

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2022 6:59 PM
To: Islands2050
Subject: Draft Policy Statement

Dear Trust Council and Islands 2050 Project Team,

[I am resending my letter sent to this email address just 10 minutes ago. I am resending as I had addressed my first email to "Islands Trust" as opposed to "Trust Council and Islands 2050 Project Team" which too late I learnt is required for letters to be considered and publicly posted. The contents are entirely the same.]

I am writing to provide input regarding your Draft Policy Statement which greatly concerns me – to the extent that I feel the Trust is far overreaching in what it seeks to control, and how.

There is a certain irony in the Draft Policy Statement plan to tremendously extend the Trust's mandate and powers to unprecedented and, frankly, inappropriate levels of bureaucratic growth. Seeking expanded, far-reaching powers, and duplicating the mandates of other arms of local, provincial and federal government at a time defined by rising reactivity to excessive bureaucracy, implies the Trust is unable to account for the public pulse. This may form an existential threat to the Trust itself.

Whereas in the past I have supported the Islands Trust I will be unable to do so ever again, as a matter of principle, if the Draft Policy Statement and proposed 2022/23 Budget are sanctioned. For several decades I was a supporter of the Islands Trust even while many around me were against it. But the Trust is seeking to go too far. I see it increasingly losing the support of those who once believed in the need for the Trust – people like me. After a lifetime of belief in the need to steward nature, to protect the incredible natural beauty of the B.C. coastline, I no longer believe the Trust in its current form is the right body for such a role. I have been startled to admit the extent of my feelings against the Islands Trust as it stands in 2022 – and where it seeks to expand from here.

To give but one example of my multiple objections to the Draft Policy Statement, where is the logic in requiring owners of properties zoned Large Rural Residential, to pay fees and undergo bureaucratic review to cut down a tree? We do not live in an urban metropolitan area. I live rurally for the beauty of the landscape, for the peace, for exposure to nature, and to feel a stronger sense of autonomy than in a metropolitan centre. While I am loath to cut any tree, a simplistic, uncritical policy dictating yet more fees and complex, lengthy bureaucratic processes *to cut down a single tree* on privately owned large rural properties is highly questionable. Has the Trust sought to generate an alternate policy that deals with clear-cutting of trees on private property as can sometimes occur, as opposed to restricting the rights of ALL rural property owners who may wish to take down the odd tree on their land? Or is this primarily about garnering greater revenue to support even further bureaucratic expansion (and new ways to limit the rights of residents) when the Trust's current size should be more than enough?

This manner of logic might be acceptable within the Trust – it must be, to have come this far. But is it grounded to the larger context and the public pulse? I think not. Commercial activities and the lax standards applied to regulate them have arguably been responsible for far more damage to the natural environment in B.C. than the actions of small minorities who do not see a need to steward and protect nature. Most residents of the Islands do not need the Islands Trust to help them protect nature. The Trust should instead deal with the most obvious, egregious threats to the Islands, especially from commercial interests that continue to be enabled by our governments to horribly exploit the natural world. Furthermore, I see no need to duplicate other levels of government – imposing substantial inefficiencies in costs, complexity, and time.

The Trust no longer has my support. Its proposed overreach has convinced me to actively do whatever I can to see the Trust restructured in a way that better, more reasonably, protects our Islands and *serves* rather than grossly *restricts* the rights of rural property owners.

Sincerely,

Mark Daniel