

From: KEES LANGEREIS [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, December 11, 2025 9:51 PM
To: Islands2050
Subject: input on the draft Trust Policy Statement (TPS)
Attachments: Letter to Islands Trust 2050 Dec 11.pdf

Please find attached some comments on the draft TPS.
Thank you,

Kees Langereis
Gabriola Island

December 11, 2025

To: Trust Council

Re: feedback on the draft Trust Policy Statement dated July 31, 2025

What happened to “rural” in the Trust Policy Statement (TPS)?

During the 1970s and 1980s the policies established under the Islands Trust Act focused largely on limiting development to protect the natural environment, retain the “ruralness” of island communities, support the livelihood of local residents and retain the geographical beauty of the islands’ ecosystems intact for current and future generations and visitors. The people and the natural landscape were key elements. The Trust Area was, and still is, considered a special and valued area of BC warranting extra environmental protection.

The Trust policies of the day referred to “rural community character”, rural living”, “rural atmosphere”, “rural landscape”, “rural environment” and “rural roads”. These descriptors continued until after the 1989 repeal and replacement of the Islands Trust Act with a new Islands Trust Act.

The new Act continued the original mandate but modified its administrative structure by establishing the current Trust Council and Executive Committee. In 1994 under jurisdiction of this new administrative structure, Trust Council passed a new TPS bylaw, the contents of which has continued to today with only minor amendments.

Unlike prior versions of the TPS, the 1994 version only mentioned “rural” in one sentence (i.e. a description of the Trust Area). In later years, the term “rural” was added to one Directive in relation to “roadways”. In doing so the concept of ruralness as an element in policy decisions was virtually eliminated. It was no longer part of the impact assessment of bylaws and those of the general public unaware of the history would have little or no awareness it was ever an element.

The current draft TPS is not much better. It continues the one reference to “rural” in only one Directive related to roadways and a single reference to “rural” in its description of Goal #4 (i.e. Foster Sustainable, Inclusive, and Resilient Communities)². The TPS Principle 2.1.4 refers to “sustainable”, “inclusive”, and “resilient” communities but omits reference to

¹ Google AI overview: "Rural" describes areas outside cities and towns, characterized by low population density, open spaces, agriculture, and natural landscapes, encompassing small villages, farms, and wilderness, defined statistically by being outside urban centers or commuting zones, often contrasting with urban life by having fewer services but potentially more traditional or resource-based economies.

² The policies in this section support the preservation and protection of unique island character and aim to foster sustainable, inclusive, rural, and resilient island communities.

“rural”. Moreover, draft Directive 3.4.2³ lists what is to be avoided but does not include “rural” character or environment of the Island as something to retain. To truly support the original objective of the Trust the Directive should include a positive objective such as “preserving or retaining the rural community character and environment” or if continuing the negative approach by adding “to avoid the loss of the rural island character and environment”.

The Trust islands have been developed over the years and their ruralness diminished to varying degrees. Change will occur but reintroducing “rural” as an element in decision making may help islands retain their current rural-community character. It is not too late. Residents and visitors appreciate the rural aspect of each island’s character. Let’s not lose what is left of our ruralness.

Please reintroduce the concept of “rural” into Directives such as 3.4.2 and 3.4.7 as it is one aspect of the Trust Area’s unique amenities.

Last request: please reintroduce a Directive comparable to the current TPS Directive 5.1.3⁴. The draft TPS Directive 3.4.3 reference to “aesthetic” is too vague and open to interpretation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kees Langereis
Gabriola Island

See Appendix 1 for a summary of the use of “rural” in previous versions of the TPS.

³ 3.4.2 Growth Management: Manage community growth and its associated impacts by directing residential, commercial and industrial development into suitable locations, to prevent sprawl, minimize fragmentation of forest lands, and avoid adverse impacts to Indigenous cultural heritage, harvesting and hunting areas.

⁴ Directive Policy 5.1.3 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the protection of views, scenic areas and distinctive features contributing to the overall visual quality and scenic value of the Trust Area.

APPENDIX 1

THE USE OF “RURAL” IN PREVIOUS TRUST POLICY STATEMENTS

1975 TPS

Sample extract:

“To accomplish this the Trust will monitor, and where necessary, regulate the rate and extent of development taking place in the Trust area and encourage types of development that will maintain the essentially rural nature of the islands.”

- Term cited in 4 other provisions where it modified the terms “retreat”, “nature”, “atmosphere” and “environment”

1983 TPS

Sample extract:

“SOCIAL GOALS

1. To preserve the rural character of the Area.”

- Term cited in 10 other provisions where it modified the terms “atmosphere”, “environment”, “character”, “living”, “landscape”, and “roads”.

1990 TPS

Sample extract:

“SOCIAL GOALS

1. To preserve the rural character of the Area.”

- Term cited in 9 other provisions where it modified the terms “atmosphere”, “environment”, “character”, “living”, “landscape”, and “roads”.

1994 TPS

“Communities within the Trust Area are still predominantly rural in character”

- Term cited only once (as above) where it modifies the term “character” in a description of the area. Note that it is not used in any directive policy.

1999 and current TPS

Sample extracts:

“Communities within the Trust Area are still predominantly rural in character.”

Directive 5.3.5 extract: “...address the development of a classification system of rural roadways in recognition of the object of the Islands Trust.”

- The 1999 TPS retained the 1994 description but added the term to one directive in relation to “roadways”.
- The current TPS mirrors the 1999 draft with the Directive now numbered as 5.3.4