

From: Islands2050
Sent: Monday, November 29, 2021 12:19 PM
To: Islands2050
Subject: FW: Grassroots Community Poll Rejects Islands Trust Draft Policy Statement

From: Southern Gulf Islands Coalition [<mailto:concernedssiResidents@gmail.com>]
Sent: Monday, November 29, 2021 8:48 AM
To: Dan Rogers
Subject: Grassroots Community Poll Rejects Islands Trust Draft Policy Statement

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Greetings to all the Islands Trust Trustees. We hope this finds you well.

Thank-you for your public service. We recognize this is an arduous task to both

represent citizens, and attempt to achieve consensus amongst diverse views and uphold the values of each Gulf Island community.

To aid your upcoming decision-making on the controversial New Draft Islands Trust Policy Statement, we wanted to share with you the results of a recent Southern Gulf Islands poll. This survey was conducted by the [Southern Gulf Islands Resident and Business Coalition](#), an apolitical, non-profit grassroots group that has recently grown to **more than 1000 members**.

We applaud those trustees who recognized this Draft Policy Statement has far-reaching regulatory impacts on people’s lives and livelihoods, and voted to obtain further consultation before a decision. To those who want to implement this policy immediately, we invite you to meet with our group to hear community concerns first hand as well as view the recent polling results below. A screenshot of the Islands Trust voting results on first reading of the new Draft Policy Statement is provided as a

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Island Trust Voting Results				
2	Island	Name	In Favour	In Opposition	Abstain
3	Bowen Island	Sue Ellen Fast			
4		Micheal Kaile			
5	Denman Island	Laura Busheikin			
6		David Critchley			
7	Gabriola Island	Scott Colbourne			
8		Kees Langereis			
9	Galiano Island	Tahirih Rockafella			
10		Jane Wolverton			
11	Gambier Island	Kate-Louise Stamford			
12		Dan Rogers			
13	Hornby Island	Alex Allen			
14		Grant Scott			
15	Lasqueti Island	Peter Johnston			
16		Timothy Peterson			
17	Mayne Island	Jeanine Dodds			
18		David Maude			
19	North Pender Island	Benjamin McConchie			
20		Deb Morrison			
21	Salt Spring Island	Peter Grove			
22		Laura Patrick			
23	Saturna Island	Paul Brent			
24		Lee Middleton			
25	South Pender Island	Cameron Thorn			
26		Steve Wright			
27	Thetis Island	Doug Fenton			
28		Peter Luckham			
29	TOTAL		6	20	

refresher.

POLL RESULTS:

The Southern Gulf Island Resident and Business Coalition poll surveyed residents and businesses over two weeks in November. Of the then-total membership of 450 invited to participate, the survey had a 42% response rate, representing 189 individuals of diverse ages from Salt Spring, Galiano, Mayne, Pender, and others. You can see full survey results collated by Google Forms [here](#).

- The Islands Trust [Draft Policy Statement](#) **should be deferred** until the next municipal election mandate in Oct. 2022, **said 85%** of those surveyed.
- Another **69.3% say “scrap it”** entirely
- 58.7% of respondents demand a grassroots consultation, but an even greater number, **75.1%, aren’t even confident the Trust will integrate community concerns** into a new Draft Policy.
- Majority of respondents learned about the policy from their neighbours through word of mouth (50.3%) or a neighbour email (43.4%), followed by social media (18%) or their local newspaper (16.9%).
- **Only 15.3% identified the Islands Trust as their source of news on the proposed new mandate.**
- **74.1% were “strongly opposed”** to the new Draft Policy Statement after viewing its content. Strong opposition to the current draft stems from the belief the Islands Trust regional government used a top-down, secretive process to ram through the 51 new directives, everything from banning desalination despite chronic water shortages, prohibiting new docks in areas with poor ferry service, disallowing tiny homes, limiting

farming, retail options or even the ability to cut a single, diseased tree on your property.

- **Island Trust Public Engagement** to date has been “**very poor**” (78.3%)
- Similar to other cities and regions in BC and Canada, **Affordable or Workforce Housing was cited by 24.9% as one of the key challenges** facing the gulf islands. This is especially topical, given the [near zero vacancy rate as reported by CTV news](#) and the recent purchase of the Seabreeze Inne that will potentially displace many residents.
- However, the housing shortage issue was surpassed by the **35.4% who pointed to the Islands Trust, Regional Governance, Local Government, Capital Regional District as the “biggest challenge”**.

People were most concerned with the Islands Trust Draft Policy Statement impacts on the following areas of their lives and livelihoods, in ranked order of importance. Multiple answers were permitted.

1. **Tree Cutting:** a new requirement for every landowner to pay for a permit to cut a tree on private property (84.1%)
2. **Taxation:** taxes on local residents and business will substantially rise to support this expanded Islands Trust mandate that is proposing to include climate change, affordable housing and Indigenous reconciliation normally addressed by higher levels of government (83.1%)
3. **Top-down approach** to engagement: presenting a fully baked plan with little opportunity for input/changes (82%)
4. **Moratorium on new public docks** despite the lack of or limited ferry service between islands. People rely on boats

to buy groceries, visit hospitals, or evacuate in emergencies (76.7%)

5. [Doesn't recognize uniqueness of each island](#) (75.1%)
6. [Livelihood](#): restrict local businesses, retailers, tourism, hotels, short-term rentals, farming, artists/artisans (69.3%)
7. [Prohibition of desalinization plants](#) that would help increase freshwater supply (64%)
8. [Housing](#): size limits would decrease seasonal housing & rental housing options (63%)
9. [Farming & Agriculture Restrictions](#): Island communities rely on local farming produce for their livelihood and food, as well as tourism opportunities with farm-based B&B (62.4%)
10. [Heritage & Sustainability Values Defined by the Islands Trust](#) not Individual Community Plans (49.7%)

We still believe a new grassroots community-based plan can balance environmental protection and integrate Indigenous values while expanding fresh water supply & affordable housing options without harming the local economy or food sources. We look forward to hearing from you prior to further decisions being made.

Kind regards,

Jamie Harris, Volunteer, Salt Spring forestry

worker [REDACTED] **cell:** [REDACTED]

Ron Spencer, Volunteer, Salt Spring, Excavating Contractor

of First Nations descent

██████████ cell: ██████████

Mairead Boland, Saturna

Island ██████████ cell: ██████████

SELECTION OF SURVEY COMMENTS

“I asked what was the cost of the implications of the trust's decision...was promised an answer, never got it.”

“The Policy Revision places way too much control in the hands of the unelected and unaccountable staff in Victoria.”

“Islands Trust needs to stick with its original mandate of land use and not try and expand its purview into areas of jurisdiction of other government agencies.”

“This is big brother at its worst.”

“The Trust needs to decide if Salt Spring is to be a tourist destination and pro-business or a nature reserve. There is a middle way!”

“Banning of docks, for those who use boats for work, community and helping neighbours, is absurd.”

“If people need to build on their land, let them! People should be able to make housing to rent which in turn will give jobs.”

ABOUT THE SOUTHERN GULF ISLAND RESIDENT AND BUSINESS COALITION:

We are an apolitical group of residents & businesses advocating for a balanced regional plan that protects the environment, includes Indigenous communities, expands freshwater & affordable housing options without harming our local economy or food sources. We are the grassroots of this community, people who raise families here, breed livestock, grow food and operate retail stores or create artisan wares.

W: [Southern Gulf Islands Coalition](#) **E:** concernedssi Residents@gmail.com



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