

**From:** Wayne Quinn [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 9, 2026 1:43 PM  
**To:** Trustees  
**Cc:** Rueben Bronee; Stefan Cermak; Clare Frater; Julia Mobbs; Islands2050; Budget; Paul Brent; Rob.Botterell.MLA@leg.bc.ca  
**Subject:** Islands Trust - A Perspective  
**Attachments:** Scan 5.jpeg; Scan 6.jpeg; Scan 7.jpeg

Hello

Please find attached my perspective on the Islands Trust from my time as Director of Planning during period 1998-2006 to the present time including thoughts on the organization, the draft policy statement, and the proposed 2026-27 budget.

Wayne Quinn  
Saturna Island

## THE ISLANDS TRUST – A PERSPECTIVE OVER TIME

I will introduce myself as a former Director of Planning at the Islands Trust during the period 1998 to 2006. With a total Trust staff of about 30 and an annual budget of somewhere between 1.8 million and 2.8 million during that period, the organization focused on its mandate: land use planning and the processing of planning applications in consideration of island community official plans and land use bylaws. Housing, First Nation, and climate change issues were not on our radar until the later years of that period.

Land use planning staff as they currently do, worked out of three service centres and numbered about 18 out of the 30 staff. Administration included 7 and a small group of 2-3 Trust Area Services staff supported the work of the Trust Fund Board as it was called. Two additional staff served as bylaw enforcement officers. I would generally describe the culture of the organization in that period as grounded and pragmatic with a principal focus on land use planning activities and bylaw enforcement.

On completion of my tenure as Planning Director in 2006, there was evidence that the organization was experiencing accelerated political creep into an ideological mindset focused more on conservation initiatives and away from land use planning.

Development in my experience has always been a bad word at the Trust and the preserve and protect mantra was now being interpreted as being less about human communities and island economy.

In retirement, I settled on Saturna Island and have been a resident here for 19 years. During my residency I have participated significantly as a volunteer/leader of many organizations including Saturna Island Fire Protection Society, Saturna Lions Club, and as an Island Commissioner for the Saturna Emergency Program. As you are all aware, volunteerism is the glue that allows island communities to function at numerous levels and is critical for delivery of island services.

The most astounding thing I learned as a 19-year island resident was the level of disconnect between Trust staff and the Saturna community regarding policy considerations by the Trust and the needs of the community. As a Trust employee working in the Victoria office, I knew very little about the heart and lungs of how island communities operated and their commitment as stewards and caretakers. As an island resident, I can point to a very high level of intellect and integrity amongst our residents and see little or no evidence of how Islands Trust policies have improved our living environment. Rather, resident initiated organizations like the Saturna Island Marine Research and Education Society have garnered national attention as a marine

conservation custodian. The Islands Trust had/has no involvement in this citizen effort. We take care of ourselves!

I expect current Trust staff, for the most part, are urban dwellers, and have no idea about island resident activities designed to ensure island sustainability on all accounts; environment, economy and human interaction. I sense the Trust staff has engaged in an exercise drafting a set of policies that they think will be good for and benefit us with little community consultation. These draft policies are heavily slanted on preservation of First Nation heritage and culture and reflect a great deal of consultation with First Nation communities. A noble effort perhaps but in my opinion, outside the Trust's pure mandate of land use planning. On that thought then, gradual creep has now fully morphed from land use planning in the early 2000's to an organization in 2026 focused on actions perhaps more within the jurisdiction of federal and provincial agencies.

As preparation for attending the Saturna Local Trust Committee meeting to hear an update about the Draft Policy Statement, I thought I would do a little background prep on the Trust organization. To my great amazement, the 2025 organization chart showed 70 staff positions! This is more than double the staffing I worked with, but what caught my attention and confirmed the highjack was a current staffing level of 18 in the Trust Area Services group that support the Islands Trust Conservancy. An increase of 15 staff positions since my time at the Trust!

Looking further, I see the 2026-27 budget reflecting a 12% to 13% tax increase and is now proposed somewhere past \$12 million. The proposed budget is asking for three more staff positions for this group at perhaps \$100,000 per position. As a taxpayer I resent being asked to cough up support funding for additional staff whose value-added contribution must be questioned. This organization, in my opinion, is heavily bloated and needs to be tapered back to reflect the reality of its mandate and current financial stresses in our society.

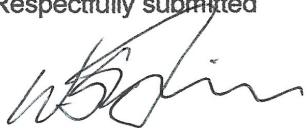
I believe there is no one at the political or provincial staff level that truly understands the history and mandate of the Trust. A request for a provincial review was punted back to the Trust with a directive that the Trust is best equipped to manage its operational model. This was after a retained consultant identified significant operational issues with the Trust's governance model.

To close, I suggest the Islands Trust in relation to the proposed new draft policies, the 2026-27 budget and staffing, consider the following:

1. That the new draft policies be deferred until a provincial court review of the Richmond case provides clarity regarding indigenous and land title rights.

2. That Islands Trust initiate immediately a hiring freeze, especially in the Trust Area Services division.
3. That the 2026-27 budget increase be held at a maximum of 6% or less being more in line with budgets of local jurisdictions in the province.

Respectfully submitted



Wayne Quinn

Saturna Island