Risk Act*, critical habitat is the habitat that is necessary for the survival or recovery of listed extirpated, endangered, or threatened species, and that is identified as critical habitat in a recovery strategy or action plan. Extirpated species means a wildlife species that no longer exists in the wild in Canada, but exists elsewhere in the wild. Endangered species means a wildlife species that is facing imminent extirpation or extinction. Threatened species means a wildlife species that is likely to become an endangered species if nothing is done to reverse the factors leading to its extirpation or extinction. (Source: *Species at Risk Act*)

### **Density**

The total footprint of the built environment, including number of allowed buildings per given area of land and how they are distributed across an area of land (e.g. clustered)

### **Development**

Refers to alterations to the land that is permitted by zoning bylaws consistent with the mandate of the Islands Trust for land use planning.

### **Intensity of land use**

Intensity of use refers to the rate of conversion of one land use to another. Some conversions have larger impacts than others (e.g. conversion of forests to residential, commercial or industrial use can have irreversible impact on the ecosystem services provided by the natural environment.) Note that density and intensity of use can combine to increase cumulative impacts of land use.

### **Ecosystem**

An ecosystem is a collection of communities of both living and non-living things that are connected. The biotic elements in an ecosystem include living things such as plants and animals. The abiotic elements found in an ecosystem include non-living things like land forms or climate. Healthy ecosystems provide important "services," like clean air and water, healthy forests and farms, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and habitat for plants and animals. (Source: Government of BC)

### **Ecosystem Integrity**

Ecosystems have integrity when their native components, such as native species,

biological communities, natural landscapes and ecological functions, are intact and are likely to persist. (Source: Government of Canada)

### **Environment**

Environment encompass the earth's components: air, land, water, all layers of the atmosphere, organic/inorganic matter, living organisms, and the interacting natural systems. It covers both biological and physical elements, focusing on ecosystems and the surroundings in which humans and organisms live. (Source: Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999 (CEPA) and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.)

(Note: For the purposes of the Trust Policy Statement the term 'environment' only refers to the natural environment.)

### **Natural Environment**

All living elements or biotic elements (i.e. animals, plants, forests, fish, birds, fungi, invertebrates) and non-living abiotic elements (i.e. water, land, sunlight, rocks and air).

### **Equity / Equitable**

Equity refers to achieving parity in policy, process and outcomes for historically and/ or currently underrepresented and/or marginalized people and groups while accounting for diversity. It considers power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts and outcomes. (Source: Equity & Inclusion Glossary, UBC)

### **First Nations**

First Nations is not a legal term but came into common use in the 1970s to replace Indian, which some people found offensive. Many communities have also replaced "band" with "First Nation" in their names. Symbolically, the term elevates First Nations to the status of "first among equals" alongside the English and French founding nations of Canada. It also reflects the sovereign nature of many communities, and the ongoing quest for self-determination and self-government. First Nations people may live on or off reserve, they may or may not have legal status under the *Indian Act*, and they may or may not be registered members of a community or nation. "First Nations" should be used exclusively as a general term as community members are more likely to define themselves as members of specific nations or communities within those nations. (Source: Assembly of First Nations)

### **Fragmentation**

Fragmentation of forests refers to the splitting up of intact areas of forests into smaller, more isolated units or patches (Lord and Norton 1990).

## **Groundwater Recharge Areas**

Groundwater recharge areas are terrain that inherently provide geographical and eco-logical conditions for the infiltration of water from the land surface to the subsurface through soils, sediments, and fractured bedrock to replenish groundwater sources.

Groundwater recharge areas can be *diffuse* where widespread precipitation on the landscape infiltrates into groundwater sources or *localized* where discrete surface water sources such as streams, lakes, septic fields, and/or irrigation fields infiltrate into groundwater sources. Groundwater recharge areas that have a significant groundwater recharging effect for drinking water sources or groundwater dependent ecosystems in the Islands Trust Area are defined as *Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas*

## **Groundwater Region**

A groundwater region is a defined geographic area characterized by shared groundwater recharge, flow patterns, usage, and hydrogeological features, and that has clusters of wells that draw from common recharge zones. Analogous to surface-water watersheds — which are delineated based on drainage to a common outlet — groundwater regions are mapped to support the sustainable assessment, protection, and management of subsurface freshwater resources. Unlike surface watersheds, groundwater regions may span multiple watershed boundaries due to the complex movement of groundwater. These regions serve as practical planning units to guide evidence-based decisions regarding land use, water allocation, and ecosystem protection.

## **Habitat Fragmentation**

Refers to the disruption of once large continuous blocks of natural habitat into less continuous habitat, primarily by human disturbances such as land clearing and conversion of vegetation from one type to another.

Habitat loss and fragmentation are the primary causes of species extinction worldwide

(Source: D. Mullu, 2016, A review on the effect of habitat fragmentation on ecosystems)

## **Heritage Site**

Heritage site means, whether designated or not, land, including land covered by water, that has heritage value to British Columbia, a community or an aboriginal people. (Source: BC Heritage Conservation Act)

<b>Affordable Housing Diversity</b>	Refers to the range of housing types and tenures in a community that allow people to find <b>affordable</b> housing appropriate to their needs, <b>including</b> as their needs change over time and at all stages of life. (Note - that we consider that in the context of this policy statement housing diversity should only apply to affordable housing)
<b>Inclusive / Inclusion</b>	Inclusion is an active, intentional, and continuous process to address inequities in power and privilege, and build a respectful and diverse community that ensures welcoming spaces and opportunities to flourish for all. (Source: Equity & Inclusion Glossary, UBC)
<b>Indigenous Cultural Heritage</b>	Indigenous Peoples understand and describe cultural heritage according to their distinct perspectives, traditions, and languages. For Indigenous Peoples, cultural heritage refers to ideas, experiences, objects, artistic expressions, practices, knowledge, and places that are valued because they are culturally meaningful, connected to shared memory, or linked to collective identity. Indigenous cultural heritage cannot be separated from either Indigenous identity or Indigenous life. Indigenous cultural heritage can be inherited from ancestors or it can be created by people today as a legacy for future generations. Indigenous Peoples have a right to identify their own cultural heritage, interpret its meaning, and safeguard its value. (Source: Indigenous Heritage Circle)
<b>Indigenous Governing Body</b>	Indigenous Governing Body means an entity that is authorized to act on behalf of Indigenous peoples that hold rights recognized and affirmed by the <b>BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.</b> (Note we refer to DRIPA rather than Section 35 of the the Constitution Act, as it includes rights)
<b>Indigenous Knowledge/Knowledge Holders</b>	There is no single definition of Indigenous Knowledge. For the purposes of this document, "Indigenous Knowledge" refers to a set of complex knowledge systems based on the worldviews of Indigenous peoples. Indigenous Knowledge reflects the unique cultures, languages, values, histories, governance and legal systems of Indigenous Peoples. It is place-based, cumulative and dynamic. Indigenous Knowledge systems involve living well with, and being in relationship with, the natural world. Indigenous Knowledge systems build upon the experiences of earlier generations, inform the practice of current generations, and evolve in the context of contemporary society. Different First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities each have distinct ways of describing their knowledge. Knowledge Holders are the only people who can truly define Indigenous Knowledge for their

communities. It is important to note that some Indigenous communities are struggling to maintain their Indigenous Knowledge due to ongoing impacts of colonialism. (Source: Impact Assessment Agency of Canada)

### **Indigenous Peoples**

Indigenous Peoples has the same meaning as aboriginal peoples in section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. The Assembly of First Nations also states: There is no official definition of Indigenous Peoples. In part, Indigenous communities, peoples and nations can be described as those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre- colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories. Other terms include Aboriginal Peoples, Native Peoples, Original Peoples, or First Peoples. (Source: Assembly of First Nations)

### **Indigenous Rights**

The term 'Indigenous Rights' is to be interpreted in accordance with the Province of British Columbia's Distinctions-Based Approach Primer, December 2023.

### **Midden**

Midden, or 'shell midden' archaeological sites are indicative of past First Nations settlement activity. Formed by the accumulation of stratified cultural deposits over thousands of years, shell midden sites represent some of the most complex archaeological sites in the world. (Source: McLay et al (2008) *A'lhut tu tet Sul'hweentst Respecting the Ancestors*)

*Note:* A midden may be an archaeological indicator of village and burial sites, and may contain ancestral remains.

### **Natural Heritage**

Natural heritage is:

- natural features consisting of physical and biological formations or groups of such formations, which are of Outstanding University Value from the aesthetic or scientific point of view;
- geological and physiological formations and precisely delineated areas which constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants of Outstanding University Value from the point of view of science or conservation;
- natural sites or precisely delineated natural areas of Outstanding Universal Value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty.

(Source: The World Heritage Resource Manual Preparing World Heritage Nominations, 2016, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/glossary/318>).

### **Nature-based solutions**

Nature-based solutions are actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural and modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously benefiting people and nature. Nature-based Solutions address societal challenges through the protection, sustainable management and restoration of both natural and modified ecosystems, benefiting both biodiversity and human well-being. Nature-based Solutions are underpinned by benefits that flow from healthy ecosystems. They target major challenges like climate change, disaster risk reduction, food and water security, biodiversity loss and human health, and are critical to sustainable economic development  
(Source: International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN))

### **Precautionary Principle**

Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration, known as the precautionary principle, states: "In order to protect the environment, the precautionary approach shall be widely applied by States according to their capabilities. Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation."

Four central components of the precautionary principle include: taking preventive action in the face of uncertainty; shifting the burden of proof to the proponents of an activity; exploring a wide range of alternatives to possibly harmful actions; and increasing public participation in decision making.

(Source: *The Precautionary Principle in Environmental Science*, Kriebel et al., 2001)

### **Preservation**

To maintain in a given condition. Preservation often requires maintaining the processes that generate the desired condition

### **Protection**

To maintain over the long-term **areas where** by managing, or limiting, the type and intensity of development or activity to ensure that valued **natural** attributes are not compromised or destroyed.

### **Reconciliation**

Reconciliation is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country. In order for that to happen, there has to be awareness of the past, an

acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behavior. (Source: Truth & Reconciliation Commission)

## Restrict

To confine, bound or limit, not necessarily prohibit.

## Sensitive Ecosystems

Sensitive ecosystems are classified as 'sensitive' because of their rarity and/or vulnerability to disturbances such as human impacts and climate change.

The BC Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory identifies sensitive ecosystem types, which have been adapted by the Islands Trust Conservancy to identify sensitive ecosystems commonly found in the Islands Trust Area, including:

- Cliff: Steep slopes, often with exposed bedrock. Very little soil accumulation, and only exceptionally hardy trees and plants. Cliffs are important vegetation refugia because they are often inaccessible to deer browsing or livestock grazing and can be important nesting habitat for birds.
- Freshwater: all freshwater networks including but not limited to streams, lakes, wetlands, groundwater sources, springs, and precipitation.
- Herbaceous: Shallow soils characteristic of herbaceous ecosystems support low-growing vegetation, such as grasses, forbs (low, broad-leaved plants), wildflowers, mosses and lichens. Few trees and shrubs survive on these sites due to the fast-drying and often shallow nature of the exposed soils.
- Old and Mature Forest: Dry to moist forests dominated by conifer or deciduous tree species with a canopy cover of over 30%. Old forests have a stand age of over 250 years.; Mature forests have a stand age of 80–250 years.
- Riparian: Located adjacent to lakes, streams and rivers and characterized by plant communities and soils dependent on increased moisture. Influenced by erosion, sedimentation, flooding and seepage.
- Wetland: Feature moisture-dependent plants that thrive in an environment where water remains at or above the surface of the soil during most of the year. A wetland can be bog, fen, marsh, swamp, shallow water, wet meadow or a mixture of these types.
- Woodland: Dry and open forests dominated by a mix of broadleaf and coniferous tree species with canopy coverage of 10–30%. Generally restricted to south-facing slopes and ridges with shallow soils and bedrock outcroppings. (Source: BC Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory, as adapted in Islands Trust Conservancy Regional Conservation Plan 2018–2027)
- Near-shore coastal ecosystems: Ecosystems of particular importance to
- marine ecosystems and as buffers against climate change.  
These ecosystems are particularly affected by land-based  
activities adjacent to them.

**Species at Risk**

An extirpated, endangered, threatened species, or a species of special concern. Extirpated species means a wildlife species that no longer exists in the wild in Canada, but exists elsewhere in the wild. Endangered species means a wildlife species that is facing imminent extirpation or extinction. Threatened species means a wildlife species that is likely to become an endangered species if nothing is done to reverse the factors leading to its extirpation or extinction. Species of special concern means a wildlife species that may become a threatened or an endangered species because of a combination of biological characteristics and identified threats.

(Source: Federal *Species at Risk Act*)

**Stewardship**

Voluntary, cooperative actions that nurture and take responsibility for the long-term integrity of the natural environment and unique amenities in the Islands Trust Area. For Indigenous Peoples, stewardship may be mandatory under Indigenous law

**Sustainable**

Capable of being maintained indefinitely; capable of meeting the environmental, economic, and social needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. (Source: UN Brundtland Report 1987)

**Sustainable  
communities**

Human communities that have achieved the balance between environmental, economic and social systems and that respect the carrying capacity of the supporting environment.

**Treaties / Treaty  
Nations**

Treaties are constitutionally protected, government-to-government agreements that identify, define and implement a range of rights and obligations, creating long-term, mutually binding commitments. Treaties negotiated through the BC treaty negotiations process are tripartite agreements between the governments of Canada, British Columbia, and a First Nation. The goal of treaties is reconciliation. Treaties signed with First Nations in Canada between 1701 and 1923 are commonly referred to as historic treaties. In BC, there are Douglas treaties, signed with First Nations on Vancouver Island, and Treaty 8 covering a portion of northeastern BC. Treaties signed today are called modern treaties, and cover where there are no historic treaties, and can also deal with matters not addressed in historic treaties.

(Source: BC Treaty Commission)

### **Unique Amenities**

**Unique Amenities** constitute the following "particular combination of characteristics and location":

- **Natural Features:** diverse vegetation, wildlife and nearly continuous tree cover.
- **Scenic & Recreational:** Solitude, scenic beauty, and abundant recreational opportunities near urban centers.
- **Heritage:** Numerous areas of archaeological or heritage significance.
- **Character:** Compact marine-oriented settlements, tranquil rural areas, and a range of unique island lifestyles.

**Source:** 1. the list of characteristics is from: The Object of the Islands Trust: Renewing the Consensus. Islands Trust Position Paper No. 1, 1986. Source 2: 'particular combination of characteristics and location' comes from the Trust Policy Statement 2003, page 6.

**Note:** Newer proposed wording is neither adequate nor approved.

### **Watershed**

A watershed is a topographically-defined area where all precipitation — rainfall and snowmelt — flows downslope via surface or subsurface pathways to a common receiving water body such as a stream, wetland, lake, or the ocean. Due to the islands' high shoreline-to-area ratio, many watersheds in the Islands Trust Area are non-basin watersheds ~~the~~ with ephemeral flows and no defined channels or permanent receiving water bodies.