



Snuneymuxw

First Nation

www.snuneymuxw.ca

June 1, 2022

Dilani Hippola
Senior Policy Advisor
Islands Trust
200-1627 Fort Street
Victoria, BC, V8R 1H8

RE: Capacity Funding and Draft New Islands Trust Policy Statement Bylaw No.183

In 2021, Snuneymuxw First Nation was engaged by Lisa Wilcox, Senior Intergovernmental Policy Advisor, of Islands Trust, regarding their new draft Policy Statement bylaw No. 183. Islands Trust provided Snuneymuxw with a capacity funding grant of \$5,000 to participate in early engagement. Over the course of several months, representatives from Snuneymuxw met virtually with Islands Trust staff to discuss the draft statement and provide input from a Snuneymuxw perspective. Communication with staff was respectful and productive. The preferred method of engagement for Snuneymuxw is regular, consistent meetings between staff, to discuss a variety of issues or items that are relevant to both parties. This went well until the policy statement was scheduled appear on the agenda for a public meeting. Snuneymuxw was prepared to be in attendance for that meeting but was advised by an Island Trust employee that the meeting would likely become disrespectful and culturally offensive to Snuneymuxw People due to potential hostility from local Islands Trust residents who oppose reconciliation language in the draft policy statement including recognition of Snuneymuxw People. Due to multiple factors, our staff-to-staff engagement meetings have been on hold, but we welcome the renewal of those meetings in the future.

Snuneymuxw First Nation has reviewed the draft new policy statement and support the draft language contained. It acknowledges the treaty right of Snuneymuxw First Nation in respect to the Trust Area and in addition, aligns with the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*. Furthermore, recognition of Snuneymuxw rights and authority in Snuneymuxw Territory is consistent with the government-to-government

relationship our Nation has with British Columbia, and Nation to Nation relationship with the Government of Canada. Snuneymuxw notes and appreciates that reconciliation is woven throughout the document, but the true test will come through action and Snuneymuxw welcomes the opportunity to work alongside the Islands Trust to promote and preserve Snuneymuxw's lands and waters of the Island's Trust area. Going forward, it is important that we develop a protocol for decision making that respects our Treaty of 1854 and way of life, and where necessary, enter constructive arrangements or agreements that address impacts or infringements to Snuneymuxw rights.

Snuneymuxw First Nation understand and accepts that our comments will be listed publicly.

Any questions and/or concerns, can be directed to SFN Lands Clerk, Desiree Thomas, at landsclerk@snuneymuxw.ca or at 250-824-1351 from Monday to Friday, between 8 AM to 4 PM.

Thank you



Chief Mike Wyse