



ISLANDS TRUST FUND

NEWS RELEASE

200-1627 Fort Street, Victoria, BC V8R 1H8
Telephone: 250-405-5186 Fax: 250-405-5155

Toll-free via Service BC 1 800-663-7867 or in Vancouver 604-660-2421

itfmail@islandstrust.bc.ca www.islandstrustfund.bc.ca

2014-04-ITF

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ancient Cedar Requires Additional Protection

Local groups decide to fence namesake tree in Elder Cedar (S'ul-hween X'pey) Nature Reserve

Gabriola Island, British Columbia, September 15, 2014 — The namesake tree of the Elder Cedar (*S'ul-hween X'pey*) Nature Reserve, a frequently visited giant Western redcedar on Gabriola Island, is showing signs of distress. For years, visitors to the nature reserve have enjoyed getting close to this magnificent tree, but the foot traffic has compacted the soil and damaged roots that are critical to the tree's health. Three local groups have had to make the tough decision to protect the tree's root zone with a fence.

The Islands Trust Fund (owners of the reserve), in partnership with the Gabriola Land and Trails Trust and the Nanaimo and Area Land Trust, who co-hold a covenant on the nature reserve, consulted an arborist and reviewed options to maintain the tree's health. Compacted soil in the root zone is reducing the ability of water to move through the soil, impeding the movement of oxygen to the roots and inhibiting root growth. This damage to the roots has weakened the tree, increasing its susceptibility to disease and shortening its lifespan. A simple fence to deter people from walking around the base of the Elder Cedar is the first step in the restoration of its root zone. Interpretive signs are now in place to explain the restoration effort and to encourage visitors to stay on the trails. These interim measures will allow the tree's root system to begin to recover while a more permanent solution, such as a boardwalk, is considered.

"While visitors can no longer get as close to the Elder Cedar as they once could, these steps to protect its roots and reduce soil compaction may extend its life by a hundred years or more," said Anne Landry, member of Gabriola Land and Trails Trust. "Visitors are asked to respect the fence and signage, so that the magnificent Elder Cedar will not be loved to death."

Elder Cedar (S'ul-hween X'pey) Nature Reserve contains some of the last remaining old growth forest on Gabriola Island. The 65-hectare nature reserve's trails offer locals and visitors a chance to see and appreciate ancient specimens of Western redcedar, Western hemlock and Douglas-fir.

- 30 -

CONTACT

Jennifer Eliason, Manager, Islands Trust Fund
250-405-5191 - jeliason@islandstrust.bc.ca



www.galitt.ca info@galitt.ca



www.nalt.bc.ca admin@nalt.bc.ca
250-714-1990

A CONSERVANCY FOR CANADA'S ISLANDS IN THE SALISH SEA

BALLENAS-WINCHESEA · BOWEN · DENMAN · GABRIOLA · GALIANO · GAMBIER · HORNBY
LASQUETI · MAYNE · NORTH PENDER · SALT SPRING · SATURNA · SOUTH PENDER · THETIS