



ISLANDS TRUST FUND

News Release

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HORNBY ISLANDER PROTECTS LAND WITH HELP FROM TAX-SAVINGS PROGRAM AND CONSERVANCY

VICTORIA — Hornby resident Tom Knott has become the first on his island to use a tax-saving program to protect his land, with the assistance of the Islands Trust Fund and Conservancy Hornby Island. His gift – the Myra Powers Conservation Covenant – permanently protects a maturing forest on the south-eastern slopes of Mount Geoffrey.

Over the course of his nearly 25 years on Hornby Island, Tom has watched his community's relationship with the land change. "With many of the lots near me heavily logged, I've found myself the legal custodian of the last privately-owned natural space between Strachan Valley and the bluffs and Garry Oak grove near the end of the ridge, a forest corridor important to animals and plants here," said Tom. "If I didn't protect it now, there could potentially be no refuge for these species after I'm gone."

Tom protected his land using the Islands Trust's NAPTEP program (Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program). The program gives Tom, as well as future landowners, a 65% reduction in property taxes for the covenanted portion of their land. The covenant restricts what Tom and future landowners can do with the natural portion of his property, protecting the ecosystems on his land forever.

"Tom has led the way in preserving private land on Hornby Island," said Tony Law, Chair of the Trust Fund Board. "By carefully planning the portion of his property to protect with the covenant and ensuring he could still live on and use the land, he's demonstrated that ecosystem conservation and vibrant communities can co-exist."

"I wanted to maintain my relationship with the land," said Tom. "As painful as it is to see the destruction of the forests around me, it's just as painful to see those forests locked up in untouched parks out of the belief that humans are too dangerous to have a relationship with the land. I was drawn to the NAPTEP program because it allowed me to do my part protecting this space while still allowing me to use my land as I always have. I can still live on and work on the property outside the covenant, while taking small, carefully regulated amounts of firewood from the forest within the protected area. I'm grateful for the work that the Trust Fund Board did in making this possible. After I'm gone, the forest will remain."

"Tom's efforts to protect his property were supported by Conservancy Hornby Island," said Tony Quin, chair of Conservancy Hornby Island (CHI). "Under its Legacy Program, CHI helped Tom with his application fees to enter NAPTEP, assisted him to establish a boundary for the proposed covenant area, and provided input into the drafting of the conservation covenant. CHI is very enthusiastic about the NAPTEP program, as it provides an opportunity for private property owners to protect in perpetuity, by covenant, an area of their property that has significant conservation values." CHI is a co-signer of the Myra Powers Conservation Covenant.

Tom named the covenant Myra Powers in memory of his grandmother whose enthusiasm for the natural world inspired his lifelong connection with nature. "The biggest reward for me would be if one day, after I'm

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gone, my actions protecting this land provides a new generation of children a space to wonder and discover, just as she encouraged me to do.”

The Islands Trust Fund is a regional conservancy, preserving landscapes of Canada’s islands in the Salish Sea. To learn more about how the Islands Trust Fund works with island landowners to conserve land, please contact the Islands Trust Fund at 250-405-5186 (Victoria) or toll free through Enquiry BC at 1-800-663-7867 (or 604-660-2421 in Vancouver), or visit them online at <http://www.islandstrustfund.bc.ca/>.

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