



## Islands Trust

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June 28, 2007

File Number: PG/06-3

Via Email: [env.minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:env.minister@gov.bc.ca)

Honourable Barry Penner  
Minister of Environment  
P.O. Box 9047, Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Penner:

**Re: Hydrofracturing of Water Wells in the Islands Trust Area**

The Islands Trust Executive Committee would like to express its concerns related to the hydrofracturing of water wells in the Trust Area and to request participation in the Ground Water Protection Regulations Phase 3 stakeholder consultation process.

The Islands Trust Council has been concerned about water supply in the Trust Area for many years and we understand that hydrofracturing can exacerbate aquifer damage. We also understand that there are no legislative or regulatory requirements regarding hydrofracturing and that the practice could have negative effects on neighbouring wells if aquifer flows are redirected or increased.

As required under the *Islands Trust Act*, the Islands Trust Council has adopted a Policy Statement that includes recommendations regarding the actions that other government agencies might undertake in support of our provincial object to preserve and protect the Islands Trust Area. Our Policy Statement has many policies related to the protection of water resources. Policy 4.4.6 states that "Trust Council encourages the provincial government to adopt legislation that protects the sustainability and quality of the groundwater in the Trust Area."

The Islands Trust Executive Committee supports the concerns expressed by the Mayne Island Integrated Water Systems Society to the Ministry of Environment and the Ground Water Advisory Board related to hydrofracturing. We also support their request that the province take steps to protect groundwater wells and implement a well permitting and recording system.

Further, we request that you consider the following specific suggestions from the Mayne Island Integrated Water Systems Society:

- that no hydrofracturing be permitted, for any reason, within a set distance from the ocean (100 meters minimum distance recommended);
- that those using a hydrofracturing process be required to test community and private wells within a set circumference before the process begins, at the cost of the well driller;
- that all hydrofracturing must be pre-approved, recorded on drillers' reports and maintained as part of the permanent well record;
- that water boards be given advance notice and an opportunity to comment when hydrofracturing is proposed within or adjacent to a community water system; and
- that consultation with the Islands Trust and with community groups with local knowledge on water issues be included in the permitting process.

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*Preserving Island communities, culture and environment*

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

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Thank you for taking the time to consider our concerns and requests. Our staff contact for this topic is Islands Trust Policy Analyst, Gillian Saxby, who can be reached at 250-335-1616 or [gsaxby@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:gsaxby@islandstrust.bc.ca).

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kim Benson".

Kim Benson  
Chair, Islands Trust Council

pc: Mary Cooper, Mayne Island Integrated Water Systems Society  
Linda Adams, Chief Administrative Officer  
Gillian Saxby, Trust Policy Analyst  
Islands Trust website – Letters from our Chair