

## Livelihood matters!

Islands2050 Submission:

Dear Islands Trust,

Re: Opposed to Draft New Policy Statement

We are writing to voice our concerns regarding the Draft New Policy Statement. As residents of Salt Spring Island, we have multiple concerns with the document and plans. Like many of our fellow islanders, we are deeply concerned and frustrated at much of what is in the proposal including the availability of fresh water and affordable/available housing.

However, we would like to focus on our largest concern, the potential limitation of options for management of trees on our own property.

1) We have a very large of garden and grow much of our own produce annually, including the fruit and vegetables served in our B&B for breakfast. Like many, we believe eating locally, particularly from your own garden, has many advantages. Additionally, it is not just a garden, but we have planted 13 fruit trees, built a greenhouse, and added over 20,000 litres of water collection to reduce public water use. Due to the slope of the terrain, tree growth can block out sun from the garden unless the surrounding trees are managed (limb trimming, tree removal).

2) The view from our house effects the value of our property and B&B. An inability to manage the trees on the property erodes the value for both.

3) Trees harvested also serve as the primary source of heating of our home throughout winter.

Furthermore, the branches are used build berms to manage the slope around the property, that in turn reduces the erosion and use of water and fertilizer. The bark is broken up and use for mulch in the garden and retains garden moisture. We have invested approximately \$200,000 into our home and property to build our garden/orchard and reputable 'farm' to table B&B.

If approved, the plans of Islands Trust would cause considerable loss to our family's future. If this was to proceed, even in the bestcase scenario, we would be filling out forms, waiting and paying up to \$100 per tree to manage our property. This is yet another tax and added expense, when taxes and other costs (like heating) on the island continue to grow unbearable. For those who struggle financially, limiting access to wood for burning could further diminish their ability to stay on the island. While I have focused primarily on the financial costs, there is also the personal, emotional and health costs of losing what you built. We value living rurally on the island, having established our dream, and living off what our land provides. The decisions of the Trust put that independence at risk and cause us anxiety and stress. We appreciate and love the wild nature of Salt Spring Island. Most of our property remains heavily treed in native species of primarily Doug Fir and Arbutus. The property will remain that way without involvement of Islands Trust as we value and appreciate the nature around us. We simply ask to retain the right to maintain it and find balance. We cannot state strongly enough how much this has upset and disappointed us both. It puts significant risk on our happiness, health, and financial stability. I know it will also negatively impact many others on Salt Spring. I hope that you stop progress on the present plan and find a solution that will be more respectful of the needs and wishes of the island inhabitants. At a minimum, we should be permitted to vote on this issue, to truly hear our voices. Thank you for your consideration and resolution.

Salt Spring Island