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April 5, 2017

File Number: 0420-20

Via Email: FLNR.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Honourable Steve Thomson
Minister of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations
PO Box 9049 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Thomson:

Re: Notice of Amendments to the Private Moorage Program

I am writing on behalf of the Islands Trust Council regarding the recent Notice of Amendments to the Private Moorage Program.

Islands Trust is a unique local government authority in many ways but three aspects have particular relevance to recent amendments to the Private Moorage Program:

1. The Trust Area covers the islands and waters between the British Columbia mainland and southern Vancouver Island. It includes 13 major islands and more than 450 smaller islands covering 5200 square kilometres.
2. Unlike most local governments, any Islands Trust Official Community Plan or Official Community Plan amendment requires approval by the Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development. This is due to the specific provincial interest in land use planning under our object to “preserve and protect” these islands for not just the 25,000 residents (and 10,000 non-resident land holders), but for all British Columbians, including the 37 First Nations who have publically stated asserted Aboriginal rights and title and treaty rights in the Trust Area.
3. The Islands Trust Council has a policy that commits it to proving sincere desire for reconciliation with First Nations. Key to this commitment is early and meaningful engagement with First Nations on many topics but most especially on Official Community Plan bylaws and amendments that require Ministerial approval.

Islands Trust is endeavouring to approach these 37 First Nations in a sincere and humble way by providing authentic opportunities to hear their concerns. Two of the most important issues shared amongst these First Nations are (1) the proliferation of docks in the Trust Area and (2) the degradation of archaeological values, the majority of which are in close proximity to the shoreline.

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As a federation of 13 island governments, we respectfully request that you do not expand the private moorage General Permissions areas to Application-Only Areas until 2018 at the earliest. This would give local governments time to consider the recent amendments to the Private Moorage Program and amend Official Community Plans and Land Use Bylaws as needed. These amendments may involve engagement with First Nations and, in our case, Ministerial approval. We further request that you amend information about local government zoning and roles on your website, applications and publications.

Thank you for your time in considering this matter, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Peter Luckham
Chair, Islands Trust Council
pluckham@islandstrust.bc.ca

CC.

Honourable Peter Fassbender, Minister of
Community, Sport and Cultural Development
Aitchelitz First Nation
Beecher Bay First Nation
Campbell River First Nation
Cape Mudge First Nation
Chemainus First Nation
Cowichan Tribes
Esquimalt First Nation
Halalt First Nation
Hwiltsun First Nation
K'omoks First Nation
Lake Cowichan First Nation
Lyackson First Nation
Malahat Nation
Matsqui First Nation
Musqueam First Nation
Nanaimo First Nation
Nanoose First Nation
Pauquachin First Nation
Penelakut First Nation

Popkum First Nation
Qualicum First Nation
Seabird Island First Nation
Sechelt First Nation
Semiahmoo First Nation
Skawahlook First Nation
Skowkale First Nation
Sliammon First Nation
Songhees First Nation
Squamish First Nation
Tsartlip First Nation
Tsawout First Nation
Tsawwassen First Nation
Tseycum First Nation
Tsleil-Waututh First Nation
Sooke First Nation
Tzeachten First Nation
Yakwekwioose First Nation
Bowen Island Municipal Council
Islands Trust Council
Islands Trust website