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**From:** Islands2050 <Islands2050@islandstrust.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 21, 2026 4:26 PM  
**To:** northinfo <northinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** 'Janet Bates' <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** FW: Input on 200-metre shoreline buffer policy/OCP Gabriola Island

**From:** Janet Bates <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 21, 2026 1:15 PM  
**To:** Islands2050 <[Islands2050@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:Islands2050@islandstrust.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** Input on 200-metre shoreline buffer policy/OCP Gabriola Island

To the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee,  
This email serves as a formal objection to the proposed 200-metre shoreline buffer policy being considered within the Official Community Plan (OCP) review process. As the owner of a small, 0.222-acre waterfront property, I believe this initiative poses significant and direct threats to the value and usability of my land, and potentially represents an overreach into private property rights. I purchased my Gabriola property in 2021 and even with the phrasing, "extra care may be needed to protect the area" I am concerned about what this specifically means for my neighbours and me.  
My concerns are centered around the immediate and long-term financial impacts, as well as the principle of reasonable property stewardship:

## **1. Significant Impact on Property Value and Usability**

While the Trust assures existing rights remain unchanged, the *perception* and *practical effect* of this buffer on the real estate market are entirely different. Designating my entire small property within a "buffer zone" effectively brands it as high-risk or environmentally constrained. This creates significant uncertainty for future buyers, lenders, and insurers, which will likely inevitably depress its market value. My property is my primary

financial asset and retirement fund, and this proposal risks devaluing that asset without compensation. As a waterfront property owner, I am already highly vigilant about care and stewardship of the beach and ocean area.

## **2. Increased Costs, Bureaucracy, and Regulatory Takings**

The proposal introduces a discretionary review process for any future development permits or essential repairs. Practically, this likely means homeowners will face mandatory, costly expert assessments (archaeological, geotechnical, environmental), the expense of which is borne solely by the property owner. In order to upgrade my septic, I already spent thousands of dollars to obtain required engineering reports and variances. This layer of bureaucracy acts as a deterrent to necessary maintenance and improvement, effectively creating a "regulatory taking" where the use of private land is heavily restricted without formal expropriation or compensation.

## **3. Encroachment on Property Rights and Lack of Specificity**

The application of a blanket 200-metre buffer across the entire island seems to be an arbitrary measure that fails to address the unique, site-specific nature of coastal erosion and ecological sensitivities. Winds, tides and sea life are different around the island. My property's specific characteristics should determine appropriate development, not a one-size-fits-all policy. As waterfront owners, we are the primary stewards of our land and acknowledge the realities of coastal living. We should retain the right to manage our properties and build appropriate protective measures as needed, without undue interference, as reinforced by B.C. legal precedents regarding riparian rights.

The current proposal lacks specific, clear guidelines on what exactly will be permitted versus denied within the

buffer, fostering a climate of uncertainty and anxiety among waterfront residents. This is alarming!  
In conclusion, I urge the Local Trust Committee to reconsider this broad, sweeping proposal. It unfairly burdens a small segment of the population with the costs and restrictions of a generalized environmental policy. A more collaborative and site-specific approach is necessary to balance environmental concerns with the fundamental rights and financial stability of waterfront property owners on Gabriola Island.

Sincerely,  
Janet Bates

A solid black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.