



# ISLANDS TRUST CONSERVANCY BOARD POLICY

**Policy number: 3.3**

**Title: Relationships with External Groups Policy**

**Approved By: Islands Trust Conservancy Board**

**Date: May 13, 2003**

**Resolution #: TFB 03/575**

**Revised**

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## PURPOSE

To clarify various aspects regarding how the Islands Trust Conservancy will develop and maintain relationships with the external groups with whom it works.

## SCOPE

This policy will help to guide interactions with external groups. Internal relationships are guided by *ITCB Policy 3.5. Policy on Consulting Trust Council, Local Trust Committees, Island Municipalities, and Local Trustees on Islands Trust Conservancy Board Matters*. Separate policies are also in place for communications related to covenant and acquisition projects, *ITC Policy 3.2 Communicating Information Regarding Covenant and Acquisition Projects*, and communications occurring through partnership for a property acquisition, *ITC Policy 3.4 Islands Trust Conservancy Board Role in Partnership Acquisition Projects*.

## DEFINITIONS

In this policy,

**“Advocacy”** is the act of influencing and/or seeking cooperation with other agencies and decision-makers about laws, regulations, policies, programs, budgets, priorities, and other decisions relevant to the Islands Trust mandate.

**“Object of the Islands Trust”** is to preserve and protect the Islands Trust area and its unique amenities and environment in cooperation with others, as defined in the *Islands Trust Act*.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Islands Trust Conservancy works collaboratively with other agencies and individuals to promote conservation in the Islands Trust area. Staff and Board members participate regularly in partnerships with various levels of government, non-profit organizations, community groups and other agencies to further preservation of nature in the Islands Trust area. The Islands Trust Conservancy Board wishes to maintain good communications with other agencies working in the region and has created policy 3.3 to identify methods for maintaining good relationships.

## **POLICY**

### **General**

1. Islands Trust Conservancy board members and staff will conduct activities in a manner that enhances the Islands Trust Conservancy's reputation as an organization that works proactively, constructively and collaboratively to advance the Object of the Islands Trust, as described in the Islands Trust Conservancy Board Five-Year Plan, in an informed, organized, respectful, and transparent way.

### **Correspondence**

2. All written communications from the Islands Trust Conservancy Board or Islands Trust Conservancy should be on the official ITC letterhead.
3. Correspondence addressed to the Islands Trust Conservancy Board or Board Chairperson will be copied to the Chairperson and where the Chairperson deems it necessary, will be added to the next regular meeting agenda for Board reference.
4. The positions expressed and requests made in correspondence from staff of the Islands Trust Conservancy should be consistent with decisions and/or policies of the ITC Board.
5. Use of Islands Trust Conservancy letterhead by the Islands Trust Conservancy Board should be restricted to the ITC Board Chairperson and positions expressed and requests made in correspondence from the Chairperson of the Islands Trust Conservancy Board should be consistent with decisions and/or policies of the ITC Board.
6. Letters drafted by staff for the ITC Board Chairperson should be sent only after review and approval of the ITC Board Chairperson or another ITC Board Member delegated by the Chairperson.
7. Letters drafted by the Chairperson should be sent only after review as to their suitability and content by the Islands Trust Conservancy Manager or another staff delegated by the Manager.
8. When the subject matter of a piece of correspondence relate directly to the interests of Trust Council, a Local Trust Committee, and/or another agency or organization, that correspondence will be copied to the Trust Council Chairperson; the applicable Local Trust Committee; the applicable Islands Trust Directors, and Managers or Coordinators within Islands Trust; and to any relevant representatives of external agencies or organizations.
9. Generally, correspondence to the Islands Trust Conservancy Board will be followed-up on within one week of receipt. Such follow-up should include a phone call to indicate the

correspondence has been directed to the Board Chairperson for the next regular meeting of the Board and a written response within a week of the Board's direction.

### **Information Sharing**

10. The Islands Trust Conservancy commissions studies and mapping inventories from time to time. These reports and inventories will be made publicly available provided they do not relate to any confidential negotiations or projects. Where data is being shared, Islands Trust data sharing agreements will be used.
11. Where information or mapping has been obtained that guides land securement, Islands Trust Conservancy staff will:
  - only share information with external agencies in closed meetings for the purpose of advancing conservation initiatives; and
  - only share information verbally or through map displays that are retained by Islands Trust Conservancy staff, i.e. no hard copy or digital information will be provided to external agencies.
12. If an external agency requests that the Islands Trust Conservancy share confidential information or mapping developed for the purpose of guiding land securement, the Islands Trust Conservancy Board will require a reciprocal sharing of equally relevant information from that agency. If the agency is unable to provide a reciprocal sharing of information, staff will request a resolution from the Islands Trust Conservancy Board prior to sharing information outlining the request and the perceived benefit(s) of sharing the information.

### **Advocacy**

13. The Islands Trust Conservancy will ensure that its advocacy positions are consistent with the Islands Trust Conservancy Board Five-Year Plan and Islands Trust Policy 6.10.iii and are supported by a resolution of the Islands Trust Conservancy Board. Advocacy letters from the Islands Trust Conservancy to elected officials will be signed by an Islands Trust Conservancy board member.
14. When practical, the Islands Trust Conservancy Board will coordinate its advocacy efforts with the Executive Committee so that related issues can be advanced strategically.
15. When the Islands Trust Conservancy Board is involved in advocacy work related to Trust Council activities or interests or the activities or interests of local trust committees it will notify the Director of Trust Area Services or the appropriate Regional Planning Manager, and as appropriate, work with Islands Trust staff to prepare briefing and decision documents for Trust Council or the relevant local trust committee.
16. The Islands Trust Conservancy Board will consider the impact on existing work programs when considering advocacy positions.
17. If the Islands Trust Conservancy Board wishes to advocate on an issue overlapping with the jurisdiction of another Islands Trust body or island municipality, it may consult with the affected body. After considering the advice of that body it may take an independent

position consistent with the object of the Islands Trust, and will inform the affected body of the position.

### **Social Media**

18. Islands Trust Conservancy staff will engage with other organizations on Social Media according to the Islands Trust Conservancy Social Medial Guidelines.

### **Relationship with Government**

19. As deemed appropriate by the Islands Trust Conservancy Board, the Board will work with other groups to encourage the federal, provincial, regional, municipal and First Nations governments to improve incentives for private land conservation through the establishment and improvement of government programs and tax incentives.
20. The Islands Trust Conservancy Board, as deemed necessary by the Board, will meet with provincial or federal political representatives to request assistance with conservation related projects within the Islands Trust area.
21. The Islands Trust Conservancy staff will work to establish and maintain good working relationships with government representatives in the fields of conservation and land protection.
22. All new programs or projects undertaken by the ITC involving a government agency should be communicated to the Chief Administrative Officer and the Director of Trust Area Services and periodic updates will thereafter be provided as the work evolves.
23. If timely responses (i.e. within one month of date of correspondence or request) are not forthcoming from government representatives with whom the Islands Trust Conservancy is working on a project, the Chief Administrative Officer and Director of Trust Area Services will be asked to intervene.
24. The Islands Trust Conservancy will acknowledge all government partners in conservation projects undertaken by the Board when preparing public announcements and media releases.

### **Relationships with Conservation Organizations**

25. The Islands Trust Conservancy board and staff will foster positive communications with local, regional, provincial, and national land conservation organizations and community groups in order to encourage land stewardship and positive working relationships within the Islands Trust Area.
26. The Islands Trust Conservancy Board will meet with the Boards of Islands Trust Area conservancies regularly, subject to opportunity and available resources.
27. Where possible, the Islands Trust Conservancy will initiate or participate in joint ventures with other conservation organizations within the Islands Trust area.
28. The Islands Trust Conservancy will assist conservation and community groups working in the Islands Trust area, by sharing its experience and expertise; providing organizational or technical assistance; organizing or participating in conservation-related workshops; and

providing information on land stewardship, subject to ITC Board, staff and resource availability.

29. The Islands Trust Conservancy will recognize all official project partners in public announcements and media releases.

### **Relationships with Landowners**

30. The Islands Trust Conservancy will respond to landowner enquiries in a timely manner and provide additional information as appropriate in response to landowner questions.
31. The Islands Trust Conservancy staff will work to maintain good working relationships with landowners who are working with the Board on conservation and land protection projects.
32. Landowners who donate conservation covenants or land will be acknowledged and thanked by the Islands Trust Conservancy in an appropriate manner upon completion of a project.
33. The Islands Trust Conservancy will invite landowners who have made significant donations to the Islands Trust Conservancy to special events that it may organize from time to time.

### **REFERENCES**

*Islands Trust Act*

*Islands Trust Conservancy Five-Year Plan*

ITC Policy 3.2 Communicating Information Regarding Covenant and Acquisition Projects

ITC Policy 3.4 Islands Trust Conservancy Board Role in Partnership Acquisition Projects

ITC Policy 3.5 Policy on Consulting Trust Council, Local Trust Committees, Island Municipalities, and Local Trustees on Islands Trust Conservancy Matters

Trust Council Policy 6.10.iii Advocacy Policy

Islands Trust Conservancy Social Media Guidelines