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...To Preserve and Protect...and RESPECT...

To have one's affairs put under control of a trust (trusteeship) usually implies that the wards of the trusteeship are not competent or able to manage themselves. That rationale is not the case today. Gulf Islands communities have Official Community Plans and Land Use Bylaws. The threat of rampant development has been brought under control and zoning is stabilized. Our communities are democratically mature enough to manage their land use planning without heavy-handed outside supervision. Like normal communities everywhere else in BC, we should be able to claim the rights of autonomy to maintain what we value about ourselves and to address arising issues with local adaptation.

As John Money has stated in recent letters, the residents of the Gulf Islands have already done the work and achieved good results. A radical revision of the Policy Statement would upend this historical achievement, and place us under even tighter trusteeship, when what is wanted is more local autonomy. The communities within the Gulf Islands have matured, but the Islands Trust threatens to mutate.

Political agendas, many of them externally based and funded, seek to de-prioritize human presence in the Gulf Islands and constrain and prohibit our use and enjoyment of our properties. We owe no obedience to those agendas that would devalue us and our simple right to live as we wish. Gulf Islanders have found their priorities and intend to preserve and protect them. And the Trust should respect that.