

**From:** Islands2050  
**Sent:** Friday, June 25, 2021 11:14 AM  
**To:** Islands2050  
**Subject:** FW: Couple questions about the new IT policy

**From:** Laura Thomson [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 23, 2021 5:46 PM  
**To:** Trustees <[Trustees@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:Trustees@islandstrust.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** Executive Admin <[execadmin@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:execadmin@islandstrust.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** Couple questions about the new IT policy

Greetings,

I am a resident and landowner on Denman Island, and I've recently read the new IT policy changes.

I have a couple questions about it, and hoping you can clarify for me, or, direct me to someone who can. Thank you

First:

4.3.9 Trust Council shall coordinate with, and advocate to, the provincial government to grant Islands Trust the necessary jurisdictional authority to preserve and protect forest ecosystems, including:

- legislation to prohibit clear-cutting and logging of old-growth in the Trust Area; and
- authority to regulate tree cutting in the Trust Area.

My question is in regards to the second item, the regulation of tree cutting.

Considering many islanders have always managed their own trees, for building materials, land-design, or firewood, this seems overly prohibitive, then the first portion of this statement already covers the clear-cutting and logging concerns.

Many individuals on the islands are not wealthy by any means, and rely on firewood for example, to heat their homes. If this proposed policy turns into a bylaw preventing people from cutting down their own trees (for firewood), without costly permits or expert opinion, this will cause a financial hardship to many.

There are families, and elderly folks, who would not be able to afford the extra costs (on an ongoing basis) all for the ability to acquire their annual heating source.

Also, individuals have historically used their own wood for building fences, animal or livestock pens, gardens, and other land-management necessities.

Removing this ability will prevent some from constructing anything at all, since the alternative is expensive.

Causing islanders to make town trips to buy lumber from (Home Depot for example), is a much greater carbon footprint, and a far higher financial cost, than allowing them to

continue using the resources on their own lands.

The ability to work your own land, utilizing the resources on it, is a significant and vital option that supports many islanders in their farming, growing, and homesteading-type lifestyles.

This seems contrary to the efforts to mitigate climate change, and what options will these families and individuals have, if they cannot afford to collect their own firewood as per usual, or build their own fences, outbuildings, and houses?

This would cause individuals to return to the cities for purchase of materials, from an industry that has negatively impacted our environment, it seems to me, we should be moving away from that industry-supporting approach.

Has the IT considered the serious implications for this restrictive (and seemingly heavy-handed) policy?

Next Question:

The two below statements from the IT policy seem contradictory, one the one hand suggesting the use of renewable resources, and at the same time suggesting preventing the use of one of our renewable resources.

"6.1.22 Trust Council shall advocate to property owners, residents, and visitors to reduce the burning of wood and fossil fuels by adopting sustainable alternative technologies. (5.1.4)

And then the contrary statement:

6.1.23 Trust Council shall advocate to government agencies, non-governmental agencies, property owners, residents, and visitors to use renewable sources of energy within the Trust Area.

At this moment, I am not aware of any island having access to Renewable Natural Gas, which is 30% more cost effective than Electricity (BC Hydro), many residents rely on wood burning stoves for heat, and some for heat and cooking.

These statements appear to require some clarification, because as mentioned in my first paragraph, wood burning is a vital part of gulf island life.

There are many homes that do not use electric heat, or have electricity at all. Many individuals live very lightly on the land, choosing to go without modern conveniences, and wood burning supports this environmentally friendly lifestyle.

Please explain what the above statements actually mean, and if needed, please provide a list of WHICH renewable resources the IT would like people to use, and which you would like us not to use.

Does the IT have plans to work with a natural gas company, and provide access to Renewable Natural Gas?

Next Question:

4.2.12 Trust Council shall encourage, educate, and advocate to government agencies and nongovernmental organizations, property owners, residents, and visitors to adopt water conservation practices in the Trust Area, including through the use of innovative technologies such as rainwater harvesting, above-ground water cisterns, alternative

sewage disposal systems, reuse of water, the treatment and use of grey water, and the use of water saving devices. (4.4.4, 4.4.7)

Sidebar "Commented [DH44]: Note: rainwater harvesting is encouraged as a supplemental water source, but not as a primary water supply"

My question here is the confusing nature of the above two statements. Firstly, many islands across all islands use rainwater catchment systems as either the primary, or the sole method of sourcing water. Why would the IT say it encourages innovative technologies, including rainwater harvesting, and then add a sidenote stating they do not want rainwater used as a primary source?

Moving into a changing world where water shortages will become an issue, we should be advocating for more options than wells. Why would the Islands Trust, knowing many islanders already use rainwater catchment as their primary source, state this is not an acceptable means of primary water source?

It is an effective, proven, and climate friendly means of supporting ones property and homestead.

Why would the IT discourage it, and why can a person not make that choice themselves?

On my land, as an example, I have a barn and a house with metal roofs. It takes one rainstorm in November and our cisterns are full.

Infact, if we had a few more cisterns, would be able to stop using our well entirely. We could collect a years worth of water in a very short period of time.

Has the IT not considered the use of rainwater as a long-standing method employed on the islands?

I do not see any viable alternatives pointed out in your policy statement. Unless you can provide islanders with an alternative to wells and rainwater catchment, it seems to me that rainwater/cisterns is (still) an excellent and climate friendly method.

This completes my email, I would appreciate some clarification, and reflection on how the IT has considered the implications of some of these policy changes.

Much of it appears as though those at the bottom of the financial (class) ladder will suffer the most hardships as a result of this policy, and the subsequent bylaws.

(If you were wealthy, you could pay others to buy your Home Depot lumber, Truck in your water).

It is difficult for many who live on the islands not to see this new policy as a classist approach, where wealthy landowners are the only ones who won't be negatively impacted.

The islands have historically been a place of farming, homesteading, and those who work their own land, and grow their own food. This policy seems to ignore those many individuals, by ignoring the consequences they will face as a result.

These are healthy and climate friendly lifestyles, and the IT ought to be supporting those

who choose this life, rather than designing a system where only those with financial wealth can reside on the islands.

Laura Thomson

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