

Village Point Improvement District

PO Box 3, Mayne Island BC V0N 2J0
Phone: 250-655-0844 Emergency: 1-866-317-9839
Email: vpid@shaw.ca

September 17th, 2021

Islands Trust – Island 2050
200 - 1627 Fort Street
Victoria BC V8R 1H8



Re: Islands Trust Policy Statement

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Islands Trust Policy Statement. Our comments only relate to those areas that affect the Village Point Improvement District and are as follows:

1. A ban on desalination is inappropriate for water districts. Whatever methods individual improvement districts choose to meet their human needs for water cannot be arbitrarily forbidden. The science on small operations continues to emerge, and in spite of what may have been discovered so far, slight harm to environment remains less important than essential water to humans.
2. Cutting trees is a duty of water districts where safety of residents and efficient management of underground infrastructure is necessary. Adding another layer of complexity to an already difficult judging process is a serious imposition, and again takes decision making away from local residents.
3. Water consumption is paramount in any discussion about increasing density. Water districts are experiencing higher than normal demand as the infill of empty properties completes. Great care should be taken in preventing development to go beyond the capacity of the island to provide water for its residents.
4. With water in, the water out must also be accounted for. As the only district with a duty to maintain a communal septic system, VPID is very conscious of the need to restrict and mitigate septic filtering into the aquifer. This practice should guide density discussions throughout the Islands also, because aquifers are island commons.
5. Freshwater standards are a good thing, but enforcement is problematic. Unless they go hand in hand, this is an exercise which is doomed to failure before it starts. The unpaid volunteers that run many of the water districts are not enforcers. Only senior government political will can make this happen properly.
6. Rainwater harvesting as a plentiful source of potable and non-potable water requires much management in terms of filtering, disease prevention, turbidity and the like. A more user-friendly system of permits, oversight, and standards would go a long way to helping ease the water shortage problem every year.

Respectfully,
Village Point Improvement District Board of Trustees