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Fresh voices on Galiano and Island Trust-wide

voice to ideas and opinions on Galiano. The publication has a particular theme; the current review of Galiano's Forest Bylaws. Helena Chambers, Pam Frier, Cheryl Bastedo and Sue Turner's mission statement is, 'Galiano is at a crossroads. Decisions will be made in the near future about land use issues that will affect every aspect of our experience of Galiano. Our purpose is to open up communication and establish a dialogue in the community ... there is a need for truthful, transparent sharing of information in an attempt to reexamine the long held beliefs held by members of the Galiano community.'

Galiano Voices, which is bulk-mailed to Island addresses, does not side-step important issues and differences and even adds a little humour. Its second edition, out November 29, has an analysis of the impacts of the recent *Private Managed Forest Land Act*, legislation which has wider relevance than Galiano alone. Luckily, *Galiano Voices* can now be downloaded at www.galianovoices.shawbiz.ca. If you wonder what's happening on Galiano it's well worth the read. For Galianoites who missed theirs in the mail this time, check store counters or contact one of the editors.

A New 'Alliance' to Support the Islands Trust

Another new group of concerned citizens from across the southern Gulf Islands has formed to support the 'preserve and protect' goals of the *Islands Trust Act*. The inauguration of Gulf Islands Alliance was announced at Islands Trust Council in Victoria on December 9.

'We want to ensure the full implementation of the Islands

Trust mandate to keep our fragile island ecosystems intact and our rural communities small and diverse,' said Alliance Chair Christine Torgrimson, of Salt Spring Island. 'Our aim is to better inform ourselves and the public to support measures that counter the growing threats to our islands.'

'In the 1960s and 70s the province recognized the fragile and special nature of the islands. It wisely legislated the *Islands Trust Act* in 1974 to protect what it said was one of the most unique and threatened environments in the world.'

'Since then, the Trust area population has more than doubled. The Trust has wrestled with the forces of industry, development and tourism to try to keep the islands intact. Provincial funding has declined to levels which now jeopardize Islands Trust ability to safeguard an ecologically rare archipelago that includes 13 major islands and more than 450 smaller islands.'

She pointed out that in several recent public forums, sponsored both by the Trust and by citizen groups, people from across the islands have discovered that they share similar concerns. 'We are struggling with shortages of groundwater, illegal rental of residences for short-term vacationers, logging and tree-cutting issues, and the loss of near-shore marine life. Some islands are literally losing their residential communities as second homes and short-term vacation rentals take over their neighbourhoods and housing prices escalate well beyond many Islanders' means.'

'We have recognized that we can be far more effective by getting together as an inter-island force, learning from each other, finding the best solutions, and bolstering the efforts of the Trust,' Torgrimson said. ☺

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