

From: Sandra Tretick <info@penderislandchamber.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 31, 2026 5:20 PM
To: Islands2050
Subject: [BULK] Islands 2050 feedback
Attachments: 2026-01-29 PICOC IT Policy Statement Submission.pdf

Hello,

Please find attached a submission from the Pender Island Chamber of Commerce.

Kindly acknowledge receipt.

Thank you,

Sandra Tretick
Executive Director
Pender Island Chamber of Commerce
250-629-3665



January 29, 2026

Dear Islands Trust Council

via email: islands2050@islandtrust.bc.ca

Re: Pender Island Chamber of Commerce Submission on the Draft Islands Trust Policy Statement

On behalf of the Pender Island Chamber of Commerce, thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the draft Islands Trust Policy Statement.

The Chamber supports the Islands Trust mandate to preserve and protect the Trust Area and its unique natural environment. We also recognize that the object of the Islands Trust Act calls for this preservation and protection to occur for the benefit of the residents of the Trust Area and of British Columbia generally. In our view, the draft Policy Statement would be strengthened by more clearly and consistently reflecting this balance.

Our comments are informed by the lived realities of a small island community with limited land availability, a highly seasonal economy, and an ongoing need to support residents and businesses year-round while welcoming visitors seasonally. A balanced interpretation of the Trust's object is essential to long-term community resilience.

Balancing environmental stewardship and community viability

The Islands Trust Act establishes a dual responsibility: environmental preservation alongside community benefit. While the draft Policy Statement appropriately emphasizes environmental protection, it would benefit from clearer policy direction on how island communities can continue to function, adapt, and remain viable within that framework. Environmental stewardship and community sustainability are not competing goals; they are mutually reinforcing.

Tourism as a stewarded economic activity

Today, tourism is a cornerstone of Pender Island's economy and is closely tied to the health of our natural environment. Pender Island's location between Vancouver and Victoria, its proximity to the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve, and its long-standing role as a boating and outdoor recreation destination contribute to both local livelihoods and British Columbia's visitor economy.

A successful and responsible visitor economy depends on functional communities, including accommodations, food services, transportation, recreation operators, and marina infrastructure. Policy direction that supports these interconnected systems in environmentally responsible ways helps ensure that tourism continues to contribute positively to both conservation and community wellbeing.

Space for essential local services

Pender Island faces a shortage of appropriately zoned commercial and light industrial land. As a result, many essential services must be sourced from off-island, increasing costs, delays, and transportation-related environmental impacts. Supporting appropriately scaled local services aligns with the Act's intent by reducing reliance on off-island supply chains while strengthening community resilience.

Farming and sustainable agriculture

Local agriculture supports food security, reduces dependence on external supply chains, and helps preserve the island's rural character. Sustainable farming practices align closely with conservation objectives while supporting local livelihoods. Farmers require sufficient flexibility to maintain viable operations, including on-farm infrastructure, processing, storage, and direct-to-consumer sales.

Housing and community demographics

Pender Island has a significant senior population that depends on reliable, nearby services, while also needing to retain workers, younger residents, and families who sustain essential services and the year-round economy. Housing is both social and economic infrastructure. Without adequate affordable and workforce-oriented housing, businesses struggle to find staff, farms face labour shortages, and essential services become less viable.

Small-scale economic activity and stewardship

Small-scale commercial, home-based, agricultural, marine-related, and light industrial uses can coexist with strong environmental protection. Locally based services reduce transportation emissions, support emergency preparedness, and enable residents to live and work within their communities. These activities should be explicitly recognized as contributing to the “benefit” contemplated by the Islands Trust Act.

Request for consideration and engagement

The Pender Island Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests that the final Policy Statement:

- Clearly affirm that thriving local businesses, services, agriculture, marinas, and employment are integral to the “benefit” set out in the Islands Trust Act;
- Recognize and support tourism that depends on both environmental protection and functional community infrastructure;
- Support sustainable agriculture and local food systems as compatible with conservation objectives;
- Support housing for workers, families, and seniors as critical to maintaining essential services and economic resilience;
- Provide clear policy direction to identify, protect, and enable appropriately scaled commercial, agricultural, marina-related, and light industrial lands; and
- Avoid policy language that may unintentionally increase reliance on off-island services.

Healthy islands depend on both healthy ecosystems and healthy, functioning communities. A Policy Statement that clearly reflects this balance will better serve residents of the Trust Area and the interests of British Columbia as a whole.

We would also welcome the opportunity for the Chamber to be included in ongoing discussions as the Policy Statement is refined, and to contribute constructively to future policy development affecting island communities.

Thank you for considering our submission.

Sincerely,

Sandra Tretick
Executive Director
On behalf of the Pender Island Chamber of Commerce