



News Release

200 - 1627 Fort Street Victoria BC V8R 1H8
Telephone **250.405.5151** FAX: 250.405.5155
Toll Free via Enquiry BC in Vancouver 604.660.2421. Elsewhere in BC **1.800.663.7867**
information@islandstrust.bc.ca www.islandstrust.bc.ca

May 8, 2020

2020-13-IT

Trust Council Reminds People to Avoid Non-essential Travel to the Islands

Lekwungen, METULIYE/Victoria, BC—In a region known for its welcoming farm stands, markets, and art studios, elected leaders are once again reminding people to avoid non-essential travel to the Gulf and Howe Sound islands and to minimize community interactions.

As the Province starts to reopen gradually, the Islands Trust Council reminds visitors to stay close to home, and continue physical distancing and other measures a little bit longer.

Trust Council suggests islanders continue to limit community interactions and refrain from extending invitations to visitors.

"As we head into the May long weekend, we need people to remember our pleas that they avoid non-essential travel to the Gulf and Howe Sound islands and minimize community interactions as directed by the BC Centre for Disease Control," emphasized Peter Luckham, Chair of the Islands Trust Council. "On most islands, our medical resources are non-existent or limited. In most cases, it is volunteers who offer first response, and we don't want to put them at risk. Most island residents are over 60, which is one of the reasons we are insistent about people avoiding non-essential travel and minimizing community interaction. When you avoid contact with others, you limit the chances the COVID virus has to spread."

The Canadian Coast Guard has requested that all mariners avoid non-essential trips and consider staying close to home to save lives. Boaters already in the Trust Area are asked to avoid making supply and grocery trips on the islands.

Through their social media accounts, BC Ferries' message continues to be: The Coast isn't going anywhere and neither should you. Please avoid non-essential travel and #StayHome.

"Thank you for staying close to home," offered Chair Luckham. "We look forward to the time when we can once again welcome visitors to these beautiful islands."

—30—

The Islands Trust works to preserve and protect over 450 islands in the Salish Sea through land use planning, the Islands Trust Conservancy, and Trust Council programs and services. The Trust Area, located within Coast Salish territory, is the homeland of over 28,000 Coast Salish Peoples who have called this area home since time immemorial. Covering 5,200 square kilometres between the British Columbia mainland and southern Vancouver Island, the Trust Area has 26,000 residents and 10,000 non-resident property owners. The region features many indigenous archaeological and culturally significant sites, and some of the world's most endangered ecosystems.

Contact: Peter Luckham, Chair, Islands Trust Council 250.210.2553
Russ Hotsenpiller, Chief Administrative Officer, via Vicki Swan, Communications Specialist 250.405.5156

Preserving *island* communities, culture and environment

Bowen, Denman, Gabriola, Galiano, Gambier, Hornby, Lasqueti, Mayne, N. Pender, Salt Spring, Saturna, S. Pender, Thetis
