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April 30, 2008

File Number: GF/T-5-10

Via Email: [info@islandgov.org](mailto:info@islandgov.org)

Ken Marr  
President  
Islanders for Self Government  
Box 827  
Salt Spring Island BC V8K 2W3

Dear Ken Marr:

**Re: February 22, 2008 Letter to the Islands Trust Council**

Thank you for your letter regarding my January 15 response to your presentation on behalf of the Islanders for Self Government at the Islands Trust Council quarterly meeting in December 2007.

Your February 22 letter acknowledges that certain statements published by Islanders for Self Government regarding the jurisdictional authority of the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee and the current review of the Salt Spring Island Official Community Plan were inaccurate. But your letter then goes on to say, "these matters are extraneous to and are irrelevant to the debate on incorporation."

We disagree. What's most important is that the public has access to accurate information and that the public is not misinformed. The main issue is about identifying misinformation and correcting it.

The Islanders for Self Government is responsible for the information it publishes, as is the Islands Trust for its own publications. We all have a responsibility to make efforts to verify information before it is distributed to the public. If published information is shown to be inaccurate, it should be withdrawn from distribution and corrected. Where we believe that that the public is being misinformed about the Islands Trust, we have a right and a responsibility to respond directly, and to try to correct published misinformation.

Further, in response to your assertions that the Islands Trust is not a local government, my January 15<sup>th</sup> letter included examples from 12 provincial Acts that include definitions of a local trust committee as a local government. Excerpts from the Neilson-Welch report do not supersede this provincial legislation. In addition, the Ministry of Community Services' own "Local Government Department" web page (<http://www.cserv.gov.bc.ca/lgd/pathfinder-planning.htm>) includes the following statement: *"In British Columbia there are 184 local governments, consisting of 157 municipalities (villages, districts, towns and cities), 27 regional districts and the Islands Trust."*

We appreciate your organization's continued support for increased funding for the Islands Trust from the province and maintain that the Islands Trust's many meetings and correspondence with the Ministry of Community Services, lists of which were provided to you in my January 15<sup>th</sup> letter, do indeed serve as formal requests for increased funding from the province.

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Preserving **Island** communities, culture and environment

Bowen Denman Hornby Gabriola Gambier Lasqueti Mayne North Pender Salt Spring Saturna South Pender Thetis

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Regarding your request that Trust Council support an incorporation study update for Salt Spring, it is our understanding that incorporation studies in the Islands Trust Area (for Bowen, Salt, Spring, and Gabriola) have only been initiated by the Ministry of Community Services upon written request of, and with unanimous support from, the two locally elected trustees and the Electoral Area Director from those islands.

I wish to reiterate that Trust Council does not take a formal position on the issue of incorporation on islands within the Islands Trust Area. Accordingly, the Islands Trust Council has not and will not intervene in such matters by supporting or opposing incorporation studies for individual islands.

Thank you again for your interest in the Islands Trust and for your letter to the Islands Trust Council.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kim Benson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kim" being more prominent than the last name "Benson".

Kim Benson  
Chair, Islands Trust Council

pc: Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee  
Islands Trust website