

March 20, 2003

Mr. Rob Howatt
Subdivision Approving Officer
Ministry of Transportation and Highways
P.O. Box 9850
Station Provincial Government
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9T5

Dear Mr. Howatt:

**RE: HENRY CALDWELL SUBDIVISION APPLICATION FOR A LEASE TO
SABLEFIN HATCHERIES LTD.**

In considering the Henry Caldwell application, the Salt Spring Local Trust Committee has a responsibility to consider the object of the Islands Trust, as stated below, as part of its decision making process.

“The object of the Trust is to preserve and protect the Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment for the benefit of the residents of the Trust Area and of British Columbia generally, in cooperation with municipalities, regional districts, improvement districts, other persons and organizations and the government of British Columbia.”

This mandate makes it difficult to separate land use when considering criteria for subdivision due to the potential impact the land use may have on the ecosystems and community in the Salt Spring Trust Area. Further, this mandate recognizes the role our Local Trust Committee must undertake as educator, coordinator, and initiator in guiding individuals, organizations and other agencies in support of this object. While the Local Trust Committee can provide the necessary leadership, responsibility for stewardship of the Trust Area rests with many. In this instance, government agencies, such as the subdivision approval authority, and the Province itself have an important role to play. Cooperative actions are required between the Local Trust Committee, government agencies and the Province to ensure that activities are carried out in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of the Trust Area ecosystems and the island community.

The Salt Spring Local Trust Committee forwarded the Caldwell application to the Agricultural Land Committee without a recommendation to support or decline the subdivision proposal. It was our intention that the Agricultural Land Commission consider comments from the Local Trust Committee, the Advisory Planning Commission and concerns expressed by first nations and members of the community when making its determination for approval or denial of the application. Enclosed for your consideration are the additional comments and concerns that have been received by the Local Trust Committee subsequent to our forwarding the application to the Agricultural Land Commission.

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The Salt Spring Local Trust Committee has been advised to consider objective subdivision criteria that do not include public interest considerations when determining our response to this application. Further, it would appear that the Islands Trust's preserve and protect mandate may be seen in conflict with criteria guiding the subdivision approval process, and with the mandate of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the Agricultural Land Commission which both support finfish farming as a permitted farm use in the agricultural land reserve. The Salt Spring Local Trust Committee asks that you consider exercising your discretionary powers to grant this subdivision approval by referencing the Islands Trust Policy Statement and the Salt Spring Official Community Plan as an expression of the public interest in this matter.

Expression of community concern regarding the potential negative environmental impact of finfish farming, whether on land or in marine waters, in the Trust Area or other areas of the province has been significant. Considerable community concern has also been heard regarding the impact the industrialized nature of this development might have on disrupting the rural character of the surrounding neighbourhoods and the potential impacts on adjacent property owners in terms of noise, increased vehicle traffic on local roadways, ground water contamination, pollution and decreased property values.

The Walker Hook beach, tombolo and surrounding area are of high recreational, historical, archaeological and environmental significance to the Province and are therefore a matter of special concern for the Local Trust Committee and the community. This area has long been identified in the Salt Spring Official Community Plan as an area for future park acquisition through the subdivision process. In light of public comments received regarding the Walker Hook area, the Salt Spring Local Trust Committee asks that the application proceed no further without an environmental impact assessment to determine the effect the waste management plan will have on the Walker Hook beach, tombolo and surrounding area.

Thank you in advance for your kind attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Eric Booth
Salt Spring Island Local Trustee

Kimberly Lineger
Salt Spring Island Local Trustee