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November 24, 2009

File Number: PG/05

The Honourable Pat Bell
Minister of Forests and Range
PO Box 9049 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Bell:

Re: Status of the Coastal Douglas-fir in the proposed Commercial Forest Reserve

I am writing at the request of the Islands Trust Executive Committee following your response to my question during the Resource Minister's panel at the recent UBCM convention. You mentioned that there was ongoing work on the idea of a Commercial Forest Reserve in BC, and the possibility of exempting Crown lands in the Islands Trust from this designation.

We appreciate that you recognized the special status of the Crown lands within the Islands Trust Area. We were particularly encouraged by your understanding of our provincial mandate to preserve and protect unique ecosystems such as the Coastal Douglas-fir forest in the Islands Trust Area. Protection of forested lands is also important to meet commitments regarding climate change mitigation.

We understand that, before a Commercial Forest Reserve policy is finalized, there will be an opportunity for further public input. We would like to be included in this process and are particularly interested in any further information you can provide about the implications of a Commercial Forest Reserve in the Islands Trust Area.

Our mapping and ecosystem protection staff would be happy to share resources to facilitate your work in this area. You may also find our Vacant Crown Land Profiles for each Local Trust Area useful. They are on-line at www.islandstrust.bc.ca/poi/cl.cfm. Our staff contact for further information is Lisa Dunn, Director of Trust Area Services, who can be reached at 250.405.5174 or ldunn@islandstrust.bc.ca.

We look forward to on-going cooperation with your Ministry about this topic.

Sincerely,

Sheila Malcolmson
Chair, Islands Trust Council

pc: Islands Trust Executive Committee
Islands Trust website

Preserving **Island** communities, culture and environment

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