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Reprint from Volume 21 Number 6

Mar 26, 2009

Trust Council vote supports examining PMFL exemption for Galiano Island

Protection of Islands Trust bylaws moves a step closer at the March 11 meeting of the Islands Trust when Trust Council passed a motion instructing the Executive Committee to explore a solution to the conflict that exists over the management of the large tracts of private forest land on Galiano Island. The proposed solution to the problem is to seek an exemption from section 21 of the *Private Managed Forest Land (PMFL) Act*.

If such an exemption were granted, it would finally resolve the conflict that exists between the *PMFL Act* and the object and policy statement of the *Islands Trust Act*.

Misty MacDuffee, chair of NGO Gulf Islands Alliance (GIA), told Trust Council that such an exemption would allow Galiano Island to embark on its OCP review without the fragmentation that currently exists due to different land use objectives inside and outside the PMFL.

If the change isn't made, Galiano's desire to undertake community planning and implement Trust objectives in these areas are overridden by forestry policy.

Initiatives to solve this problem between the two *Acts* were started by the Islands Trust as early as 2005, just after the *PMFL Act* came into effect. In 2005, Trust Council passed a resolution unanimously requesting that the Executive Committee advocate for legislative changes and provincial co-

operation to implement the Trust Object in areas that were included in PMFL jurisdiction.

In June 2008, concerns were again expressed by Trust Council over the *PMFL Act*. A resolution was passed requesting staff to explore a request to the lieutenant Governor in Council to exempt the Trust Area from the *PMFL Act* and its regulations.

Clearly, Trust Council has been trying to resolve the conflict between the two *Acts* since the PMFL came into place in 2004.

A motion to pursue an exemption using Section 21 of the *PMFL Act* was passed by the Galiano Local Trust Committee on March 9, 2009. After the GIA delegation to Trust Council requested support for this motion at the March 11 meeting, several trustees spoke in favour of passing a similar resolution.

Past Island's Trust Council Vice-chair Gisele Rudischer also asked that the Council adopt the resolution put forward by the Galiano Local Trust Committee.

The GIA, the Galiano Local Trust Committee, and now the Islands Trust Council support pursuing an exemption from Section 21 of the *PMFL Act* as a possible solution. GIA plans to support work by the Islands Trust Executive Committee and the relevant provincial ministers to seek such an exemption through a provincial Order-in-Council.

For more information contact GIA's Misty MacDuffee 250-818-2136 or Ken Millard 250-539-5878 or 250-539-2414. ✉

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This article was published (March 26, 2009) in 'Island Tides'. 'Island Tides' is an independent, regional newspaper distributing 17,500 print copies throughout the Gulf Islands and the Canadian Strait of Georgia from Victoria to Campbell River to Howe Sound.

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