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**Sent:** Sunday, December 10, 2023 10:41 PM

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**Subject:** Rezoning of DL 86 (Matheson/Bairstow) and DL 85 (McElhanney)

Dear Lisa, Ben and Tim,

I am writing to express my strong support for the earliest possible approval of these rezoning applications, which will resolve an impasse that has dragged on for nearly three decades. For all that time, this impasse has been very detrimental to local residents and visitors wishing to enjoy Dionisio Point Provincial Park, and also to the reputation of the Islands Trust as an agency capable of inspiring whatever necessary movement on both sides to solve futile deadlocks.

In my view, the needed movement by Galiano's forest zone owners includes (1) firm commitments to sustainable forestry, (2) serious efforts and investment in forest restoration work to enhance biodiversity and reduce wildfire risk, and (3) public access to hiking trails. This movement has been taking place across the island, with increasing numbers of forest owners cooperating generously with the Galiano EcoForestry Association and the Galiano Trails Society. Over the past few years, the most spectacular example of such movement has been provided by rezoning applicants Corinne Matheson and Wayne Bairstow on DL 86. They have achieved a prodigious amount of excellent forest restoration work, while opening Mystic Woods Trail so that the public can now walk into Dionisio Point Park without trespassing.

Conflict resolution often needs movement on both sides. In accordance with staff recommendations, the LTC can approve these rezonings without any bylaw amendment. But I do believe that the LTC should reflect on whether past positions taken by previous Galiano Trustees may have been unduly harsh, with unintended consequences that might have been very harmful. Here is a historical example. About a quarter century ago, when our forest zoning conflict was still emotionally overheated, the Galiano forest owners collectively made an offer to the LTC which they thought was too generous to be refused by reasonable people. It was a very simple proposal that forest owners wanting 20 acre residential density would donate 50% of their land to the community. The response from the LTC was that we'll take our half of your land **plus half of your half** to give us 75%, and on top of that we'll take a big chunk of your waterfront. Total deal killer, with the result that much of the island is still stuck in deadlock so many years later.

While most of the forest owners bought their land with the intention of being Galiano Islanders, none of them would remotely consider staying here after giving up 75% of their land **PLUS waterfront**. Nobody has taken that deal, except to liquidate and get off our island. It has only been done twice in all these years, firstly by the 13 families whose rezonings of DL 30/31 created the Heritage Forest with the revenge of clear-cutting the forest, and secondly by the owners of the north half of DL79 whose revenge was to renege inexcusably on their commitment of a cash donation from the sale of a "community benefit" lot. All of those people sold out and left. Our community thus lost 16 potential Galiano resident or cottager families, who were so angry that they left while extracting maximum revenue at Galiano's expense. Overly extreme

policies can have negative effects of driving people away from our community and provoking ugly episodes of vindictive behaviour.

While your planners have made it clear that the DL 85 and 86 applicants don't need to concede waterfront, some people will suggest that the exact precedents of DL 30/31 and DL 79 should be followed to extract waterfront contributions. My point is that those precedents had disastrously bad consequences, and therefore must **NOT** be followed. The movement needed right now from our Trustees is to stay away from the most negative aspect of those precedents, as wisely recommended by your planners so that further derailments can be avoided. These rezonings are on the right track to achieve major progress on environmental, social and reconciliation fronts.

With thanks for your hard work and dedication,

Bowie