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April 18, 2011

Stephen Brown
President
Chamber of Shipping of British Columbia
Suite 100 - 1111 West Hastings Street
Vancouver BC V6E 2J3
Via Email: stephen@cosbc.ca

Kevin Obermeyer
President and CEO
Pacific Pilotage Authority
1000 - 1130 West Pender Street
Vancouver BC V6E 4A4
Via Email: oberkev@ppa.gc.ca

Dear Mr. Brown and Mr. Obermeyer:

Re: Continuing concerns about Plumper Sound anchorage

I am writing on behalf of the Islands Trust Executive Committee and the residents who live near Plumper Sound to thank you for your response to the concerns raised by Keith and Tilly Smith of North Pender Island and to express the Islands Trust's ongoing concern about the Plumper Sound anchorage.

On January 17, 2011, the Smiths wrote to the Pacific Pilotage Authority, the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, and Islands Trust expressing concern about the amount of light and noise created by the large vessels anchored in Plumper Sound. We understand this issue was considered at your January 20, 2011, Navigation and Pilotage Committee meeting. On February 3, 2011, the Chamber of Shipping of British Columbia issued the *Memo to Masters of Vessels using Plumper Sound Anchorages*. The memo outlines specific steps to be taken to minimize light and noise pollution and states: *[y]our vessel has been assigned to Plumper Sound Anchorage an area of outstanding natural beauty on the coast of British Columbia. The residents on the surrounding islands have brought to our attention the issue of noise and lights that affect their peaceful surroundings, especially at night. The marine industry is sensitive to these issues and wishes to be a good neighbour to the local community.*

While this memo was to have had immediate effect and be circulated to all vessels using the Plumper Sound anchorage, residents have noticed little to no change in practices. We encourage you to monitor the effectiveness of the Memo and make changes as needed. The Islands Trust Policy Statement, required by the *Islands Trust Act* and approved by the Minister for Community, Sport and Cultural Development, includes a statement that *it is Trust Council's policy that the intensity of noise and lighting in and through the Trust Area should be compatible with community character.*

Thank you also for inviting island residents to call the Pacific Pilotage Authority Dispatch in Victoria, at 250-363-3878, to request that the agent of an anchored vessel be advised of a problem. Please ensure anyone answering knows how to relay or manage these types of calls.

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We continue to be concerned about the increasing use of the Plumper Sound anchorage, given the risks created by its unique geographical challenges and the disruption the anchored vessels cause to the lives of residents. We appreciate that in June 2010, in consultation with industry, Transport Canada issued an *Anchorage Advisory for Plumper Sound* to advise ships masters and agents that:

- The weather at this anchorage location can deteriorate to storm force winds very quickly between October and April;
- There is less than optimal holding ground in this area; and
- There are special safety guidelines to observe when using the anchorage.

However, on March 2, 2011, the *Cape Vanguard* dragged anchor in Plumper Sound during a forecasted wind storm and came within 200 metres of shore. We appreciate that the ship's crew, the ship's agent, Coast Guard's Marine Communications and Traffic Services staff, and Joint Rescue Coordination Centre staff worked cooperatively to prevent the grounding of this vessel. As residents have informed Islands Trust staff that they have also witnessed vessels dragging anchor in Plumper Sound in November and December 2010 and January and March of this year, we believe there should be an evaluation of the Advisory's effectiveness.

We understand that the Chamber of Shipping of British Columbia has put together a task force composed of Port Metro Vancouver, the pilots, shipping lines and shipping agencies to look at the anchorage situation within Port Metro Vancouver's jurisdiction and:

- Review the rules for assigning anchorages;
- Develop recommendations for creating new anchorages or better utilizing the carrying capacity of anchoring grounds within Port Metro Vancouver's jurisdiction; and
- Discuss and analyze other measures that may have an impact on anchorage capacity such as terminal bunkering procedures and other operations.

We look forward to hearing the recommendations of this task force.

We are also writing to Port Metro Vancouver and Transport Canada to request that the Islands Trust be consulted during the anchorage planning process if any new anchorages are proposed within the Islands Trust Area, as we have also heard concerns from residents relating to other anchorages in the inland waters of the Strait of Georgia.

The Islands Trust Policy Statement states that: *responsibility for stewardship of the Trust Area rests with many.... Cooperative actions are required of other agencies, organizations and individuals to ensure that activities are carried out in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of Trust Area ecosystems and island communities.*

Thank you for your attention to this important topic and for working with us to help preserve and protect this special area. I enjoyed meeting you both at Trust Council's Marine Shipping Safety Session in June 2010 and look forward to ongoing dialogue and cooperative efforts to improve marine shipping safety in this region.

Sincerely,



Sheila Malcolmson
Chair, Islands Trust Council

cc: Islands Trust Executive Committee; Keith and Tilly Smith; Islands Trust website