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Sent: Sunday, February 7, 2021 10:06 PM
To: Islands2050
Cc: Sue Ellen Fast
Subject: Islands 2050 survey on the Islands Trust Policy Statement

To: Trust Council

My main concern in providing this submission is to address the fundamental issue that the Policy Statement must reflect a strong, legal position which is resilient to challenges in the long term, in consort with the provincial government.

I have been a property owner on Bowen Island since 1975. During a period of about 15 years, I was involved in various community projects and political campaigns. These activities included providing support for the creation and implementation of our Official Community Plan, and political campaigns in which we successfully elected a number of Island Trustees, including two former Chairmen of the Islands Trust, as well as regional directors and Advisory Planning Commission members who strongly supported the Islands Trust and its mandate.

During those years, and subsequent years, these formative, pioneering efforts have established a strong foundation for a community dedicated to preserving its island way of life within the mandate of the Islands Trust. That foundation has remained strong through a mutually supportive relationship between our community and the Islands Trust.

Given the unrelenting pressures faced by a small community next door to Canada's third largest city, Bowen's ongoing relationship with the Islands Trust is absolutely critical in preserving and protecting the unique island amenities that are synonymous with our island way of life.

As well, given our specific, legal designation as an island municipality within the Islands Trust - which sets us apart from urban oriented municipalities in Metro Vancouver - Bowen's relationship with the Islands Trust is also critical in maintaining the continued, long term policies of sustainable, balanced and gradual growth within the OCP's framework of comprehensive planning. That comprehensive planning, as reflected in our Official Community Plan, incorporates the consideration of all environmental factors, which is also aligned with the Islands Trust mandate of preserving and protecting the unique amenities of the islands within the Islands Trust.

In my personal experience since 1975, I have become acutely aware of the various political pressures, manifested both externally and internally, which have been exerted on the island over the years. Long term islanders such as myself have witnessed attempts to weaken or sever Bowen's affiliation with the Islands Trust, in conjunction with development proposals which have directly challenged the provisions of Bowen's Official Community Plan. Given Bowen's proximity to a large urban centre, I am only confirming occurrences which come as no surprise to anyone.

The fundamental point I am making in my submission is that the process of updating a policy statement which is greatly resilient to the above challenges is critical to the fundamental mandate and integrity of our federation of islands. By its very nature, it is an ongoing project on various fronts which can permit the policy statement to reflect a legal structure which ensures an even greater resilience in the long term:

1. A process that necessitates a review in further strengthening a legal structure which ensures the continuity of the federation and its mandate within the province - so that it is more fully resilient and impervious to long term changes in provincial politics.

2. A process that considers options for a form of overriding conservancy that protects the Islands Trust and its mandate in perpetuity, given that the unique amenities of the islands are being preserved and protected for the benefit of the entire province, the country and visitors from other nations. Starting with the provincial jurisdiction, other options can also be explored at the national and international level.

3. A process that considers the manner in which any legal structures that further strengthen the Islands Trust and its mandate can be harmonized.

As the above requires foundational background work that considers the long term future of the Islands Trust federation and its mandate, and which can then be reflected in an updated Policy Statement, I present it here as food for thought in charting a more resilient future for islands that need to be fully recognized and protected as unique gems of nature within the picturesque beauty of Canada's west coast.

Stay safe and well, Islands Trust!

John Sbragia