

News Release



ISLANDS TRUST FUND

Islands Trust Fund

Suite 200-1627 Fort St. Victoria, BC V8R 1H8
Tel 250.405.5186
Email itfmail@islandstrust.bc.ca
www.islandstrustfund.bc.ca



Gambier Island Conservancy

1005 West Bay Rd, Gambier Is, BC V0N 1V0
Email info@gambierc.ca
www.gambierc.ca



Sunshine Coast
Conservation Association

Sunshine Coast Conservation Association

Box 1969, Sechelt, B.C.V0N 3A0
Email info@thescca.ca
<http://www.thescca.ca>

November 27, 2013

2013-06-ITF

LAND TRUSTS PROVIDE EXTRA PROTECTION FOR GAMBIER ISLAND NATURE RESERVES

GAMBIER ISLAND — Three land trusts have teamed up to reinforce the protected status of three nature reserves on Gambier Island in the Howe Sound. The Islands Trust Fund, owner of the nature reserves, recently signed conservation covenants with the Gambier Island Conservancy and Sunshine Coast Conservation Association. The covenants legally commit all three organizations to share responsibility for safeguarding the nature reserves. The agreements also ensure decisions about future use and management will include local knowledge.

The three reserves, spanning 150 hectares, provide a wildlife corridor stretching from the bluffs of Brigade Bay to the top of Mt. Artaban, a popular hiking destination that rises 614 metres (2,014 feet) above Howe Sound and is visible from the Sea-to-Sky Highway. The reserves' forests, wetlands and streams filter rainwater, providing water for the communities at the base of the mountain.

“By having local groups hold conservation covenants on our reserves, we add local insight and extra protection,” said Jennifer Eliason of the Islands Trust Fund. “Our Howe Sound partners will forever have a say in the stewardship and management of these ecologically important areas.”

The Sunshine Coast Conservation Association sees the three-party agreement as an integral part of its mandate. “This is exactly what our association exists to do -- protect the biodiversity and environment on the Sunshine Coast,” said SCCA chair Jason Herz.

The reserves were originally protected as a result of the Gambier Island community's vision and dedication. After heavy logging in the Brigade Bay area, the community worked with the landowner at the time to restore the watershed back to its original beauty. In 2005 the community negotiated the donation of two parcels to the Islands Trust Fund -- Long Bay Creek Wetlands and Brigade Bay Bluffs -- to be protected as nature reserves. In 2008, the Islands Trust Fund and the Gambier Island Conservancy raised more than \$40,000 to acquire the adjacent Crown land encompassing Mt Artaban through the Province's Sponsored Crown Grant program.

Protecting these nature reserves for future generations is particularly important to the Gambier Island Conservancy, which is currently opposing plans to log two new woodlots on Gambier Island, one of which borders the Brigade Bay Bluffs Nature Reserve. “These covenants support the ongoing effort to

develop a comprehensive management plan for Howe Sound,” said the Conservancy’s president, Peter Scholefield.

The Gambier Island Conservancy works to preserve and restore Gambier Island’s biological diversity by enhancing public awareness and increasing environmental knowledge. The Sunshine Coast Conservation Association represents more than thirty local conservation and community groups dedicated to protecting the biodiversity and integrity of the Sunshine Coast environment. To learn more about their work, visit www.gambierc.ca and www.thescca.ca.

The Islands Trust Fund is a regional conservancy, preserving landscapes of Canada’s islands in the Salish Sea. To learn more about protected areas on Gambier and other islands, or to learn how landowners can use conservation covenants to protect natural areas on private lands, visit them online at www.islandstrustfund.bc.ca.

– 30 –

CONTACT

Jennifer Eliason
Manager, Islands Trust Fund
250.405.5191

Peter Scholefield
President, Gambier island
Conservancy
604.913.9090

Jason Herz
Chair, Sunshine Coast
Conservation Association
chair@thescca.ca