



Islands

Trust



The Policy of the Islands Trust



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THE POLICY OF THE ISLANDS TRUST

The Policy of the Islands Trust was officially adopted by the Islands Trust Committee on August 18, 1983 under By-law No. 9 cited as: "Islands Trust Policy Adoption By-law, 1983".

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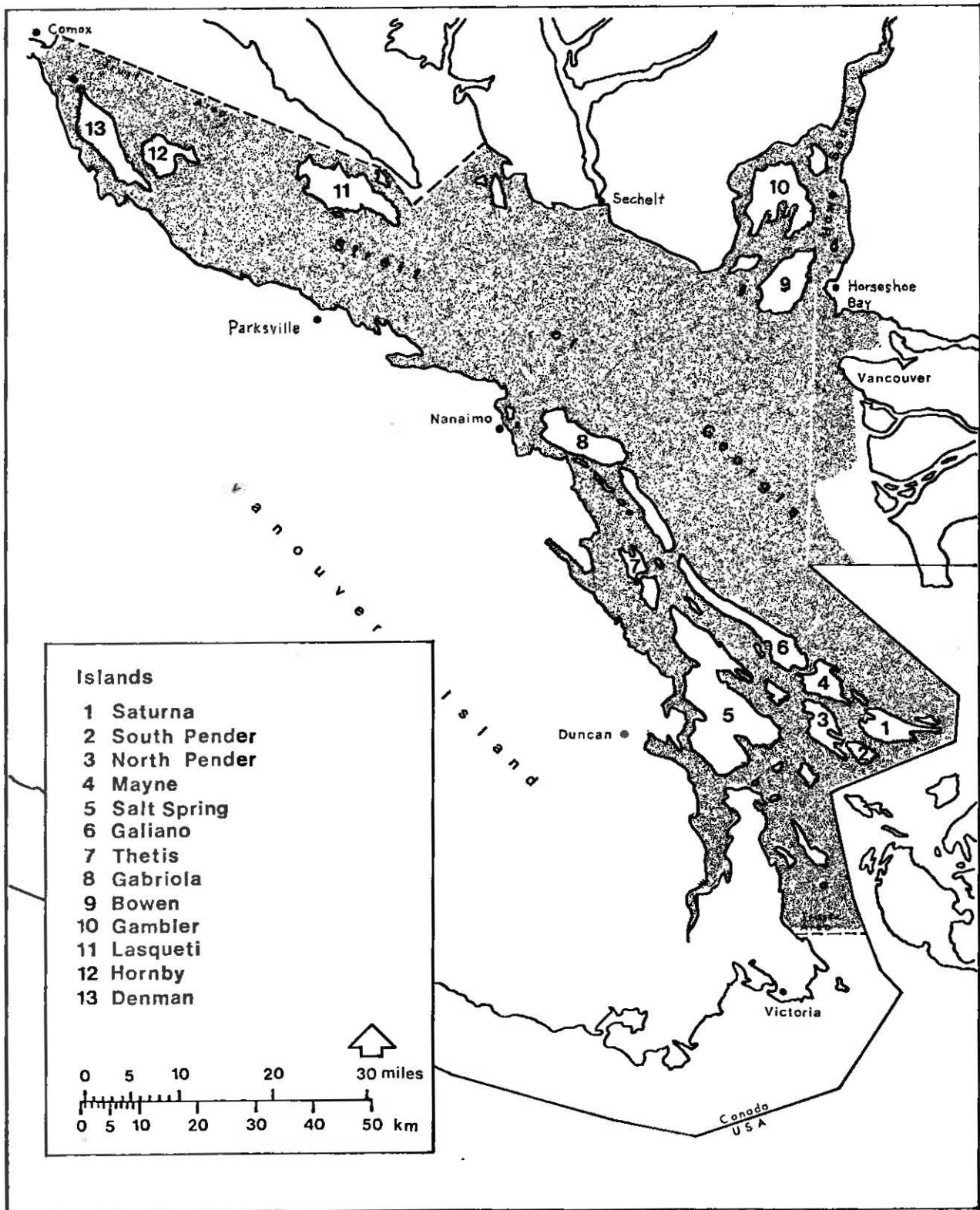
PREFACE

This document provides the general policies for the management of the Islands Trust Area. It elaborates on the preservation and protection mandate given to the Trust under the Islands Trust Act.

The social and environmental goals and policies contained in this document will guide the Trust and its Committees in their detailed planning, but many of the subjects referred to are the responsibility in whole or in part of other agencies. For these agencies these policy statements are expressions of Trust opinion and are not necessarily binding on those who share the core responsibility.

These policies have grown out of a five-year process initially devoted to identifying issues and collecting factual data on the Trust Area. The initial intention was to prepare a Regional Plan for the Trust Area, however, as the nature and role of regional planning in British Columbia is quite uncertain at this time, it was recently decided that the document should be used to articulate the general goals and policies that will be used to guide future development in the Trust Area. In the development of these policies, Trust staff and other government offices assembled and analyzed information about the bio-physical base and the activities and impact of human use and settlement. Issues were identified through the use of thirteen public meetings and a widely distributed pamphlet. From this foundation, a draft document was prepared and printed in March 1982. It was the subject of a further series of public meetings on the islands, the mainland and Vancouver Island. After technical reviews by other government departments, amendments were made to reflect both public and technical concerns. The views of all 26 Trustees as expressed at their quarterly Council meetings were also considered. In summary, this document has been through a process which has involved over one thousand people at 28 public meetings and 20 meetings of the Planning Committee.

THE ISLANDS TRUST AREA



INTRODUCTION

Since the late 1960's there has been an increasing awareness that the islands in the Strait of Georgia need special attention. For years people have been drawn to these islands by their unique qualities: the clean air and water, the unspoiled environment, the relatively uninhabited beaches, the protected coves and waterways, the wildlife, the gentle climate, and the unusual tranquil beauty. All these, in close proximity to major urban centres, have attracted thousands of people whose needs and demands have threatened to destroy the very qualities that make the islands so desirable and special.

Perhaps some of the first to be alerted to the danger were the residents of the islands, but there existed no means then to avert it. In 1969, the Provincial Government, recognizing the harmful, irreversible effects of unconstrained and insensitive development, imposed a temporary 10-acre freeze on all the islands. This was followed in 1974 by the establishment of the Islands Trust with an unusual mandate - to preserve and protect the unique amenities and environment of the Trust Area for all the people of British Columbia.

Since 1974, the Islands Trust Act has been amended several times to ensure a democratic local decision making and planning process, and to enhance its ability to plan and regulate land use changes. Under the Islands Trust Act the jurisdiction of the Trust in land use planning is divided between Local Trust Committees and the General Trust Committee. The former are responsible for local planning and regulation on thirteen groups of designated islands, while the latter is responsible for similar functions on the 300 or so undesignated islands in the Trust Area. The General Trust Committee is also responsible for general affairs affecting more than one designated group of islands. The Trust Committees are required to make recommendations to the Lieutenant Governor in Council, and to coordinate and assist other levels of government in the determination, implementation and carrying out of policies for the preservation and protection of the Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment. At the local level all major islands have completed Community Plans and by-laws in general conformity with the accepted policies of the Trust. In regard to the general public interest in the Trust Area as a whole the Trust has developed some basic policy statements and, by means of briefs, recommendations, agreements and workshops, has sought the support and cooperation of those government agencies whose jurisdictional responsibilities overlap those of the Islands Trust.

In 1978, the Trust was given the obligation to prepare a Regional Plan for the Trust Area. Since that time the need for such a Plan and its content have been discussed at many meetings involving Local Trustees and representatives of many government departments. In brief, the Plan was viewed as being a general statement of goals and policies, sufficient in scope to provide an integrating context for local planning, capable of dealing with factors common to two or more islands, yet

clearly establishing the ways in which both local and provincial interests could be defined and protected. It was recognized that whereas conventional planning instruments were probably adequate at the local level, a regional planning approach would be needed to protect both the local and broader public interest in the Trust Area as a whole.

Recently, however, because of proposed amendments to the Municipal Act, it has become quite clear that the role and nature of regional planning in British Columbia is quite uncertain. It was consequently decided as there was an urgent need for general policies and guidelines for the future management of the Trust Area, that the present document should proceed as a policy document rather than as a regional plan document.

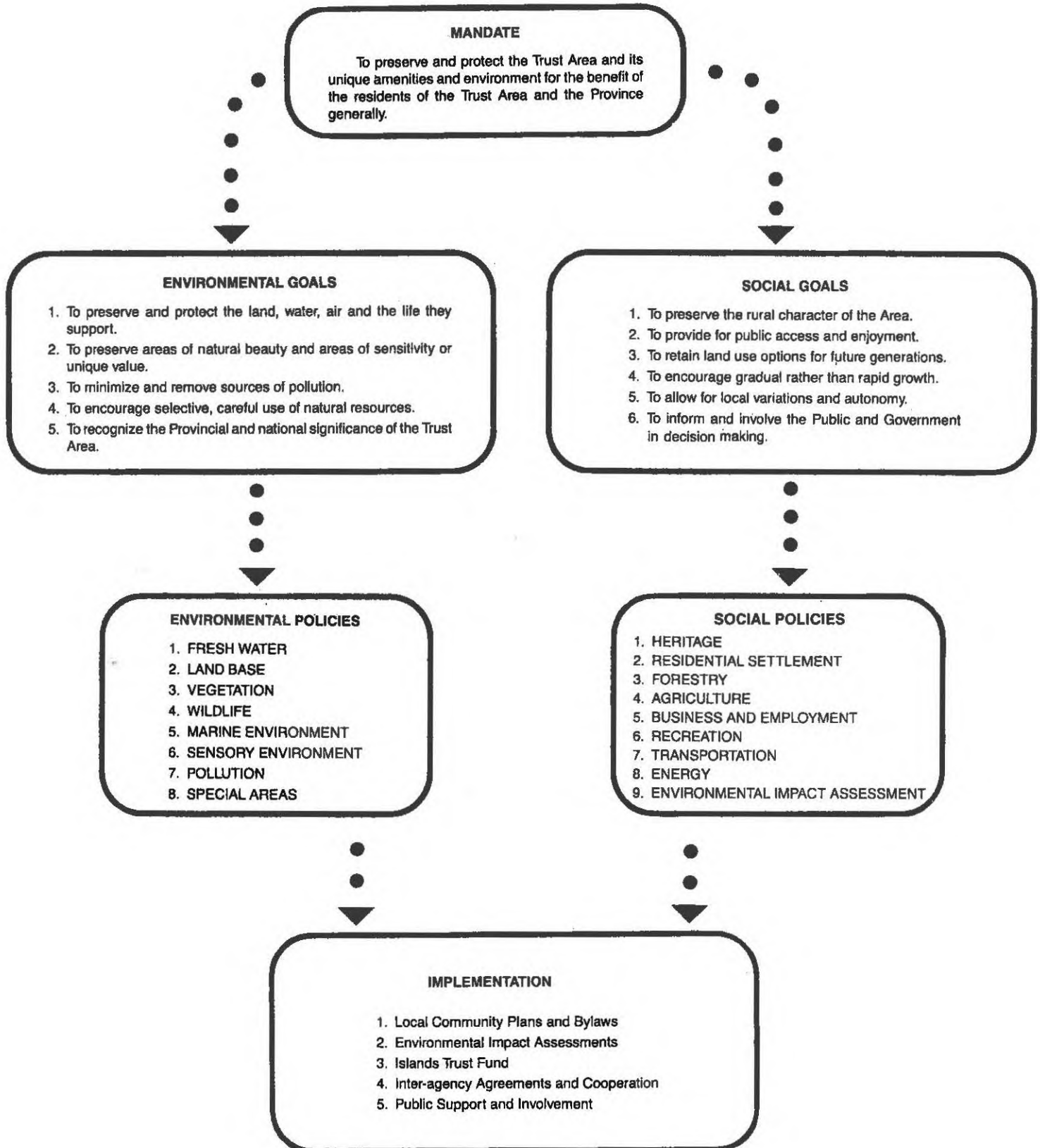
One additional role of these policies relates to a section of the Islands Trust Act which, when proclaimed, would enable the Trust to accept gifts and bequests of money and land. In the public interest it is essential that the policies establish a basis for decisions concerning the acceptance and administration of such gifts and bequests.

The present document establishes the general policies for the Islands Trust Area. One section describes the Trust Area and identifies its essential and special values. Another section documents the pressures being applied to the physical and social environments, and the ways in which the demands are being met. This leads to a discussion of the local and provincial interests. To provide a framework for future decisions, a number of basic goals are stated which in turn give the rationale for the more detailed policy statements that follow. Finally, one section deals with the ways and means by which the objects of the Trust can be implemented and enforced. The basic structure is summarized in the Policy Diagram on Page 8.

This document is written for everyone with an interest in the future of the Trust Area. It will be of value to residents and visitors as they adapt their needs and demands to the guidelines suggested herein. It will be of value to Local Trustees and other government officials who are required to interpret and amend local plans and by-laws. It will be relevant for those officials of senior levels of government whose jurisdictional responsibility is superior to that of the Trust but whose decisions affect the land, the marine environment and the people of the Trust Area.

A commitment to the Trust concept and a cooperative attempt to achieve the objects of the Islands Trust described here will enable the Province to preserve for future generations some of what has been so generously gifted to us.

POLICY DIAGRAM



THE TRUST AREA

Between the southern British Columbia mainland and Vancouver Island lies the Islands Trust Area, comprised of 13 major islands and more than 450 smaller islands, many of them uninhabited. Eighty-seven per cent of the total region, which approximates 5,178 square km. (2,000 square miles), is comprised of the ocean surrounding these islands. The waters are shipping lanes and utility corridors, providing connections between mainland centres, Vancouver Island and some of the islands themselves, making the land areas of the Trust Region accessible to people from the high-density portions of the Province which border it.

Many of these islands, though finite by nature, have increasing permanent and part-time residents and a growing number of visitors who, together with the changes they bring, make steadily heavier demands on limited island resources.

The Trust region is not a backwater and the pressures it faces originate with the millions of people around its shores as well as island residents. The issues facing the Trust are related to the nature of change and the conflicts and choices which accompany it.

The following resume of the bio-physical conditions and resources in the Trust Area will give a background for Plan consideration.

1. CLIMATE

The Trust Islands have a temperate, marine climate marked by cool, dry summers and rainy, mild winters. Average temperatures range from 1.7 - 3.9 degrees C. (35-39 degrees F.) in January and 15.6 - 17.8 degrees C. (60-64 degrees F.) in July. There are noticeable differences in precipitation and hours of sunshine between the southern and northern islands; those in Howe Sound are influenced by the Coastal Mountain Range and have a climate more like that on the mainland with approximately 125 centimetres (50 inches) of rainfall annually, while those in the Strait of Georgia, especially the southern islands, are distinctly dryer with not more than 75 - 90 centimetres (30-35 inches) of rainfall annually, and summer drought is not uncommon, causing much of the vegetation to become susceptible to fire.

Microclimates, influenced by elevation, slope, aspect and the extent of forest cover, produce local variations and, although frosts do occur from October until May, the growing season is long with killing frost possibly being experienced in December and January. Sporadic snowfalls can vary from a few centimeters to several, but are usually of short duration.

The climate of the Trust Area supports an abundant variety of marine life, vegetation, birds and animals and is one of the more significant characteristics influencing increased demands for settlement and recreation.

2. FRESH WATER

Of absolute necessity to land-based living things is an adequate supply of fresh water. However, cumulative drought conditions appear to be a characteristic of the islands. Low annual rainfall, coupled with a lack of summer precipitation has, at times, created severe water shortages affecting all islands' groundwater resources. Many surface water sources dry up during the summer months and the recharge of aquifers is severely restricted during these periods. At the best of times, only a small percentage of precipitation finds its way into bedrock storage.

Island watersheds tend to be small; creeks are few, short and intermittent. However, a number of freshwater lakes provide valuable water sources on several islands. Such water sources may be uncertain in the long run as lakes die and turn into swamps and marshes. The process of eutrophication is often accelerated by increasing nitrogen and phosphorus content through intensive use of fertilizers for farming and poor sewage facilities. Groundwater, which is stored in the porous, soft clays and sedimentary bedrock supplements surface water. Limited bedrock fracture storage and low summer precipitation require consideration of alternate methods of water storage.

Water studies highlight a number of problems in the islands; well interference, saline intrusion, withdrawals in excess of recharge and low water tables in the summer months and other groundwater quality problems. Competition for water grows, and an uncertain resource is required to meet the needs of wildlife, vegetation, agriculture and humans.

3. THE LAND BASE

The most extensive feature of the Coastal Trench is its submarine landscape, characterized by basins and troughs up to 430 metres (1,411 ft.) in depth and banks and ridges that lie in a northwest-southeast direction. Surface extensions of these banks and ridges form the islands, which consist of rolling uplands and valleys interspersed with mountain peaks, ranging as high as 915 metres (3,000 ft.) on Gambier and 755 m (2,400 ft.) on Bowen Island. Much of the shoreline of the islands is rugged, with steep cliffs, wave-cut platforms, offshore rocks and islets. Inland, the surface is predominately bedrock covered with shallow soils, but a significant number of areas contain good soils for agricultural use.

The predominant bedrock constituents on most of the islands are sedimentary or volcanic and glaciation has left an obvious impact on the land. Although there are occurrences of coal, gold, zinc, rodonite, iron, copper and shale in varied locations, most of the islands are classed as having low mineral value. No mines are in operation on the islands, but a proposal exists for mining copper and molybdenum on Gambier.

Most of the marine areas within the Trust are under petroleum and natural gas exploration permits. However, there is a current moratorium on exploration in the Strait of Georgia and no active drilling is underway.

Earthquakes are relatively common and range from mild tremors to the 1946 quake off Comox, which measured 7.3 on the Richter scale - a little less than the San Francisco earthquake. Steep slopes, sporadic heavy rainfall, poor drainage and unconsolidated sediment overlying bedrock can lead to other earth movements. Coastal erosion, caused by human activity, accelerates normal cliff retreat.

4. FORESTRY AND VEGETATION

There are considerable areas of forests, mostly cut-over stands, supporting a small logging industry. Few examples of original mature forest remain on the islands, yet the second growth stands provide a significant resource. Logging is either by major companies on the 10,500 ha., (26,500 ac.) or 15.6% of the Trust land area under tree farm certificate, or by smaller operators on other private land. The majority of logs are taken off-island and consist of commercial species such as Douglas-fir, Grand Fir, Western Hemlock and Western Red Cedar. A few groves of Garry Oak remain undisturbed. Arbutus (Pacific Madrone) is more widely distributed, occurring in pure stands or mixed with fir or deciduous trees. Alder is a prolific native tree, providing an energy resource as firewood or, together with fir, establishing a natural reforestation process with an undergrowth of salal, salmonberry, sword fern and other plants in cleared areas.

The warm climate is conducive to an array of wild flowers. Most of these are found in pockets of shallow soil in open areas around rocky outcrops where they share more abundant sunlight. Roadside wild flowers thrive through most of the year, many having naturalized from early homesteads. The flora of the Gulf Islands is probably the most varied in the Province and also one of the more fragile components of the total environment.

5. AGRICULTURE

Seventeen percent of the islands' area, or 11,400 ha. (28,200 acres) is in the Agricultural Land Reserve and its varied soils (2,000 ha. (4,925 ac.) being class 3 or better) are used for farming or have potential for such use. This compares favourably with the 5% of the Province which is capable of producing crops.

Despite a summer moisture deficiency, agriculture is an important pursuit on the islands and while a few larger farms may provide the economic basis for full-time farming with some export, a great number of smaller holdings provide subsistence production for local use or sale. Together, a significant contribution to overall food production provides protection for families during periods of low cash income and permits the preservation of both a desirable land use and a life-style which many residents wish to maintain.

6. WILDLIFE

A variety of small and large mammals, game birds, raptors (eagles, hawks and falcons), sea birds, shore birds and song birds inhabit the

islands as temporary or permanent residents. Over 200 species of birds have been counted in the Trust Area and it is estimated that 2 million waterfowl, as well as countless numbers of other species, use the Pacific Flyway on their Spring and Fall migrations from the Arctic to South America.

There are numerous colonies of nesting birds on isolated, rocky promontories, cliff-sides, offshore rocks and islets, and eagles and herons both rely on first-growth trees, near the sea for nesting or lookouts.

The most prominent large mammal is the Columbian Black-tailed deer with an average density of 6 - 10 per square kilometre (15-25 per sq. mi.). The larger fallow deer is less numerous and inhabits only a few islands. Other common mammals are raccoon, river otter, muskrat and mink and the waters around the islands are home to sea lions, harbour seals, porpoises and killer whales.

The waters of the Trust Area abound with a variety of pelagic and bottom fish. Most important are the five species of Pacific salmon, herring, ling cod, rock fish, English sole, flounder, hake, dogfish and sable fish. The area is noted for its value as a spawning ground for herring, which has previously been over-fished. Some fish species rely on the kelp-filled shallows as habitat for reproduction. Bag limits have been established for some of the most sought-after sport fish and shell fish. Seasonal and area closures are used to conserve stocks.

The foreshore zone in the Strait has provided a rich source of seafood: crabs, clams, oysters, shrimps, prawns, abalone, geoducks, scallops and mussels, but overharvesting is prevalent in some areas. Oysters are the only mollusc under extensive cultivation, which is concentrated in the northern half of the Trust Area, where 80% of the B.C. oyster harvest is gathered. Molluscs are particularly sensitive to changes in water quality and are easily contaminated by industrial and domestic effluent. Sewage discharges from pleasure craft, faulty septic systems and sewer outfalls account for the high fecal coliform counts in contaminated areas. On the basis of a series of studies by Environment Canada, a number of closures are in effect in the Trust Area. Red tide, a microscopic organism, not uncommon in the waters of Georgia Strait, are ingested by certain bivalves and, when the shellfish are eaten by humans, the stored toxin can cause fatal paralytic poisoning.

7. THE HUMAN POPULATION

There is evidence of human settlement of the Gulf Islands going back 6,000 years. Archaeological sites on Galiano and Mayne date from 3,000 - 6,000 years ago, while sites on North Pender and Gabriola are 2,000 - 3,000 years old. The sites are shell middens behind beaches, burial cairns, petroglyphs and beach fish traps. The aboriginal population of the southern Gulf Area is estimated at about 7,500 at the time of first contact with the white man at the end of the 18th Century. Indians belonging to the Salish, Squamish, Sechelt, Pentiatich and Halkomelon groups lived on the mainland or Vancouver Island in

the Winter and came in their dugout canoes to the Gulf Islands to fish and hunt. Remains of permanent villages are found in but a few places: Mayne Island and Kuper Island.

European discovery of the islands dates from the 18th Century, when both the British and Spanish undertook exploratory voyages through the Strait of Georgia. In 1792, Captain George Vancouver, with the aid of Spanish explorers, charted the passages and islands. The first non-aboriginal settlement was located on Salt Spring Island in 1857 by blacks who sought freedom from slavery in the United States, followed two years later by white settlers. Other islands were settled soon afterwards by peoples from other parts of Canada, the United States, Europe and the Orient. Farming was the chief occupation and steamship the only link with most islands and the mainland. A ferry service from the mainland to Bowen Island started in 1897, but it was not until the 1920's that regular service to some islands developed.

Fishing, logging and other activities soon supplemented farming and salteries were located on Galiano, Reid and Valdes Islands, among others. A salmon cannery was established on Lasqueti in 1910 and a fish reduction plant on North Pender later. Whaling was an important activity for some islanders in the early 1900's. All these activities brought new and different people to the islands.

The development of recreational facilities on many islands was an important aspect of early settlement. Resort establishments became commonplace in the early 1900's. Large parcels of land were bought as Summer estates, so the distinction between resident, seasonal resident and recreationist is a pattern established early on.

Populations increased steadily, especially as roads replaced trails and marine transportation facilities improved. While many of the former mining and industrial activities have declined on the islands, others have replaced them. Settlement is still dispersed on most islands, but some have established villages and commercial centres.

The following figures give an indication of the growth rate facing the islands:

	1966	1976	1981	% Increase 76-81
Bowen	218	590	1125	91
Gambier	-	85	-	-
Lasqueti	104	260	316	22
Denman	} 360	378	589	56
Hornby		420	686	63
Gabriola	407	1185	1627	37
Thetis and Valdes	109	173	241	39
Galiano	344	525	746	42
Mayne	278	495	560	13
Saturna	-	185	229	24
North and South Pender	330	805	1020	27
Salt Spring	2238	4410	5443	23
TOTAL	4388	9513	12702	

(Source: Statistics Canada Census Information)

8. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

The economic base of the islands centres around farming, fishing, logging, tourism, retirement living and the services these require. Some islands attract people who work on the mainland or Vancouver Island and commute daily.

Aside from the above industries and activities related to them, the islands support construction, millwork, quarrying, log booming and salvage, metal fabrication, skilled crafts and artistic pursuits such as instrument making, boat building, jewelry, pottery and wood carving, painting, writing and a range of entertainment. Government services, such as ferries, highways, schools and clinics or hospitals contribute to the economic base of the islands as do the professional services required by growing populations.

Commercial development on the larger islands may be broadly characterized as that oriented towards tourism and resident services. Visitor accommodation is generally comprised of small lodges, usually located on the water and offering a range of facilities including restaurants, liquor lounges and water and land related recreational facilities. These, together with small-scale marinas and retail shops are largely dependent on visitor trade and are subject to the effects of a very short tourist season and the vagaries of the weather. There are, however, a few larger settlements with shopping facilities and opportunities for year-round employment.

9. SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

One third of the islanders are over 55 years of age with family size and income tending to be below urban averages. A proportionately larger number of Canadians reaching retirement age has produced an influx of individuals who have left a cross-section of city jobs but who have in common, an appreciation of a peaceful rural environment. There are others who have chosen a simpler life closer to the land and who, to be free of the constraints of conventional living, may supplement a limited income by crafts, other home occupations or small-scale food production. The predominance or popularity of different lifestyles varies from one island to another, but categories which make up the unique mix should not be overemphasized.

Depending on the island and its population, a range of social and cultural facilities are available. Eleven islands have schools and the major islands have community halls. More populated parts of the Trust have health services and recreational facilities.

Attitudes between visitors, part-time "cottage" residents and full-time residents vary, but, again, the appreciation of a natural island environment is held in common. There is often a progression from visitor to summer cottage resident to permanent resident upon retirement.

10. STATUS OF LAND

Of the Trust Area, 20 percent is Crown land. There are 24 Provincial parks, ranging in size from one to 500 hectares (1,200 acres). At the end of 1981, there were eight Ecological Reserves including one Marine Reserve in Satellite Channel. Excluding Indian Reserves, Provincial parks, Federal lands, Ecological Reserves and road rights-of-way, 13 percent of the Trust Area remains under Crown land status and is unevenly distributed throughout the islands. The remainder of the Trust lands are in private ownership.

Ownership of lands is widely dispersed, but a large percentage is held by people with easy access to most islands. Distribution of lots, their size and whether or not they are built on varies throughout the islands. However, there are many small lots and few large holdings remain. The average size of the small lots is 0.39 hectares (0.97 acres) and it is noteworthy that most of this subdivision occurred before 1969, prior to widespread land use controls through Community Plans and regulatory by-laws.

Studies of development and ownership, undertaken by the Trust in 1978, revealed that of 16,400 parcels of private land, 55% were vacant, 24% had seasonal dwellings and 21% had permanent homes. The 9,000 vacant parcels are the prime object of development; 74% being less than 0.81 hectares (2 acres) in size. Of the parcels in the Trust Area, many have the potential to be subdivided under existing Community Plans and by-laws. Subdivision to the limits of all Community Plans would, with existing lots, result in a total of 28,000 lots or a possible potential of 60,000 to 70,000 people.

11. SPECIAL AREAS

In other sections of this document, policies are advanced for the protection and use of the bio-physical components of the Trust Area. The limitation of this blanket approach is the absence of any recognition that some areas are more important than others. The placing of emphasis is a realistic necessity. It assists in the process of making choices between conflicting demands on the natural environment and helps ensure that the best use is made of scarce resources, such as tax dollars or limited programs.

Three special areas have been chosen and it is appreciated that there is an overlap between them. The first is the Coastal Zone, the second, Special Natural Areas and the third, Crown land.

1. The Coastal Zone is the ribbon of land and water around each island where land and sea converge. It is an environment supporting a great diversity of life and is often the major component in scenic areas as well as the place of maximum pressure for housing and recreation.
2. Special Natural Areas are units of land and/or water with significant biological or physical features that are especially

worthy of preservation or protection. The areas were chosen as a result of an inventory carried out in 1975 for the Nature Conservancy of Canada and the Islands Trust by Mr. D. R. Benn. The areas were:

- wetlands and bodies of fresh water;
- grasslands and wild flower areas, particularly those on lands adjacent to the marine environment;
- open stands of Garry Oak, Arbutus or Douglas-fir;
- areas of mature forest;
- intertidal and subtidal zones rich in a variety of marine life;
- small islets, isolated steeplands and bluffs giving protection to colonies of nesting birds;
- ridge-tops and vantage points with attractive vegetation and opportunities for hiking and viewing.

3. Crown land which, unlike private land, provides the public a greater opportunity to determine future use.

12. ENERGY

Energy sources for the islands vary greatly. Many of the more populated islands have electricity generated elsewhere with Lasqueti being the main exception. In more isolated areas, generators, propane and wood provide for domestic and home workshop use. Local conditions and initiative dictate the use of solar and wind power.

Transportation tends to be a high energy user as the scattered settlements call for heavy automobile use.

The islands are also affected by the energy needs of others. The high-tension supply line from the mainland to Vancouver Island crosses Galiano and Salt Spring Islands. A proposed natural gas pipeline would cross Valdes.

13. TRANSPORTATION

Transportation facilities on larger, more populated islands include ferry and road systems, while the smaller have few, if any roads and rely on private boats. Aircraft, usually float planes are used privately, on charter or in scheduled service. There are few public paths or trails for pedestrians or bicyclists.

Ferry service is provided by B.C. Ferry Corporation and the Marine Branch of the Ministry of Transportation and Highways. Lasqueti and Gambier Islands have pedestrian-only ferries. The remaining major islands have vehicle ferries used by residents, visitors, business and service people. In some instances, barges are used for transport of bulk materials.

14. WASTE DISPOSAL AND POLLUTION

Resource use and protection in any area is seriously affected by discharge of pollutants into the environment. Noxious wastes, associated with certain land uses, alter the quality of that environment

to the point where other activities are not possible. Domestic sewage is almost totally disposed of on the islands by the use of individual septic tanks, outhouses or composting toilets, although a few sewage collection systems have been developed on North Pender and Salt Spring. A major community sewage disposal system serving Ganges has been proposed. The disposal of domestic and other forms of solid waste is carried out at landfill sites located on most of the main islands with a few exceptions such as the successful recycling depot on Hornby Island.

15. RECREATION

Natural and cultural features in the Trust Area lead to a variety of outdoor recreational activities generally unavailable to visitors near their urban centre homes. The shorezone attracts the most people because it offers a wide variety of activities, ranging from boating, fishing, and scuba diving to numerous beach activities, including beach-combing, shellfish harvesting, swimming, sunbathing and nature study. Coastal wetlands, tide pools, wave-sculptured rocks, birdwatching areas, abundant marine mammals, Indian petroglyphs, and a year-round mild climate give the islands recreational appeal in all four seasons.

In upland areas, cliff-sides and hill-tops provide vantage points for viewing wildlife and enjoying the peacefulness of the rural atmosphere of the islands. A growing number of residents and visitors tour the islands quietly by bicycle and explore the varied landscapes on foot. Historic points of interest (such as old homesteads), lakes and ponds, scenic meadows with Arbutus or Garry Oak, wildlife habitat, and community craft fairs also attract recreationists, as do the scattered campgrounds and picnic sites.

Facilities for boat launching and moorage, public access to the shoreline, nature interpretation, overnight accommodation, camping and picnicking, trails and viewpoints are all in great demand on most islands. The capacity of the islands to absorb increasing recreational use varies with the physical resources, local community values, and the impacts involved in each case.

Increased leisure time, demographic changes, and the economics of travel are factors influencing the numbers of people attracted to the islands, particularly to the coastal zone, which is sensitive to the increasing demands put upon it by growing populations and increased facilities.

16. LAND VALUES AND TAXATION

There is no doubt that over the long term the value of land in the Trust Area is rising. After making allowance for inflation the dollar values still climb as demand increases. This in turn advances assessed values and finally taxation. The factors behind this occurrence are the proximity of large urban centres, the accessibility provided by ferries, the relative scarcity of island land, especially waterfront, and the unique amenities to be found and enjoyed.

On the other hand, land values are generally no higher than those found in most adjacent urban areas. This is partly due to the low level of servicing found on the islands. The patterns and levels of land values can have significant social and land use implications.

THE PROVINCIAL INTEREST AND THE NEED FOR PLANNING

The previous section provided a description of those physical, biological and social features that make the Trust islands unique not only in British Columbia and Canada but, also, in the world; these features include physiography, climate, vegetation, wildlife and ways of living.

Each country contains a variety of distinct physical and biological environments and a variety of lifestyles. The existence of such variety is, itself, a value deserving preservation and nurture. The resilience and vitality of any society, now and in the future, depends on maintaining this diversity.

In Canada, a distinguishing characteristic of the country, of the society and, in fact, of the national purpose has been the diversity of physical environments and ways of life as well as a commitment to the maintenance and cultivation of this diversity. In British Columbia, particularly, a major contribution to the character of the Province is the abundance of dissimilar physical environments; biotic zones and lifestyles - from ranching areas of the Cariboo to fishing and lumbering communities of the North Coast; from urban concentrations of Vancouver and Victoria to the Queen Charlotte Islands; from mountain communities in the Kootenays to the marine environment of the Gulf Islands. Each has its singular value; none essentially "better" than another and each contributes to the richness and vitality of the whole Province.

It is of importance, then, not only for those who live in these places, but for all of us in the Province, that the unique features of these diverse environments and lifestyles should not be gradually and, perhaps, unwittingly obliterated by unplanned development that would destroy, at a loss to society as a whole, their distinctive characteristics.

The recognition of both the distinct character of the Trust islands and the urgent need for their preservation and nurture came in the 1960's. Sudden developmental pressure led to an abrupt acceleration and proliferation of land subdivision and development. This, unfortunately, was done without regard for the unique features of the area and was concerned as much, or more, with speculation and promotion as with human settlement and normal community growth. The need thus became increasingly urgent for measures which would provide for planning and control to conserve and protect those values which spurred development in the first place. It was clearly an immediate threat that the character and pace of development could, if uncontrolled, destroy those very things that are of value to island residents and all people of the Province.

Recognition of the issues was followed by a number of active measures to provide planning and protection. One of the first of these was the establishment, by the Provincial Government in 1969 of a 4 hectare (10 acre) land freeze throughout the Trust islands. In 1972, the Provincial Government established a standing committee of the House to report to the Legislature on the status of the Trust islands and make recommendations. As a result of this report, the Islands Trust was established. Its mandate was to preserve and protect the unique character of the area and it was given the authority to engage in land use planning for the Trust Area.

The statement of goals that follows sets out the directions that would be followed in implementing this mandate and expresses the objectives and values that are of significance to the people of the Province and the residents of the islands.

GOALS

It is the fundamental goal to fulfill the objectives of the *Islands Trust Act*, "To preserve and protect the Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment for the benefit of the residents of the Trust Area and of the Province generally." To accomplish these objectives, the following goals are accepted:

ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS

1. To preserve the unique natural environment of land, water and air and the life it supports.
2. To preserve the natural beauty of the Trust Area and recognize that areas of sensitivity or unique value require special protective measures.
3. To encourage the removal of existing sources of pollution and discourage activities or projects, inside or outside the Trust Area, which would reduce the natural and aesthetic values of the Area.
4. To encourage only the selective and careful use of renewable natural resources in ways consistent with the goals and policies.
5. To recognize the provincial and national significance of the unique social and physical diversities of the Trust Area.

SOCIAL GOALS

1. To preserve the rural character and atmosphere of settlements in the Trust Area and ensure that communities remain viable, healthful places in which to live, providing for a variety of lifestyles in harmony with the natural environment.
2. To ensure that access and opportunity, now and in the future, are provided for the public to enjoy and appreciate the Trust Area in harmony with the natural environment and existing communities.
3. To ensure that options for future generations to make land use decisions are not jeopardized.
4. To encourage gradual and appropriate, rather than rapid, change and growth.
5. To recognize that physical and cultural diversity of the Trust Area should be reflected by variations in local policy within this framework
6. To recognize co-operation and communication with government departments, other agencies and public involvement in the decision-making process as essential to the fulfillment of these goals.

POLICIES

The following policies are intended to accomplish the goals set out in the preceding section. These policies are specific statements about activities in the Trust Area which are acceptable or unacceptable, to be encouraged or discouraged. It is important to recognize that each individual policy statement is a part of the whole Plan, contributing to achievement of the Plan goals. As such the policy section which follows should be reviewed in conjunction with the other sections of the Plan, "The Trust Area", "Goals" and "Implementation".

It will also be observed that many of the policy statements fall outside the direct jurisdiction of the Islands Trust. However, it is the role of the Islands Trust to make recommendations to Government and to coordinate and assist in determination of policy for the purpose of achieving the Trust's object. The Islands Trust Act states (Sec. 4(2)) "... for carrying out the object of the Trust ... (the Trust) ... shall:

- (a) make recommendations to the Lieutenant Governor in Council respecting the determination, implementation and carrying out of policies for the preservation and protection of the trust area and its unique amenities and environment;
- (b) make recommendations to the Lieutenant Governor in Council respecting the acquisition, use and disposition by the Crown in right of the Province of land situated within the trust area;
- (c) coordinate and assist in the determination, implementation and carrying out of municipal and Provincial government policies for the preservation and protection of the trust area and its unique amenities and environment; "

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES

1. FRESH WATER

Fresh water supply, recognized by the United Nations as the world's most pressing environmental problem, is a major concern in the Trust Area. Sufficient quantities of unpolluted water are necessary for domestic use, commerce, agriculture, fish and wildlife. The islands, lacking the large watersheds and Winter snow pack common to the rest of B.C., have a limited resource to share among competing demands. The impact of settlement on the quality of ground and surface water and the costs associated with storage and distribution combined with natural scarcity lead to a requirement for conservation.

1. To encourage or require conservation measures such as small scale surface catchment in the use of the fresh water resource, aware that groundwater overuse will result in the destruction of this resource.
2. To protect water quality and quantity by requiring that watersheds and groundwater recharge areas be protected from degradation.
3. To prevent the disruption of natural wetlands, recognizing their ecological significance and importance to wildlife.
4. To require that an adequate potable water supply be proven for each lot created by subdivision.
5. To encourage water self sufficiency on each island thus avoiding off island supply.
6. To protect water quality by following the policies in Section "7. POLLUTION" (Environmental Policies).

2. THE LAND BASE

The land forms of the islands are essential to the area's scenic values and provide the base for the soils and water which support life on the islands. Alteration of these land forms could have serious aesthetic and environmental consequences.

1. To preserve natural land forms of the islands.
2. To oppose large scale extraction of stone, gravel, sand, soil and minerals.
3. To control small scale extraction of stone, gravel, sand, soil and minerals which should be restricted to local use only.
4. To require reclamation of gravel pits and quarry areas.
5. To control soil removal.
6. To support measures to avoid soil erosion resulting from logging, agriculture, road construction and other human activities.
7. To restrict interference with the natural, dynamic processes of coast erosion and deposition.
8. To protect human life and property by prohibiting development which is liable to rock fall, land slippage or subsidence, and erosion or flooding by salt or fresh water.

3. VEGETATION

The natural vegetation of the Trust Area contributes to the scenery and atmosphere which make the islands so attractive. While trees are the most prominent vegetation feature, the Trust islands support a diversity of wild flowers, shrubs and even cactus. Five Ecological Reserves in the Trust Area are devoted to the preservation of particular vegetation features.

1. To encourage the conservation of the natural vegetation of the Trust Area generally and, in particular, protect from disturbance the following:
 - (a) Significant examples of representative plant communities;
 - (b) Special stands or individual trees of importance due to scientific, scenic or historical interest;
 - (c) Examples of mature forests;
 - (d) Natural vegetation adjacent to the foreshore of the ocean;
 - (e) Natural vegetation around lakes, streams and wetlands;
 - (f) Areas of significance to wildlife, such as eagle nesting trees.
2. To regulate tree cutting.
3. To encourage environmentally sensitive forestry practices as outlined in Section "3. FORESTRY" (Social Policies).

4. WILDLIFE

The Trust Area is host to over 200 species of resident and migratory birds; mammals include deer, beaver, raccoon and mink. The habitat which supports this wildlife is continually eroded and threatened by human activities such as clearing, draining wetlands and building. On the other hand, habitat for some species is enhanced by disturbance, leading to population increases. Preservation measures must be taken to protect the wildlife population for the benefit of the many people who value this resource as a part of island living and recreation.

1. To conserve wildlife and to minimize the effects on it of human activities.
2. To preserve wildlife habitat generally and, particularly, by:
 - (a) Preventing interference with rocky islets used by wildlife;

- (b) Protecting special trees, such as those used by herons or eagles;
 - (c) Encouraging forestry practices which will minimize negative impact on habitat;
 - (d) Discouraging the use of pesticides and herbicides;
 - (e) Supporting measures to prohibit or restrict public access to sensitive areas;
 - (f) Encouraging minimum habitat disturbance from development, by provision of large lots, retention of vegetation and trees, retention of wetlands and maintenance of contiguous areas of undisturbed land;
 - (g) Preserving marine mammal habitat;
 - (h) Giving priority to the requirements of endangered species.
3. To support control of hunting in the interest of public safety, minimizing nuisance and conserving wildlife.
 4. To support non-consumptive use of wildlife, such as photography, scientific study and viewing, subject to avoidance of harassment.
 5. To encourage the enforcement of dog control regulations.
 6. To encourage control of domestic cats and the removal of wild strays.
 7. To support the prohibition of sea mammal capture by zoos, aquariums or other institutions.

5. THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

The waters of the Trust Area abound with life, ranging from plankton to sea lions and killer whales. Fish and shellfish are sought by residents, recreationists and commercial interests. Over-harvesting, pollution and habitat destruction threaten this invaluable resource.

1. To protect the marine life and ecology of Trust waters.
2. To protect marine life habitat by:
 - (a) Opposing the removal of sand, gravel or rock from beaches;
 - (b) Opposing the dredging or filling of tidal flats and the construction of causeways;

- (c) Requiring that docks and wharves be so located as to minimize impact on the marine ecology;
 - (d) Supporting measures to reduce foreshore erosion due to wave action from boats and ships;
 - (e) Opposing the granting of permits for the harvesting of natural kelp beds or other marine plants;
 - (f) Prohibiting development which would destroy herring spawning areas;
 - (g) Encouraging the maintenance and rehabilitation of salmon producing streams;
 - (h) Supporting the creation of underwater marine parks.
3. To support and encourage conservation measures which maintain and improve fish and shellfish stocks.
 4. To encourage the designation and enhancement of public shellfish areas.
 5. To support mariculture which does not significantly interfere with other marine life and which is compatible with recreational activities.
 6. To preserve a pollution-free marine environment by following the policies set out in Section "7. POLLUTION" (Environmental Policies).

6. THE SENSORY ENVIRONMENT

Scenery is one of the most striking features of the Trust Area. Residents, recreational visitors and ferry travellers all enjoy the rich variety of views, dominated by water and largely natural landscapes. On the islands, the atmosphere is enhanced by the smell of forest and salt air and by silence and the sounds of nature.

1. To protect scenic areas from disturbance, particularly those areas which have distinctive features or are highly visible.
2. To minimize the visual impact of development by:
 - (a) Permitting only low density development in scenic areas;
 - (b) Encouraging building design and finish which is compatible with the natural setting;
 - (c) Encouraging forestry practices which minimize scenic disturbance and generally encourage retention of vegetation;

- (d) Requiring reclamation of disused gravel pits and other disturbed areas;
 - (e) Requiring that roads and hydro lines be located to minimize scenic disturbance;
 - (f) Discouraging the conspicuous location of towers, communication dishes or other structures;
 - (g) Discouraging aerial transmission cables across bodies of water;
 - (h) Supporting the provision of street lights only where necessary for public safety and that such lighting be designed with due regard for aesthetics.
3. To provide opportunities for the public to view and enjoy scenery.
 4. To encourage individuals, government and organizations to clean up existing eyesores such as derelict automobiles and litter.
 5. To prohibit or discourage industrial or other activities which would create a nuisance by way of noise or odour.
 6. To generally discourage or minimize noise which would result in the degradation of the natural "soundscape".

7. POLLUTION

Pollution, a provincial, national and worldwide problem is particularly significant in the Trust Area, which has largely avoided the environmental degradation brought about elsewhere by industrial activities and populations in excess of the carrying capacity of the land. This relatively pristine area, however, is vulnerable to air and water pollution from outside the area, such as pulp mills and sewer outfalls, from activities in Trust waters, such as tanker traffic and sewage disposal from boats, and from settlement and industrial activities on the islands.

1. To give the highest priority to a healthful and pleasant environment, avoiding water and air pollution.
2. To prohibit, within the Trust Area, industrial or other activities which would create significant air or water pollution.
3. To oppose, adjacent to the Trust Area, activities which would create significant air or water pollution.
4. To prohibit the development of metal or coal mines and recommend that the Trust Area be reserved from exploration for these resources.

5. To recommend that the moratorium on oil and gas exploration in the Trust Area be continued.
6. To oppose increased oil tanker traffic in and adjacent to Trust waters and to support measures to reduce such traffic.
7. To protect sources of potable water by:
 - (a) Requiring adequate setbacks from shorelines for septic tanks;
 - (b) Supporting restrictions on the agricultural use of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides in watersheds;
 - (c) Supporting controls of recreational use on lakes;
 - (d) Ensuring that septic tank effluent does not contaminate surface or ground water.
8. To prohibit development in areas where septic tank systems will not function properly.
9. To ensure that solid waste disposal sites are situated in environmentally and aesthetically acceptable locations.
10. To encourage recycling of solid wastes.
11. To oppose the use of herbicides and pesticides in forestry and right-of-way maintenance.
12. To oppose disposal of solid waste in Trust waters.
13. To support measures which would reduce pollution and environmental damage from log handling and storage in Trust waters.
14. To support maximum levels of treatment for sewage outfalls into Trust waters.
15. To support regulations requiring sewage holding tanks in pleasure craft and pump-out facilities at marinas.
16. To oppose freighter moorage in Trust waters.
17. To encourage sewage disposal system alternatives to the septic tank and sewer.
18. To support any measures to reduce the dangers of transporting dangerous materials by air, sea or land.

8. SPECIAL AREAS

It is recognized that some areas are more significant than others, due to both their value and the demand for their use. The

coastal zone is the focus of recreational and residential demand, while supporting a great diversity of life and providing a major component of island scenery. Crown land, unlike private land, has particular value in that the public has full opportunity to determine future use. Areas of significant biological and physical features were identified in a 1975 study sponsored by the Nature Conservancy of Canada and the Islands Trust.

1. To recognize the special significance of the coastal zone in the natural environment and the competing demands of human activities on this area by:
 - (a) Enacting special protective regulations governing development in the coastal zone, including additional building setbacks on the waterfront;
 - (b) Recommending that Community Plans and By-laws reflect the policies which apply to the coastal zone.
2. To recognize that certain areas have special significance due to their natural physical, biological or aesthetic features by:
 - (a) Enacting special protective regulations to preserve special areas, shown on the Regional Plan Map, such as requirements for protection of vegetation and lower residential density;
 - (b) Encouraging public acquisition of special natural areas;
 - (c) Encouraging the concept of creating wilderness areas in suitable locations, for example major parts of Gambier and Valdes.
3. To recognize the value of undeveloped Crown lands as greenbelts by:
 - (a) Opposing development or alienation of Crown land, except for community service purposes, such as the creation of parks by the exchange of Crown for private land;
 - (b) Encouraging low impact recreation on Crown land.

SOCIAL POLICIES

1. HERITAGE

Heritage preservation is a Provincial goal and is important within the Trust Area, which contains many archaeological sites as well as buildings dating from the early settlement of the area by Europeans.

1. To support the preservation of significant remnants of past cultures.
2. To protect archaeological sites from disturbance.
3. To preserve buildings and sites of historical significance and outstanding or typical examples of architecture.
4. To designate and preserve as heritage roads those roads with a distinctive character based on their historical or cultural significance.
5. To encourage the use of appropriate traditional methods in activities such as farming and logging.

2. RESIDENTIAL SETTLEMENT

Residential settlement is the greatest and most obvious pressure on the islands' natural environment and traditional communities. Population growth in the Trust Area from 1976 to 1981 ranged from 16 to 91 percent (See page 13). Approximately 9,000 parcels remain vacant today. Subdivision under existing regulations could more than double the total number of available lots in the Area. The impact of this development has not been fully assessed.

1. To restrict amendments to existing Community Plans so that no more than a 5 percent increase in total potential population under the existing Community Plans is permitted.
2. To recommend that, in reviewing Community Plans, consideration be given to reducing anticipated population levels by:
 - (a) Encouraging the consolidation of existing small lots;
 - (b) Encouraging lower density development on smaller islands which do not have public ferry access or other services.
3. To review potential residential densities and rate of development and, where necessary, provide by By-law, for staged transition to proposed use.
4. To discourage provision of services which would tend to urbanize or suburbanize communities by:
 - (a) Requiring that engineering services and utilities, such as water systems and sewers, be minimized to be consistent with public health and safety;
 - (b) Ensuring that proposed services, through increased cost to residents, do not adversely affect the islands' capacity to support varied lifestyles;
 - (c) Warning potential residents not to expect urban standards.

5. To enact that those areas designated on the Plan Map as special areas be subject to a larger minimum lot size and that they be protected by:
 - (a) Requiring that areas for conservation, greenbelt or recreation be dedicated at the time of subdivision;
 - (b) Recommending that residential development be designed to minimize impact on the natural environment;
 - (c) Recommending that consideration be given to the special areas in reviews of Community Plans.
6. To discourage multiple family dwellings including apartment-type hotels with the exception of appropriate senior citizen housing schemes.
7. To advocate taxation policies which are supportive to these and other policies of this Plan.

3. FORESTRY

Forestry plays an important role in the Trust Area. Tree farms, owned by major forest companies, comprise 10,500 ha. (26,500 acs.) or 15.6 percent of the land area. Small scale logging is a traditional activity which provides employment for some people on most larger islands and is a source of income for larger land owners. This activity is frequently perceived to conflict with protection of fresh water, wildlife habitat and scenery.

1. To encourage forestry practices which are compatible with and complementary to the values of conservation and rural living which underlie this Regional Plan.
2. To encourage the following forestry practices:
 - (a) Avoiding large areas of clear-cut logging and using alternatives such as selective logging;
 - (b) Avoiding extended straight line boundaries between cut and retained trees;
 - (c) Replanting areas after logging with more than one indigenous species;
 - (d) Providing for fire protection, especially where forests are near residences;
 - (e) Using practices for logging and access construction which minimize soil erosion and encouraging the use of equipment which is least disruptive of soil and vegetation;
 - (f) Discouraging logging on excessively steep slopes;

- (g) Leaving buffer strips along roads, ocean front, streams, wetlands and lake shores with widths being dependent on topography, aesthetics, wind conditions, tree size and species, density and other needs such as animal or bird habitat preservation;
 - (h) Encouraging the maximum beneficial use of logging slash and non-commercial species in logging areas and generally requiring proper clean up after logging;
 - (i) Studying transportation issues before logging with a view to minimizing environmental and social impacts, e.g. truck routes and use of ferries, log dumps and booming areas;
 - (j) Encouraging labour intensive management practices and, where possible, giving island labour job priority;
 - (k) Providing for public recreation and access to inactive forest land by foot trail only;
 - (l) Considering wildlife needs including habitat in integrated management plans;
 - (m) Protecting watersheds and areas of botanical, geological, archaeological or other forms of scientific interest;
 - (n) Opposing the use of herbicides, pesticides or other toxic substances.
3. To support the continuation of Certified Tree Farm areas, subject to the following:
- (a) The forestry practices set out in Section 2 (above) should be followed;
 - (b) The maximum periodic cut should be considered for individual islands, rather than as a part of wider management areas;
 - (c) Taxation benefits should be recaptured if land is removed from Tree Farm status.
4. To discourage logging on smaller islands.
5. To oppose logging on lands designated U.R.E.P. (use, recreation and enjoyment of the public).
6. To encourage small sawmills to cut local timber, providing they are suitably located with respect to residential areas and the natural environment.
7. To encourage woodlots for local domestic fuel, subject to environmental protection.

4. AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is a traditional activity in the islands, most of which were settled by homesteaders in the late Nineteenth Century. As well as producing food for local consumption, island farms contribute to the pleasant rural atmosphere of the islands. Seventeen percent of the Trust's land area 11,400 has. (28,200 acs.) is within the boundaries of the Agricultural Land Reserve.

1. To encourage small scale food production.
2. To encourage local food production activity by:
 - (a) Permitting support services such as roadside stands, irrigation facilities, appropriate food processing facilities and island produce markets;
 - (b) Ensuring that zoning or other regulations do not overly restrict farming activities;
 - (c) Restricting land use adjoining agricultural land to uses and densities compatible with agriculture;
 - (d) Supporting taxation relief for farmland and A.L.R. land as an incentive for farm creation and an aid to the survival of existing farms;
 - (e) Supporting farm assistance and education programs sponsored by the Ministry of Agriculture or other agencies.
3. To encourage subsistence farming as a traditional and valuable lifestyle on the islands.
4. To support the objectives of the Agricultural Land Commission Act toward the conservation of land with agricultural potential by:
 - (a) Ensuring that lot size standards and dwelling unit densities serve to protect agricultural potential;
 - (b) Encouraging the consolidation of smaller legal parcels within the A.L.R.;
 - (c) Supporting "open land recreation", which does not adversely affect agricultural potential;
 - (d) Supporting activities such as nurseries or horticulture;
 - (e) Not approving development or activities which would have an adverse effect on agricultural potential.
5. To not approve removing land from the A.L.R. unless:
 - (a) It is clearly demonstrated that the land was incorrectly designated; or

- (b) It is clearly demonstrated that removal is necessary due to exceptional public interest.

5. BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

Traditional economic activities have been logging, farming, fishing and small scale recreational developments. More recently, the dramatic population influx has created a demand for services to the residential community and increasing numbers of visitors (boaters, cyclists, campers, etc.) have placed demands on recreational facilities. It is vital that the very qualities sought by both residents and visitors are not destroyed in an effort to accommodate these demands.

1. To encourage traditional activities such as fishing, agriculture and forestry on a scale compatible with the island communities and environment.
2. To prohibit large scale industrial or commercial developments likely to result in adverse aesthetic, environmental and social effects.
3. To encourage home occupations and cottage industry, subject to compatibility with the natural environment and local communities.
4. To ensure that commercial and industrial developments are located, designed and landscaped to harmonize with the rural and natural landscape, having special regard for the retention of trees, natural vegetation and natural features.
5. To avoid ribbon commercial development and random scattering of commercial locations.
6. To encourage tourism which depends on and harmonizes with rural living and a largely undisturbed natural environment, and to discourage tourism which is in conflict with these features and other policies of this Plan.
7. To advocate a policy of "welcome without promotion" in publicity for tourism.
8. To encourage small scale traditional lodges and discourage large facilities, strata-title developments and time sharing accommodation.
9. To support the "bed and breakfast" approach to visitor accommodation.
10. To approve marina development based on minimum need and the capacity of the environment by:
 - (a) Requiring environmental impact assessment of new marinas or expansion of existing marinas;

- (b) Prohibiting major urban components such as major repair facilities, large resorts or condominiums;
- (c) Recognizing that existing facilities in and adjacent to the Trust Area provide fuel, supplies and services;
- (d) Discouraging permanent berthing and storage of off island boats at island marinas;
- (e) Prohibiting liveaboard wharfage, except for boats in transit;
- (f) Encouraging land storage of smaller boats.

6. RECREATION

The islands and waters between the mainland and Vancouver Island have provided for many types of recreation since the end of the last century. Traditional resort-lodges and Provincial parks have served visitors while many cottages have been built by part-time summer residents. Most recreation is related to the sea and the coastline. Increased accessibility from ferries and private boats has intensified pressure on the natural environment, endangering the very qualities which attracted people in the first place.

1. To recognize that the Trust Area provides recreational opportunities for local people and others living elsewhere in the Province and beyond.
2. To encourage only those recreational activities which are compatible with the unique amenities and environment upon which the recreational opportunities depend.
3. To encourage and plan for an integrated park system of smaller islands and appropriate less developed parts of larger islands primarily based on the Special Areas designated on the Plan Map. This park system should:
 - (a) Serve the local and wider public;
 - (b) Minimize recreational/residential conflict;
 - (c) Give a high priority to environmental protection in park design;
 - (d) Avoid high concentrations of recreational use;
 - (e) Include marine and underwater components;
 - (f) Include the concept of long distance land and marine trails, including a trail from Gabriola to Saturna;
 - (g) Emphasize natural qualities, minimizing buildings, structures and works and using building materials and designs compatible with the natural environment;

- (h) Provide adequate supervision, toilet facilities, garbage removal and fire protection;
 - (i) Not include commercial development;
 - (j) Co-ordinate park acquisition with acquisition of special natural areas, as in Section "8. SPECIAL AREAS, 2(b) (Environmental Policies).
4. To encourage marine parks and undeveloped areas, rather than commercial marinas, as destinations for recreational boaters.
 5. To encourage provision of a public boat launching ramp on each major island.
 6. To encourage the creation of local neighbourhood parks in residential areas.
 7. To encourage low impact recreational activities on Crown land.
 8. To support the provision of facilities for visitors and residents engaging in low impact recreation such as cycling, hiking and canoeing.
 9. To discourage the following:
 - (a) Activities which, by reason of noise or disturbance of vegetation or wildlife, are disruptive to the land environment;
 - (b) Recreational facilities which degrade the visual qualities of the landscape or seascape;
 - (c) Activities which cause pollution;
 - (d) Recreational activities which deplete marine life by over harvesting.

7. TRANSPORTATION

Eleven of the Trust islands are served by car ferries, two others by public pedestrian ferries, while access to the other approximately 450 islands in the Trust Area is by private boat.

Island roads, in addition to facilitating island transportation, may add to or detract from the rural atmosphere and environment, depending on construction standards and levels of maintenance. Foot-paths and hiking trails are important for recreation.

1. To encourage a road system in keeping with the islands' natural environment and rural character by supporting such policies as:

- (a) Minimizing disturbance of natural features by keeping road design, clearing and paving widths in harmony with topography;
 - (b) Retaining natural vegetation on roadsides;
 - (c) Integrating installation of utilities with road construction to minimize impact;
 - (d) Discouraging the use of herbicides to clear rights-of-way;
 - (e) Minimizing the number and size of road signs;
 - (f) Using equipment of appropriate size for maintenance and emphasizing the use of manual labour;
 - (g) Minimizing ditching to avoid disturbance of surface and ground water flows;
 - (h) Maintaining unused rights-of-way as greenbelt.
2. To encourage the development and maintenance of pedestrian, equestrian and bicycle paths as part of island transportation systems.
3. To recommend the following guidelines for ferry service:
- (a) Expansion of service should follow, not anticipate, demand;
 - (b) The ideal service capacity should be of marginal adequacy;
 - (c) Peak demands should not be considered in defining ideal capacity;
 - (d) Movement of pedestrians, rather than vehicles, should be encouraged;
 - (e) Parking should be provided at terminals;
 - (f) Travellers should be encouraged to avoid peak travel times;
 - (g) Car ferry service should not be extended to islands not now served;
 - (h) "Pedestrian only" service should be provided direct to island parks, if demand exists;
 - (i) Consideration should be given to meeting additional demand for ferry service with passenger ferries;

- (j) Schedules should not be amended to encourage off-island commuting;
 - (k) A fare structure should be maintained to avoid hardship, which would be caused by high fares, and excessive use, which would be caused by low fares.
4. To require that ferry terminal alteration or expansion be in keeping with the islands' environment by:
 - (a) Minimizing foreshore filling and using only clean rock fill where filling is necessary;
 - (b) Retaining existing trees;
 - (c) Situating parking areas to be as inconspicuous as possible;
 - (d) Breaking up blacktop areas with landscaping;
 - (e) Providing pleasant waiting areas for passengers, indoor and outdoor;
 - (f) Using environmentally sympathetic building designs.
 5. To oppose any proposal to connect islands to Vancouver Island, the mainland or one another by bridge or tunnel, whether or not access to the islands is provided by the bridge or tunnel.
 6. To encourage the continuation and maintenance of the existing system of Federal Government wharves.
 7. To encourage the provision on each populated island of a facility, appropriately located, for unloading bulk cargo.
 8. To recommend that no additional customs points of entry be established on Trust islands.
 9. To encourage the provision of emergency helicopter pads on populated islands.
 10. To oppose the construction of airports, or airstrips for group use for resorts or for other commercial or industrial purposes.
 11. To oppose airstrips in residential areas.
 12. To recommend that flight paths for scheduled airline service be routed away from residential or recreational areas.
 13. To encourage the restriction of float plane take-off and landing locations to minimize nuisance, noise pollution and safety hazard.

8. ENERGY

Although the major islands in the Trust Area, with the exception of Lasqueti, are served by B.C. Hydro, almost all of the remaining approximately 450 lesser islands are not. The cost and environmental impact of providing such services, combined with the desire for independence held by many islanders, make the islands an ideal location for energy alternatives and conservation.

1. To promote and encourage the conserver approach to the production, distribution and use of all forms of energy.
2. To encourage educational and informational programs on energy conservation, including demonstration and experimental projects.
3. To encourage the use of renewable energy resources wherever possible in ways that are consistent with other policies of the Trust.
4. To require the involvement of island residents in decisions affecting the supply of energy to the islands, especially those dependent upon off island systems.
5. To oppose proposals for the generation of nuclear power including nuclear waste disposal.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Particular developments within the Trust Area may have significant effects on the physical and social environment. If these environments are to be protected, it is essential that the consequences of proposed developments be thoroughly studied before proposals are approved.

1. To require that environmental impact assessments, including studies where necessary, be undertaken respecting any major development under Islands Trust jurisdiction and to encourage such assessments where developments affecting the Trust Area fall under other jurisdictions.
2. To require environmental impact assessments to be undertaken for any project at the discretion of the Trust Committee having jurisdiction.
3. To require that environmental impact assessments consider social as well as physical impacts.
4. To require that environmental impact assessments consider the long term as well as short term, consequences of any development.

5. To include the public in the process of environmental impact assessment by:
 - (a) Informing the public of such studies, including their terms of reference;
 - (b) Providing for Public Hearings;
 - (c) Disclosing results of such studies without delay.

IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of these policies and goals can be achieved by the combined use of a number of devices and procedures. Because the Trust Area comes under the jurisdiction of many local, Provincial and Federal agencies the Islands Trust does not have the final authority to ensure the achievement of many of its goals and objectives. Some policies can be effected directly by Local and General Trust Committees, while others can be furthered only by agreements and consultation with the relevant senior government agencies. A description of the various jurisdictional responsibilities and appropriate measures follows.

1. LOCAL COMMUNITY PLANS AND BY-LAWS

Community Plans and land use regulatory By-laws are now in place for each of the thirteen major islands and many of their associated or satellite islands. The remaining smaller islands will be covered by similar By-laws in the near future.

The Community Plans are fairly general statements of objectives and land use preferences derived from the express wishes of residents and landowners. The regulatory By-laws establish minimum lot sizes and the zones within which certain uses are permitted. Taken together, these devices define in general terms the scale of development desired, the rate of change preferred and how the amenities and resources should be used, protected and maintained. In most cases the general goals and policies mentioned herein find some expression in these local By-laws and Plans.

The effectiveness of local Plans and By-laws in achieving the general goals and policies of the Trust may be reduced by several factors. The first limitation arises from the fact that local Plans were the expression of particular communities at a particular time. There is considerable variation between the islands on specific issues - the degree to which commercial activities, logging or tourist accommodation are to be permitted or encouraged for example. There are differences due to the large differences in stage of development and the rate at which changes in land use are occurring. Plans and By-laws produced ten years ago may not reflect the changes that have occurred in recent years, and they were often produced of necessity when relevant data were missing or limited. With increased knowledge of the

patterns and direction of change it may be necessary now for Local Trust Committees to review and reconsider their local Plans and By-laws. It is to be hoped that in so doing the goals and policies expressed in this document will be given serious consideration.

These local planning tools are further limited in that generally speaking they are not legally binding on higher levels of government. For example, the Ministry of Transportation and Highways is the final approving authority for subdivision applications and the Lands Branch has the final authority for the approval of foreshore leases, although in both cases the applications are submitted to the Trust for its recommendations. Although many agencies of senior levels of government consult local community plans, it is within their power to approve or initiate projects and to make decisions that are contrary to them particularly when consequences are judged to be in a greater public interest. To minimize the frequency and impact of these conflicting decisions, several things need to occur. Firstly, there needs to be a generally accepted public policy in support of the aims and objectives of the Islands Trust, and this should be acknowledged by and acted upon by all government agencies. Secondly, where in the larger public interest a conflict of policies seems inevitable, the agencies concerned should involve the Trust early in the planning process in an effort to minimize impact and gain the Trust's support and cooperation.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Many local Plans indicate a desire to request the use of Environmental Impact Assessments (E.I.A.) as part of the approval process before major developments are initiated or where the physical and social consequences are difficult to estimate. It is likely that the General Trustees will establish similar requirements for projects that affect two or more islands, or for those smaller islands that come under the jurisdiction of the General Trust Committee.

The use of E.I.A. should provide information useful in determining the cost/benefit relationships of major projects, and thereby assist in the selection of alternatives. Such information is particularly valuable whenever project proposals appear to conflict with existing policies yet have merit and are in the public interest.

3. THE ISLANDS TRUST POLICIES

The present document has been approved by the Islands Trust Council to be the general statement of goals and policies for the Trust Area. It is to be expected that all Trust Committees will consider these policies when they amend or interpret local community plans and by-laws.

It is the wish of the Islands Trust that other government agencies will give due consideration to these policies when they are called upon to approve or initiate projects affecting the Trust Area.

4. ISLANDS TRUST FUND

A number of sections of the Islands Trust Act provide for the establishment of an Islands Trust Fund by means of which the Trust could acquire land and money to further the objects of the Trust. These sections of the Act have not yet been proclaimed but a request to have it done has been submitted to the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

The Trust fund would enable the Trust to accept gifts and bequests of land and money. The objective would be to acquire, preserve and manage in perpetuity those areas deemed to be most valuable for recreation, nature study, research and aesthetic enjoyment. The land thus acquired would be managed to avoid the effects of neglect, yet control the intensity and nature of its use. Such lands and properties would be made accessible to the public in ways judged to be appropriate considering the nature of each site, the community of which it is a part and the general desire to preserve essential features. The operation of the fund would depend on gifts and bequests from those directly concerned in the private sector, thus minimizing a dependency on public funds and resources.

Presently, most of the land in the Trust Area is privately owned and subject to the vagaries of time, taxes and the market place. In time many of the larger parcels of land, the heritage sites, and those of particular aesthetic appeal will be broken up or sold, and in other ways made unavailable to the general public. These especially valued areas in the Strait of Georgia are finite in number, yet the demand for them is increasing. For these reasons it is the conviction of the Islands Trust that many of the policies and the general mandate of the Trust can be achieved in part through the operation of the Trust fund. Such stewardship would appear to be essential if many areas of the Trust are to be made available to future generations.

5. INTER-AGENCY AGREEMENTS AND COOPERATION

Many of the goals of the Islands Trust can be achieved in full only with the cooperation of other government agencies. To ensure such cooperation and to achieve some continuity over time, the Trust has submitted briefs, engaged in joint meetings, and has sought consultative arrangements with a number of government departments. For example, a protocol agreement has been established with the Lands Branch in regard to the disposition of Crown land on the islands; meetings were held with B.C. Hydro which led to a route selection for the proposed gas pipeline that would minimize environmental impacts;

meetings with the Ministry of Transportation and Highways are being used to develop mutually acceptable standards for the rural roads on the islands; the Lands Branch and the Marine Resources Branch have recently cooperated with the Islands Trust to establish recreational shellfish reserves on the islands. In time it is hoped that similarly productive cooperation will be established in regard to ferry services, taxation, agriculture and forestry, recreational facilities, and environmental protection.

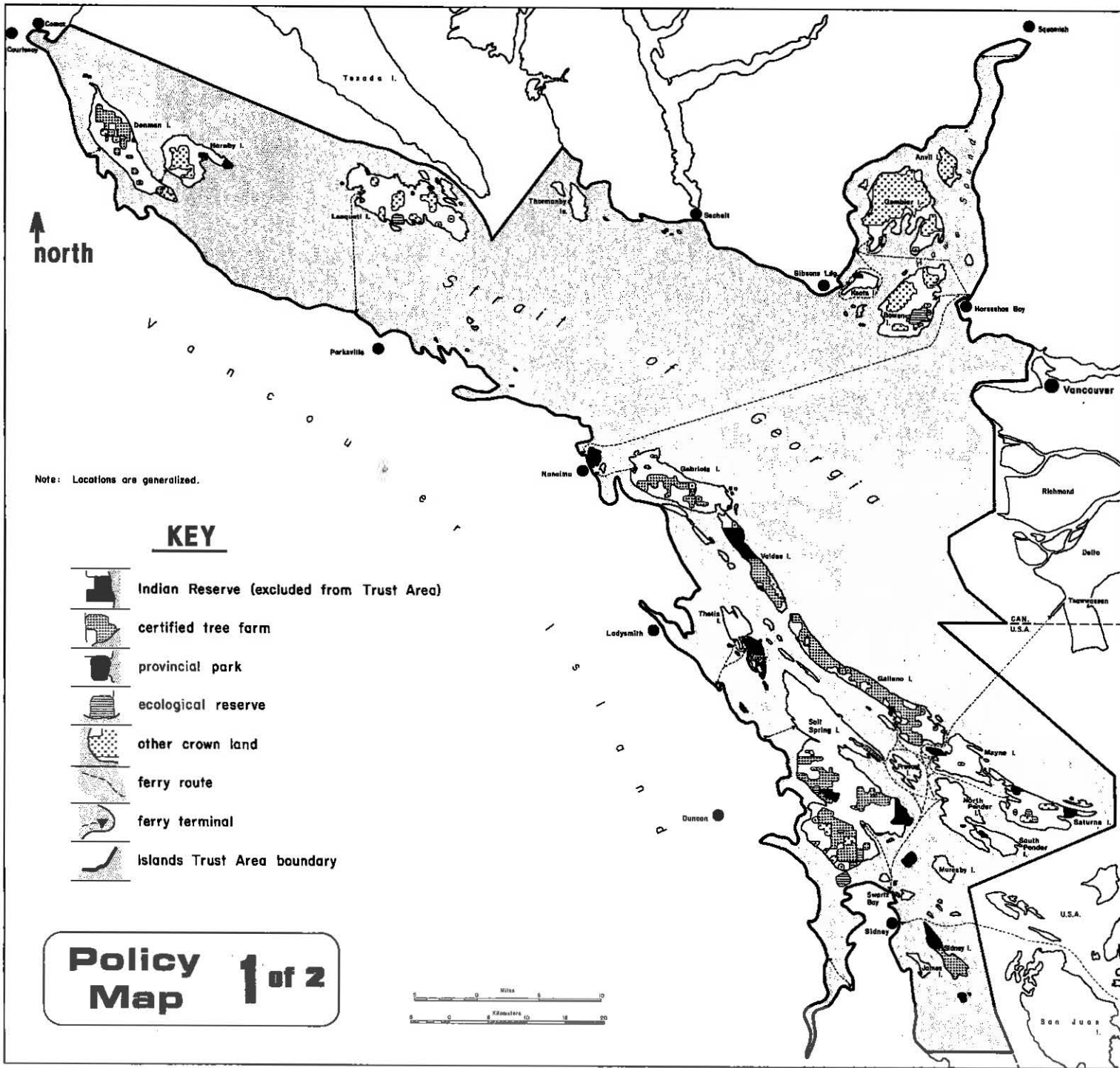
A further important form of cooperation has arisen in regard to research and surveys designed to increase our knowledge of our environment and the effects arising from our use and occupation of it. A system to coordinate such research efforts and to establish mutually useful projects is very much needed. Initiatives in this regard will be undertaken.

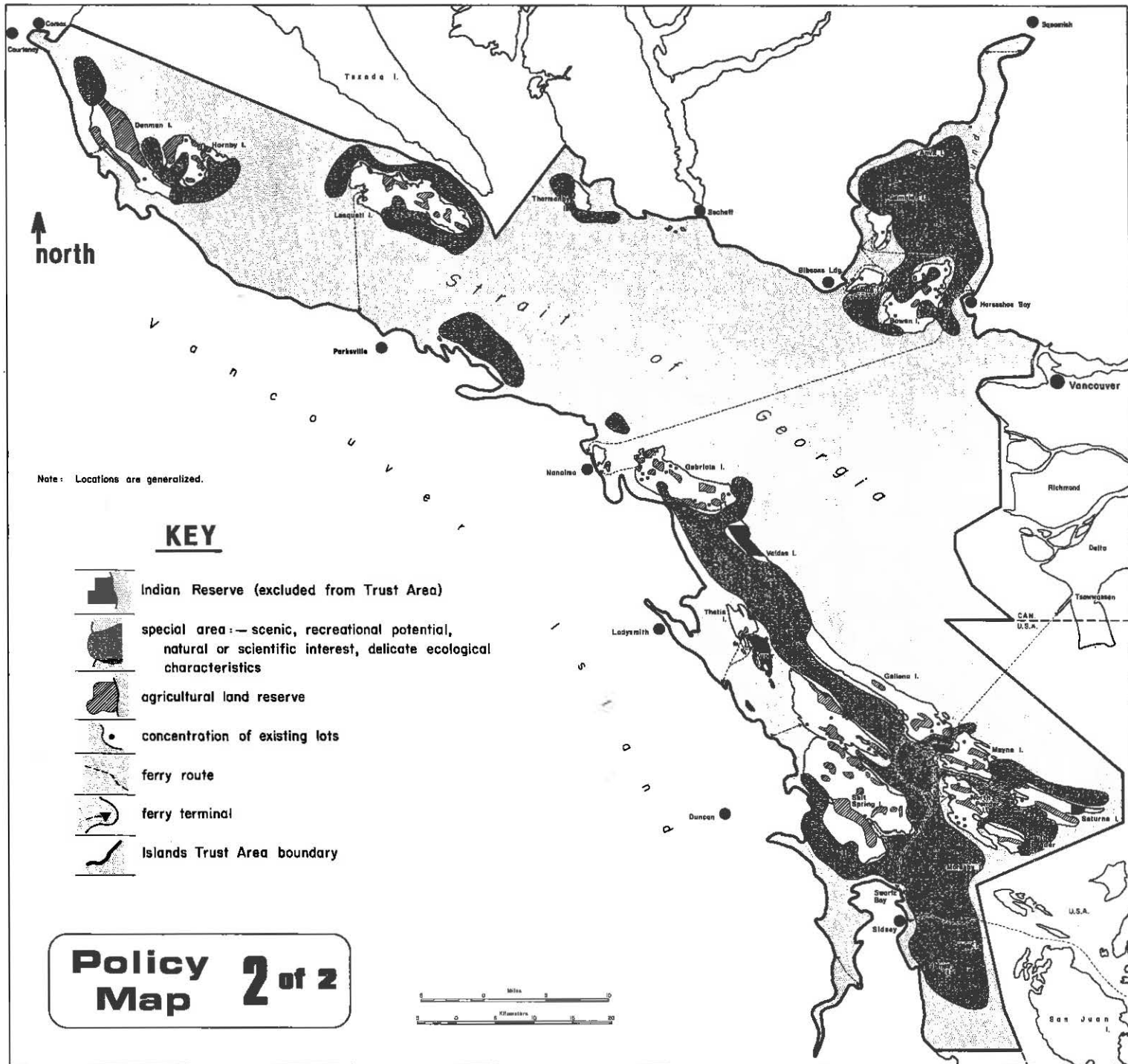
The major issue remains however one of developing a real commitment to the concept of the Islands Trust on the part of all levels of government. With such a common purpose established it should then be possible to establish a process for the resolution of conflicts between the mandate and policies of the Trust on the one hand and the greater public interest on the other. Toward this end the Trust will continue to work.

6. PUBLIC SUPPORT AND INVOLVEMENT

In the final analysis the success of the Trust and its policies will depend in large measure upon the support it receives from the public. Only with public support will governments energetically and enthusiastically work with the Trust to achieve a common purpose or to resolve conflicts in a productive fashion. Only with public support can the unlegislatable goals be achieved. Only with the cooperation of the interested public can the intent of local Plans and By-laws be realized.








To gain such support the Trust must involve the public in the selection of choices, in the definition of goals and the establishment of policies. This process has begun on the islands with the public meetings and the formal hearings used to approve and amend Community Plans and Zoning By-laws. This goal has been furthered by ensuring public discussion on and off the islands concerning the content of this document. By publishing the newsletter THE ISLANDS, by participation in meetings called by other government agencies on issues affecting the Trust Area, by making all meetings open to the public and encouraging a two way flow of information and concern, it is to be hoped that the Trust and its staff will remain in contact with the constituency it was set up to serve.





Note: Locations are generalized.

KEY

-  Indian Reserve (excluded from Trust Area)
-  special area:— scenic, recreational potential, natural or scientific interest, delicate ecological characteristics
-  agricultural land reserve
-  concentration of existing lots
-  ferry route
-  ferry terminal
-  Islands Trust Area boundary

Policy Map 2 of 2

