

**From:** Karen Ross <karen@hiceec.org>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 31, 2026 10:18 AM  
**To:** Islands2050  
**Subject:** Fwd: Draft Islands Trust Policy Statement – Public Comment Submission  
**Attachments:** John G letter re Island Trust Policy Statement V3.docx

Please see the submission below.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Karen Ross** <[karen@hiceec.org](mailto:karen@hiceec.org)>  
Date: Sat, Jan 31, 2026 at 10:12 AM  
Subject: Draft Islands Trust Policy Statement – Public Comment Submission  
To: <[policy.statement@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:policy.statement@islandstrust.bc.ca)>, Tim Peterson  
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Cc: John Heinegg [REDACTED] John Grayson  
[REDACTED] Hornby Isl.Resort [REDACTED] Katherine Ronan  
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<[AF.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:AF.Minister@gov.bc.ca)>, Osborne.MLA, Josie <[Josie.Osborne.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Josie.Osborne.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, Daniel  
Arbour [REDACTED]

Dear Islands Trust Policy Statement Team,

Please find attached a submission from the Hornby Island Community Economic Enhancement Corporation (HICEEC) regarding the Draft Islands Trust Policy Statement.

This submission focuses in particular on agricultural protection, food security, and related land-use considerations, and is submitted for consideration as part of the public comment process prior to the February 2, 2026 deadline.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Karen Ross, Executive Director  
[karen@hiceec.org](mailto:karen@hiceec.org)  
office phone: 250-335-1199



I acknowledge that the land on which I was born, and now work, play and live, is the traditional territory stewarded since time immemorial by Indigenous peoples. In particular I acknowledge that the island where I now live sits within the traditional territory of the K'omoks First Nation.



**DATE:** January 31, 2026

**TO:** [policy.statement@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:policy.statement@islandstrust.bc.ca)

**SUBJECT:** Islands Trust Draft Policy Statement – Request for clarification regarding agricultural, food security, and legal policy impacts

## **BACKGROUND**

The Islands Trust Policy Statement (TPS) is being updated for the first time in more than three decades. This extensive process began in 2019 and will result in a foundational policy document guiding land use planning across 13 major islands and more than 450 smaller islands in the Salish Sea.

This update is now in the final public comment phase, ending February 2, 2026. The draft TPS received First Reading by Islands Trust Council in summer 2025 and must pass three readings, followed by approval from the Minister of Municipal Affairs, before coming into force.

Given the long-term implications of the TPS for rural communities, agricultural viability, and food resilience, HICEEC is writing to seek clarification and assurance on how the draft policies will be interpreted and applied.

## **HICEEC – WHO WE ARE**

The Hornby Island Community Economic Enhancement Corporation (HICEEC) is a federally incorporated not-for-profit organization, formed in 1998.

HICEEC's purpose is to provide leadership in developing and implementing solutions to social and economic issues facing the residents of Hornby Island.

## **HICEEC'S POSITION ON FARMLAND, FOOD SECURITY, AND AGRICULTURE**

- HICEEC actively supports local food and agricultural initiatives as a core component of community economic resilience, emergency preparedness, and long-term sustainability.
- HICEEC has played a support role in assisting the Hornby Island Farmland Trust (HIFT), a community-led organization focused on farmland protection and food resilience, in advancing a community agricultural area.
- Through this work, HICEEC supports food security, sustainable agriculture, and community access to farmland, primarily by enabling and collaborating with organizations directly responsible for agricultural stewardship.



Local food production on Hornby Island is not only an economic activity, but also a critical element of emergency preparedness and community resilience in a remote island context.

## **AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY – REQUEST FOR CLARITY AND ASSURANCE**

The draft Policy Statement includes a new region-wide section on Agricultural Lands that emphasizes protecting agricultural land within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), supporting sustainable farming practices, and advancing food security.

HICEEC supports these objectives in principle. However, we are concerned about how these policies may be interpreted and implemented at the local level, particularly with respect to:

- agricultural lands outside the ALR,
- mixed-use rural properties with long-standing agricultural activity, and
- the practical application of “edge planning” and land-use compatibility policies.

In small island and rural trust areas, agricultural activity often occurs across a range of land designations and parcel sizes, reflecting historic land use patterns, local necessity, and adaptive food systems.

HICEEC respectfully requests clear confirmation that nothing in the Policy Statement is intended to restrict lawful farm practices, discourage food production, or diminish protections provided under existing provincial “Right to Farm” legislation — including for agricultural activity occurring outside the ALR.

## **ALIGNMENT WITH PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION**

Given the importance of agricultural protection, food security, and emergency preparedness across British Columbia, HICEEC encourages Islands Trust to clearly articulate how the draft Policy Statement aligns with existing provincial legislation, including:

- Local Government Act
- Agricultural Land Commission Act
- Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act
- Natural Products Marketing Act

\*Report: Premier’s Task Force on Agriculture and Food Economy - Province of British Columbia: (November 2025)

Clear alignment will help ensure that local implementation of the Policy Statement supports — rather than inadvertently constrains — lawful agricultural activity and community-based



food systems.

## **PROPOSED ACTION**

That Islands Trust provide clear guidance confirming that the Policy Statement is fully aligned with existing provincial legislation and does not unintentionally constrain lawful agricultural activity or local food production.

That the Ministries responsible for Agriculture and Food Security be invited to confirm alignment between provincial policy objectives and the implementation of the Islands Trust Policy Statement, particularly with respect to food security, agricultural viability, and emergency preparedness in rural and island communities.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

John Heinegg  
Chair  
Hornby Island Community Economic Enhancement Corporation (HICEEC)

Cc:

Minister of Agriculture and Food (Hon. Lana Popham):  
[AF.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:AF.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

Note: Minister of Agriculture include Food Security and the Agricultural Land Reserve

MLA Josie Osborne (Mid Island-Pacific Rim):  
[Josie.Osborne.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Josie.Osborne.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

CVRD – Director Daniel Arbour (Area A: Baynes Sound – Denman/Hornby Islands)::  
[daniel.arbour@civicinfo.bc.ca](mailto:daniel.arbour@civicinfo.bc.ca)

References:

<https://islandstrust.bc.ca/programs/islands-2050/> (see pp. 21–22)  
<https://news.countrylifeinbc.com/clbcoctober2025#page=21>  
<https://news.countrylifeinbc.com/clbcoctober2025#page=23>  
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/premier-s-task-force-on-agriculture-and-food-economy>

