



Dear Friend of Savary Island,

In March, Mr. Justice Rice made a judgment ordering a 4 lot subdivision or an 8 lot subdivision (with the provision of a new road) of District Lot 1375, formerly known as the “Trillium lands”. This is the last wilderness on Savary Island and home to one of the best examples of a coastal dune ecosystem in Canada.

The judgment may be read at: <http://www.courts.gov.bc.ca/idb-txt/SC/10/03/2010BCSC0318.htm>

The maps referred to in the judgment (Map 1 and Map 3) are at [www.silts.ca](http://www.silts.ca).

The 8 lot partition, proposed by the developer cuts through the sensitive dune ecosystem and threatens the ecological integrity of the parcel and the Island. The judge’s ruling has resulted in a subdivision layout without any public consultation or consideration of environmental values. The land is home to rare plants, plant communities, and archaeological sites and is the largest groundwater recharge area on the Island.

Alternative proposals from the Nature Trust included, a north south split which would have protected all of the dune areas, an east west split which would have protected most of the dune areas (East West Division Map) and outright purchase. The judge sympathised with the developer, who claimed to just want to build family cottages. The layout is a developer’s dream as developed parcels will be flanked by protected parcels. It is a conservation nightmare. The Nature Trust appreciates that the developer is entitled to develop, but is trying hard to preserve the area with the highest environmental values.

SILT was established in 1997, when the last undivided and undeveloped (DL1375) on Savary was under threat of subdivision. The owner/developers of DL 1375 Mr. David Syre of Trillium Corporation and Mr. Roger Sahlin of RRR Construction in Bellingham had asked the PRRD to write a bylaw to divide the land into 190 lots and establish a gated community and airport. SILT began to look for ways to preserve this “heart of the island”. Research determined that the

land contained rare and endangered plants and plant communities and was one of the best examples of intact coastal dune ecology in Canada, in fact a national treasure. SILT worked with Federal and Provincial governments to secure resources for the preservation of this land. In 2000, SILT approached the Nature Trust of BC for help in preserving the “heart of the Island”. In 2002, the Nature Trust of BC, the Province of BC, the Government of Canada and private donors made possible the purchase of a 50% undivided interest in DL 1375 and title to 13 adjoining parcels. One of the developers, Mr. David Syre sold his interest to the Nature Trust of BC.

Since 2002, the Nature Trust of BC has tried to purchase the remaining 50% interest from Mr. Roger Sahlin in order to preserve this Savary treasure forever. Mr. Sahlin took the Nature Trust to court under the Partition Act. The Nature Trust has offered up several proposals for the partition of the property that would protect most of the sensitive areas of the land and has continued to offer to buy out the developer. Most recently the Nature Trust offered the developer \$5 million dollars (more than the appraised value) for his share of the property with the goal to preserve the entire piece forever. Mr. Sahlin turned this offer down. The Nature Trust has invested \$180,000 in legal fees to try to preserve the last Savary Wilderness. This land is a piece of our national heritage and now may be subject to the cutting and slicing of a subdivision, land clearing and road building by a developer.

Savary is already over-subdivided. Savary has the highest lot density – by far – of any island in the Strait of Georgia – 9 times greater than Bowen Island and 20 times greater than Denman! OCP consultants told the PRRD in 1997 that “the island was reaching critical development thresholds” since that time development has more than doubled.

Islanders have used this land as greenspace and wilderness for decades. The parcel is crossed with trails and beach accesses to some of the best beaches on the Island. It is the largest groundwater recharge area on the Island.

The Nature Trust has reserved the right of appeal and their executive will be meeting next week to decide whether to proceed with the appeal.

The Powell River Regional District is moving ahead with establishing Development Permit Areas on DL 1375 in order to protect sensitive ecosystems and archaeological sites. <http://www.powellriverrd.bc.ca/meetings/planningagenda130410.pdf> The Planning Committee met on April 14, 2010 and resolved to recommend the adoption of the bylaw to the PRRD. The PRRD will be meeting on April 22 to consider the bylaw and a bylaw hearing is scheduled on Savary for May 23, 2010.

**You can support the protection of DL 1375, the last wilderness on Savary and the heart of the Island by:**

✓ **Sending this letter to your Savary contacts**

- ✓ Donating funds to assist with the court appeal. SILT has a donor who will match any contributions made to SILT towards the effort, so your tax deductible donation will double the effort. Send your donation to SILT Box 141, Lund., BC V0N 2G0 and indicate that it is for the Nature Trust appeal to save the last wilderness on Savary.
- ✓ Letting the Nature Trust know how important this land is to you, your family and Savary and how much you appreciate everything they have done to date. Email: [info@naturetrust.bc.ca](mailto:info@naturetrust.bc.ca)
- ✓ Endorsing the PRRD Development Permit Areas for DL 1375 to protect the sensitive areas, dunes and archaeology. Email Patrick Brabazon [brabazon@shaw.ca](mailto:brabazon@shaw.ca)
- ✓ Attend the Bylaw Hearing May long weekend on Savary or make a written submission to the PRRD in support of the Bylaw to protect the last wilderness on Savary.
- ✓ Learning more about the heart of the Island. Contact SILT [silts@telus.net](mailto:silts@telus.net)
- ✓ Joining SILT [www.silts.ca](http://www.silts.ca)

We believe in Clean water Wildlife Wilderness Access to Greenspaces

On Savary we share one of the most amazing places on earth. Want to keep it that way? Natural lands filter our water, supply greenspaces for people and wildlife, and provide quality of life to the community. Let's keep Nature in our future.

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Savary Island Land Trust Society

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