



News Release



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Please note: The program name has now been changed to Climate Wise Islands program.

ISLANDS TRUST LAUNCHES “CLIMATE SMART ISLANDS” PROGRAM

VICTORIA — The Islands Trust will take another step towards its long-standing goal of reducing greenhouse gases (GHGs) as island communities amend 19 Official Community Plans over the next eight months. Trustees will engage islanders in discussions as they identify GHG reduction targets and strategies to meet those targets. The work was formally launched in September when Trust Council held a climate change workshop and adopted a Strategic Plan that includes GHG reduction as a major objective during its 2008-2011 term. Council also passed a resolution asking each Local Trust Committee as well as Bowen Island Municipality to give high priority to the work. Funds had already been approved in the 2009-2010 budget to support what is one of the more significant projects undertaken by the Islands Trust.

“Climate change is a global challenge that demands creative solutions at the local level,” said Sheila Malcolmson, Chair of the Islands Trust Council. “Because the Islands Trust’s primary responsibility is land use planning, we are uniquely positioned to take leadership on reducing greenhouse gas emissions with land use planning tools. Trust Council has always wanted to be part of the solution, but the province’s Bill 27, the *Local Government (Green Communities) Statutes Amendment Act*, gives us a deadline of May 2010 to get this part of the job done,” Malcolmson added.

“To provide information to island communities on this initiative, we have produced a new publication – *Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions in the Islands Trust Area*,” Malcolmson added. “The document is also intended to assist our local elected officials in meeting the Islands Trust’s goal of sustainable and low-carbon communities through innovative land use planning.”

The Islands Trust has committed to addressing climate change through land use planning, advocacy initiatives, and partnerships with other levels of government and local community groups. “Land use and development patterns are critical in reducing GHG emissions,” said Malcolmson. “The design and physical arrangement of roads, buildings, and land use patterns directly influence transportation emissions and building energy use.”

The initiative further supports the BC Climate Action Charter, which the Islands Trust endorsed in 2007, joining 175 other BC local governments in a collective commitment to:

- Move to carbon neutral operations for the organization;
- Measure and report community greenhouse gas emissions (GHG); and
- Promote sustainable, energy efficient communities.

Detailed information on this initiative is available on a new climate change section of the Islands Trust website at <http://islandstrust.bc.ca/climatechange/climatehome.cfm>. The webpage includes key decisions and other resources about climate change relevant to island communities. Subscribers to “climate change news” can receive e-mail alerts of significant project updates.

The Islands Trust Council is a federation of independent local governments that represents some 25,000 people living within the Islands Trust Area. The Islands Trust is responsible for preserving and protecting the unique environment of the Islands Trust Area through planning and regulating land use, development management, education, cooperation with other agencies, and land conservation. The area covers the islands and waters between the British Columbia mainland and southern Vancouver Island. It includes 13 major and more than 450 smaller islands covering 5200 square kilometres. It is celebrating its 35th anniversary this year.

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Preserving **island** communities, culture and environment

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