Islands Trust

News Release

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June 18, 2026 – for immediate release 2026-08-IT

Islands Trust Council Announces Recipients of the 2026 Community Stewardship Awards

Lək̓ʷəŋən, METULIYE/Vancouver, BC – Islands Trust Council announced the recipients of the 18th Islands Trust Community Stewardship Awards during its quarterly meeting, held virtually June 16 – 18, 2026. Islands Trust Council recognized five individuals and two organizations for work that supports the Islands Trust's mandate to preserve and protect the Islands Trust Area and its unique environment and amenities.

"The future of the Islands Trust Area is shaped by people who step forward to protect what makes these islands extraordinary," said Laura Patrick, Chair of Islands Trust Council. "This year's recipients have shown remarkable leadership, commitment, and vision in caring for these lands, waters, ecosystems, and communities. Their contributions leave a lasting legacy, and Islands Trust Council is proud to recognize and celebrate their achievements."

Recipient activities include land conservation initiatives, the sharing and documentation of island conservation stories, island-wide community clean-up efforts, biodiversity planning and stewardship work, and initiatives that strengthen relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members.

The recipients are from communities on Bowen, Gabriola, Keats, and Lasqueti Islands.

Individual Recipients

- Sheila Harrington, Lasqueti Island, is recognized for her book *Voices for the Islands: Thirty Years of Nature Conservation on the Salish Sea*
- Dan Rogers, Keats Island, is recognized for ongoing community leadership in the Keats Island and Howe Sound region
- Douglas Leatherdale, Keats Island, is recognized for his enduring achievement of island-wide clean-up initiatives on Keats Island
- Dr. Wendy Palen and Dr. Tom Sisk, Bowen Island, are recognized for their leadership in biodiversity protection in the development of the Nexwlélexw/Bowen Island Biodiversity Plan

Organizational Recipients

- Bowen Island Conservancy, Bowen Island, is recognized for its work to protect the Cape Roger Curtis area
- Breaking Bannock, an initiative of Gabriola Arts Council, Gabriola Island, is recognized for its Building Bridges initiative

Recipients of the Community Stewardship Awards will be recognized locally at local trust committee and Bowen Island Municipality meetings over the coming months.

The Islands Trust's Community Stewardship Awards program recognizes nominees and recipients who demonstrate leadership in preservation and protection of the Islands Trust Area. Since its inception in 2002, Islands Trust Council has recognized 104 individuals and organizations in the Islands Trust Area. When reinstating the program for 2022, Islands Trust Council updated the program to better align with Trust Council's Reconciliation

Declaration and amended the program to be offered once per elected term. The Community Stewardship Awards run every four years, with the next award nominations period opening in March 2029.

Learn more about this year's award recipients and past recipients on the Islands Trust Community Stewardship Awards webpage.

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Islands Trust is a special-purpose government representing over 30,000 people living within the Islands Trust Area and 10,000 non-resident property owners. The Islands Trust Area is located within Coast Salish territory and is the homeland to many Coast Salish Peoples who have called this place home since time immemorial. Islands Trust is responsible for preserving and protecting the Islands Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment through conservation-oriented land use planning and regulation, education, and cooperation with First Nations and other agencies. The Islands Trust Area covers the islands and waters between the British Columbia mainland and southern Vancouver Island. It includes 13 major islands and more than 450 smaller islands covering 5,200 square kilometres.

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