Decatur Head Beach Association: Policies and Procedures (revised 6/1/2014)

CONCEPT

The Decatur Head Beach Association is made up of a diverse group of people united by a common love for a very special place and a willingness to work together to care for it. The purpose of the Association is to provide and maintain a family-oriented vacation facility at Decatur Head with a minimum amount of impact on the environment. Organized as a cooperative, all members are owners of all the land and buildings and together share their use. All have equal responsibility to preserve and protect them.

It all began when Rod and Barbara Loveless were looking for a piece of undeveloped land in the San Juans for a vacation home for their family. They had in mind building an uncomplicated cabin, comfortable in any weather, where family members and their friends could enjoy the outdoors and learn about island living and the marine environment. When they discovered Decatur Head and that it was for sale, they knew they had found a unique and wonderful treasure. It was also more than they could handle alone. So they invited some other families who felt as they did about the Islands to join them in acquiring the property and planning for its use. From the very beginning, care was taken to disturb the setting as little as possible, and to retain the land, vegetation and wildlife in as natural a state as possible.

What we have now is a low-keyed, loosely organized association providing an opportunity for 40 families to own a vacation home in the fabulous San Juan Islands. The original imaginative planning and the general good will and good natured cooperation that existed among members makes belonging to this group a special kind of experience.

PHILOSOPHY

At the urging of the members the Board of Trustees developed a philosophy that was approved in 1993 which states:

Therefore, the philosophy guiding the Board of Trustees and the shareholders in managing our

Property and in planning for the future will include the following guidelines:

1. We will be good stewards of the land and water environments. Any decision to build, renovate or otherwise change the landscape of our property will be consistent with this caring stewardship.

1. We will respect the reasons shareholders, their families and their guests come to Decatur Head. Any policy, rule, pronouncement or other action that may be necessary without being intrusive will be sensitive to the need for a retreat from the day-to-day life of the working world.

1. We will insist on sound fiscal management of the Decatur Head Beach Association and will keep the buildings and grounds maintained in good condition at all times.
2. We will be good neighbors to all residents of Decatur Island. Just as we value our privacy and a friendly spirit among our neighbors, so will we respect the property and lifestyle of other residents and show good will to them.

GENERAL INFORMATION

GOVERNANCE: The Decatur Head Beach Association is limited to 40 shares (the bylaws allow for the potential of 2 additional shares). The business of the Association is conducted by a seven-member board of trustees elected from the membership at an annual meeting and who serve for overlapping, six-year terms. Details on the governance of the Association are in the Articles and Bylaws included in this guidebook.

Responsibility for managing the property at Decatur Head is delegated to the caretakers who live there year round.

PROPERTY: The DHBA property consists of approximately 40 acres on Decatur Island known as Decatur Head and a small amount of adjoining property on the main part of the island. This includes both a brackish water lagoon and a fresh water pond.

Ten buildings are situated along the shores of Davis Bay and Rosario Strait. They are commonly known as: Cabins 1 & 2, overlooking the Strait, and Cabins 3 through 8, facing the Bay. Cabin 3 is the home of the caretakers and the other cabins are for the use of the shareholders. The ninth building is between cabins 4 and 5. It houses the shareholders’ storage lockers, 2 chest freezers, a work bench and storage for outboard motors. A concrete block fuel storage shed is adjacent. An eleventh building that includes the pump house and additional workshop and tool storage is situated across the spit at the tennis court.

The cabins are fully furnished and contain dishes, silverware and kitchen equipment. Shareholders bring their own linens, towels, blankets and food.

At the south end of Cabin 3 is the Associations’ office. The north end houses the laundry room, with 2 washers and 2 dryers, and toilet. Soap is provided by the association.

For the months of January through March cabin’s 5-8 will be taken offline to protect against winter damage.

RECREATION: While water based activities are a major part of recreation at Decatur, many enjoy interesting and varied walks around the Island. Mountain biking is also popular. The association has a tennis court, including a basketball hoop, and pickleball, located across the spit beyond the freshwater pond. (It should be noted that the original Articles suggest that a swimming pool might be built at Decatur. Soon after the Association was founded it was decided by the membership to build a tennis court instead.)

FIREWOOD: The Association will purchase and the caretakers will cut firewoodfor the indoor fireplaces and stack it near the cabins for occupants to split and use. This wood is not for use in the outdoor firepits. Beach wood cannot be used in the wood stove in Cabin 2. Do not use fresh cut wood in any outdoor fires. To protect our beach from erosion, beach wood collected for outdoor fires must be smaller in length and diameter than a man’s arm.

BOATS/DOCK: Shareholder boats - other than dinghies, may tie up anywhere on the dock only as long as it takes to load or unload.

There are four skiffs that are the property of Decatur Head. These skiffs are available for shared use with consideration of the needs of others. During prime time three will be secured by the flagpole with the oars underneath. Please do not leave your outboard motor on the skiff when leaving the dock. Many shareholders have their own skiffs drawn up and secured above the high tide line. These are personal property and should not be used.

BUOYS: The eight buoys are reserved for the use of shareholders and their guests while they are staying at the Head and are available on a first come, first served basis. Buoys 1, 2, 7 & 8 have a maximum of 24’ length allowed. Buoys 3 and 4 max out at 34’ and buoys 5 & 6 allow up to 36’.

VEHICLES: The Decatur truck and vehicles of Island residents doing business with the caretakers are the only motorized vehicles permitted on Decatur Head property. The truck may be used on a fee basis by shareholders with the permission of the caretaker. Its use is restricted to licensed drivers 18 years of age or older.

# CABIN CARE

CLEANING: One of the pleasures of arriving at Decatur Head is going into a comfortable, well-equipped cabin that is immaculately clean. The departing occupants are responsible for leaving it in that condition. All cabins are equipped with cleaning supplies; mop, broom and vacuum cleaner. Extra cleaning rags and extra supplies can be found in the laundry room. The caretakers are responsible for washing the view windows and laying the fire.

In 1991 a policy on fees to be applied in cabins that were not cleaned satisfactorily was voted by the membership. A basic fine of $25.00 will be levied plus a $25.00 per hour charge for cleaning (two hour minimum).

The caretakers have offered their services for cleaning the cabins at a rate of $75 for the larger cabins (1, 4, 6 & 8) and $60 for the smaller cabins (2, 5 & 7). Please pay the caretakers in cash and let them know in advance.

GARBAGE: Since there is no provision for disposal of trash or garbage at Decatur Head you must take it with you when you leave. Shareholders should provide their own garbage bags for this purpose. In an effort to lighten the food waste, two small compost bins, emptied as needed by caretaker, are provided. One is located at the locker shed and the other one is located on the drive near cabin #2.

CHECK-IN: During prime time occupants who are leaving should have everything out of the cabin by noon. Those who are coming in should plan to arrive after 2pm to allow the caretakers time to complete their part of the cleanup.

COMPLAINTS: If an incoming shareholder finds that a cabin is not clean they should report it to the caretakers who will take whatever action is necessary. There is a maintenance section in the member’s handbook for listing anything that needs to be repaired, replaced or otherwise brought to the caretakers’ attention. Since a certain amount of wear and tear is unavoidable, please let the caretakers know if an item has been broken or marred during your stay.

# FIRE REGULATIONS

Fire is an ever-present danger at Decatur Head. Shareholders and guests must take the responsibility to be constantly aware of our vulnerability in case of fire and to impress this on their children and friends. Fire extinguishers are prominently place in all cabins and outdoor hoses are connected to each building. Two portable fire pumps are located between cabins 1 and 2 & 5 and 6. All persons visiting Decatur should know the locations of such equipment and be clear on how to use them properly. Please ask the caretakers for familiarization of and instructions on use of the fire equipment. A full set of instructions on procedures to follow in case of fire is posted in each cabin.

The regulations below will be enforced, without exception, by the caretakers.

OUTDOOR FIRES: Beach fires or fires on the top or sides of the Head are strictly prohibited. Fires are permitted in the stone fire pits in front of some of the cabins except in dry or windy weather. **The fire hose must be primed and ready for use before outdoor fires are built and someone MUST be present with the fire at all times.**Please douse with water all fires in the fire pits before leaving for the night.

FIREWORKS: There will be no fireworks, including sparklers, at **any time**, at **any location** on Decatur Head property.

FIREARMS: No firearms are permitted on Decatur Head property. No hunting is allowed on our property.

FUEL STORAGE AND HANDLING: A very specific fuel storage and handling policy was adopted by the Trustees in 1994. All fuel will be stored in the fuel storage shed and fuel handling (pouring, transferring and mixing) will be carried out on the gravel pad in front of the fuel storage building. Owners of boats/motors should refer to the policy on page 11 of this guidebook for details on proper storage of motors with built-in fuel tanks.

CANDLES: At the annual meeting in 2001, it was voted that there will be no candles burned in any of the cabins at any time due to the potential fire hazard.

WATER SAFETY

All boat owners should practice safe boating procedures while in Decatur Head waters. It is the rule that children aged 10 and under will wear life jackets when on the docks or rafts and when in boats operating in and out of Decatur Head.

In 1992 the membership approved a policy regarding personal watercraft such as jet skis, wave runners and other similar water vehicles. Such vehicles are not permitted on Decatur Head property including the waters immediately adjacent to the docks and DHBA buoys. The policy is on page 10 of this guidebook.

CARE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Shareholders shall be aware of and practice strict conservation measures in order to preserve and

protect the environment. The following rules shall be carefully followed:

SHELLFISH: No clams may be taken away from Decatur Head. Each share may have one meal of clams per visit. Fill all clam digging holes. All visitors should be aware of any changes in conditions such as red tide alerts before taking shellfish. The Red Tide Hotline number is 1-800-562-5632. Clam shovels are available for all to use on the side of the storage locker building. Please wash with fresh water after each use.

FISH AND CRABS: Taking female or undersized crabs or exceeding limits on any shellfish or fish spoils it for others and for the future. Crabs taken from the bay should be consumed on the Head. Shareholders’ crab and shrimp pots may be stored on the racks provided to the north of the storage locker building.

VEGETATION: There is to be no cutting of trees, shrubs, bushes or other natural vegetation, nor any digging, ditching, diking or other construction which would change the natural ecology of Decatur Head.

PETS: Pets must be kept under control at all times. Shareholders are responsible for cleaning up after their pets both indoors and out. Pets running free can cause problems for wildlife and to fellow members and guests. An additional $5.00 per night to cover flea eradication treatment will be charged if a pet is present.

HAZARDOUS WASTE: Shareholders are responsible for contaminated fuel or other waste hazardous substances. These substances will be taken off Decatur Island and disposed of in a safe and environmentally protective manner.

LIABILITY

All shareholders shall be responsible for the actions and safety of themselves and their minor children. The Association shall not be responsible for accidents or injuries to shareholders, their families or their guests. Children 12 years of age or under must not be left unsupervised on Decatur Head property.

Association shareholders and members of their families or their guests shall be liable for loss or damage to the facilities and property in excess of normal wear and tear caused by the shareholders, members of their families or their guests. They will be billed for work and parts provided by the caretaker at a cost determined by the Board of Trustees, in each instance. Failure to pay such charges may result in the loss of use privileges.

CARETAKER RESPONSIBILITIES

The resident caretakers at Decatur Head act as representatives of the Board of Trustees to shareholders and guests, to Island residents and to visitors. The caretakers also use the truck for transport to and from the airstripor thecounty ramp and Decatur Head.

The caretakers are responsible for seeing the doors and view windows are washed before use and that a fire is laid in the fireplace. They are also responsible for providing wood at a convenient location to the cabins. They manage the cabin reservations and do general bookkeeping and fee collection for the Association. The caretakers will carry out renovations and repairs as prioritized and authorized by the Board of Trustees. Routine maintenance of the grounds and building is within their scope of responsibility.

The caretakers, as representatives of the Board of Trustees, are there to protect the property. They enforce Safety and Fire Regulations as necessary and notify the Trustees of violations or dangerous conditions.

The caretakers’ day off extends from Monday at 4pm to Thursday at 8 am, tides allowing. Shareholders must plan their transportation requirements accordingly.

Cabin capacities are based on the number of beds in each cabin for those 12 years or older and are as follows:

Cabins 1, 4, 6 and 8..................10

Cabins 5 and 7...........................6

Cabin 2 .................................... 4

Shareholders should remember that there is no transportation available to or from the community ramp and Decatur Head, orDecatur airstrip and Decatur Head on the caretakers’ day off Monday 4pm to Thursday 8am. Members will need to pick-up the truck from the Head first. Use of Decatur Shores or Decatur Northwest is prohibited and is to be used only in case of an emergency. Their community docks are private.

FEE SCHEDULE

CABIN USE\*: Year round, two night minimum

Cabins 1, 4, 6 and 8…… …..$45.00

Cabins 2, 5 & 7.................… $35.00

\*Add $5.00 per night, per pet when pets are present

TELEPHONE: The telephone in the office may be used by shareholders for local calls. For all other calls, use a 1-800 number, reverse the charges, or use a calling card

GASOLINE: Gasoline may be purchased at Decatur Head for $4.50 per gallon on a limited basis. Check with caretakers before helping yourself.

TRUCK USE: A charge of 5.00 per hour will be charged to members for use. Pick-ups and drop-offs at the ramp will not be charged. Use of the truck is restricted to licensed drivers 18 years of age or older. Please note your usage in the truck log inside the driver’s door. Truck should not be operated without caretaker permission.

SEPARATE USE OF DECATUR HEAD BY CHILDREN OF SHAREHOLDERS

The Association wishes to encourage the separate use of Decatur Head by children of shareholders over the age of 21, but recognizes that use of the cabins by shareholders themselves must be given first consideration. After a survey in the winter of 1994 the Board of Trustees decided that the shareholders had the discretionary right to request a portion of their three-week Prime Time for their children without being subject to bumping rules. However, any other use by children, either during open prime time dates or at any time during the rest of the year, shall be subject to being bumped by a shareholder up to ten days prior to the start of the reservation. While on the Head children of shareholders are subject to all the same rules and regulations governing shareholders. In addition, shareholders are responsible for all actions of their children while on the Head and are responsible for any unpaid charges incurred by their children during their stay. Fees for children are the same as for shareholders

GUESTS AT DECATUR HEAD

Often shareholders invite guests to join them at Decatur Head. In most cases the guests stay in the same cabin with the shareholders but at times, particularly during non-Prime Time, separate cabins are reserved for guests. When this occurs, shareholders and guests should understand the guest may be bumped by other shareholders from use of the separate cabin up to ten days prior to the start of the guest use.

NON-SHAREHOLDER USE OF DECATUR HEAD FACILITIES

The Trustees have determined that any use of Decatur Head by non-shareholders—except for adult children of shareholders and guests who are accompanied by shareholders or their adult children—is not permitted. Any exception to this must be specifically authorized by the President or the Reservations Chair of the Board of Trustees on a case-by-case basis (an example of such an exception might be a shareholder sponsored visit by a prospective buyer of a Decatur Head share) or, in emergency situations, on site by the caretaker.

DECATUR HEAD BEACH ASSOCIATION POLICIES

**Cabin Clean-up Fee Policy**

To deal with the problem of unclean or inadequately cleaned cabins, the DHBA Board of Trustees approved the following fee structure to be applied when cabins require caretaker cleaning attention after being vacated by the occupant:

For each instance of an inadequately cleaned cabin following the vacation of the cabin by an owner or his/her guest or adult child, there will be a $25.00 fine levied, payable to the Decatur Head Beach Association, plus a $25.00 per hour charge, with a two hour minimum, for cleaning, payable to the caretakers.

This makes the minimum charge for inadequately cleaned cabins $75.00 per instance. Please inform your adult children and guests of this policy.

Please note that the $25.00 fine is payable to the Association, not to the people responsible for enforcing this policy, the caretakers. This has been done to avoid even the possible appearance of conflict of interest on the caretakers’ part in enforcing this policy.

**Personal Watercraft Policy**

In order to continue to provide maximum enjoyment of Decatur Head by its members the Board recommends adoption of the following resolution on Personal Watercraft policy.

Be it resolved that: Personal watercraft such as jet skis, wave runners, and other similar water vehicles will not be permitted on Decatur Head property, including the waters immediately adjacent to the dock and the DHBA buoys.

**Fuel Storage Policy**

All fuels and other flammables are to be stored in the concrete block fuel shed located north of Cabin #4. All fuels and flammables must be stored in suitable containers which minimize the potential for spills and leakage. Any containers which pose a threat of leakage, as determined by the caretakers, will be disposed of. All fuel handling, i.e. pouring, mixing, and transfers, will be done on the gravel pad in front of the fuel shed. NO FUEL HANDLING IS ALLOWED IN THE STORAGE LOCKER BUILDING. No children under 12 are allowed in the fuel shed.

Boat motors will be kept in the north room in the storage locker building (motor storage room) or the fuel storage shed. The motors will be stored with the following precautions:

Motors with separate fuel tanks:

1. Store the fuel tank in the fuel shed.
2. Place the motor in the fresh water flushing barrel located north of the storage locker building.
3. Run the motor until all the remaining fuel is consumed.
4. Store the motor inthe motor storage room on the racks supplied or the fuel shed.

Motors with built-in fuel tanks:

1. Place motor in fresh water flushing barrel located north of the storage locker building.
2. Run the motor until adequately flushed or until all fuel is consumed.
3. If there is still fuel in the built-in tank fill the tank to the top.
4. Store the motor in the fuel shed on the racks supplied.
5. The motor may be stored in the motor storage room only if the tank is empty.

Further, OWNERS ARE RESPONIBLE FOR DISPOSAL OF ALL CONTAMINATED FUEL OR OTHER WASTE HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES. ALL CONTAMINTED **FUEL AND WASTE HAZARDOUS MATERIALS WILL BE TAKEN OFF DECATUR ISLAND AND DISPOSED OF IN A SAFE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANNER**

THE BUILDING OF DECATUR HEAD: A RAMBLING MEMOIR

Decatur Head was purchased from the estates of William and Joseph Jones. The purchase was completed on February 1st, 1972. Vic Hulteen, Al Swanson and Rod Loveless were the three intrepid (as it turned out) developers of the property.

Al, Vic and Rod set out for Decatur Head to commence building in April 1972. It was a bright,

clear morning when the first two truck loads of lumber were secured on the Island Ferry (a self-powered barge) in preparation for crossing Rosario Straits. By this time, the day was not quite so bright and clear. During the crossing an unusual April storm thundered out of the south and up the straits. The barge, captained by Dean Allen, was about halfway to Decatur Island. Al Swanson was riding in one of the trucks carrying the lumber. As the Island Ferry lurched through the waves, Al and the truck barely escaped being swept overboard. One of the binder chains securing the truck to the barge broke. The remaining chain strained and twisted—but did hold. All hands were accounted for when the ferry landed at Decatur Head. (A successful voyage.)

The first shelter was set up amidst the fury of the storm which brings to mind a Great Original Thought—Storms at Decatur are Beautiful to Behold When Safely Ashore—or; It is Better to be Warm, Dry and Well than Cold, Wet and Sick.

Another storm was brewing—and at first it was not particularly evident. A great lack of enthusiasm prevailed among the families across the bay about any building on Decatur Head.

The whole area had been theirs to more or less use as they pleased—and moreover the residents felt that the late Mr. Jones had promised them Decatur Head would not be sold. Naturally, the thought of a development was not popular and considerable efforts were made to stop the building. Of course, this did not bring joy to the hearts of the builders and there were many tense times. Time also mends many things—and the passage of time surely has helped here.

Among those involved in the actual building besides Vic, Al and Rod were—Howard Hart, Roger Benjamin and Mickey Howard (builders in the Seattle area); John Blomberg (entrepreneur); George Lamb (the son-in-law of William Jones and a permanent resident on the west side of Decatur Island); Jim Morrison (raconteur and heavy equipment operator); and a rather motley crew of sons and heirs. And of course, the unforgettable Moki, the electrician (more on Moki later).

Cabin 2 was the first cabin built. When it was far enough along to provide shelter and a few creature comforts, Cabin 1 was begun.

During the building, John Blomberg, working on the roof of Cabin 2, took one misstep and slid to the ground. He was naturally shaken and was lying prone on the moss. Just then Rod came around the cabin to see how the work was progressing. He saw John lying in the sunshine and said, “For Pete’s sake John, with all this work to be done how can you just lie here?” Strangely, after this, the crew razzed Rod for being something of a martinet.

The old road that led across the sand spit connecting Decatur Head to the main part of the island was improved. And it was here, of course, that the underground power and water lines cross to the Head.

It was during the building of Cabins 1 and 2 that the well was drilled. Engineers selected the site as the most probable source of water. The well almost immediately supplied water at 25 feet—but not enough. And so the well diggers drilled and drilled. The cost mounted and so did the tension.

On a particularly lovely evening, Vic was relaxing on the deck of Cabin 2. All day, for days, the sound of the well-digging machinery had filled the air. Now all was peace and quiet. No water, but no noise. The no water was a matter of concern. It is notoriously difficult to obtain adequate water in the San Juans. Vic leaned back in his chair and said thoughtfully, “Well, maybe we’ll strike oil and never have to sell.” As fate would have it, about the next day, water (not oil) came gushing in—a more than adequate amount. Decatur Head’s well is 289 feet deep.

The road at the head of the head of the salt-water lagoon (connecting Cabins 1 and 2 with the rest of the cabins) did not exist at all. A portion of the lagoon had to be filled to provide room for a road. The permit to build this road took far longer to be approved than expected. When the time came to begin Cabins 3 though 8, no road connected the two areas. Some of the materials could be brought by the Island Ferry directly to the beach were Cabin 4 now stands. During low tides this was hot possible. The Island Ferry delivered the materials to the west side of Decatur Island.

(George Lamb’s) It was then trucked across the island to Cabin 2. All this material had to be hand carried across the cliff above the lagoon (affectionately known as the Burma Road) to whichever cabin was being built. Good exercise is about all you can say for this method.

The building of the road across the lagoon was almost completed when the loader became stuck in the mud. Big Jim Morrison was operating the loader and tried every means he could think of to free it –but it was really stuck. The tide was on the rise and time was running out when an incredible joint effort (and possibly heavenly intervention) prevented what seemed to be the inevitable. At the last possible moment the loader was freed. Jim relaxed that evening by the fire and even had the energy to hold us spellbound with a fantastic collection of adventure tales—a raconteur beyond compare!

One of the pleasures of building was the beach combing. The stretch of pristine beach on the south shore was a source of wonderful old chains, floats, ropes, and of course, drift—some of which were used in the building.

All building went on while there was no phone or CB radio near Decatur Head. Sometimes Rod and Vic would come ahead to prepare work for a larger crew. It was one of these times that the only very serious accident occurred. They were putting in place some of the creosote pilings that support each cabin. Rod was using a chain saw cutting the pilings and Vic stepped too close to the saw and was seriously cut. Vic just made it to the boat. Rod, standing waist deep in water, somehow was able to lift him into the cockpit. Needless to say, it was the fastest trip to Anacortes they ever made. The marina notified the hospital and Vic received instant and expert care.

Brian Swanson, one of the sons working on the project, sported a highly mod pony tail and a wonderful bushy red beard. Although no one was yet aware of the problem, the Decatur Shores owner felt (and feels) very strongly the no one drive out on the airport landing field. Brian, to expedite pick-ups, had been doing just that. Strong words came back about “that girl driving all over the landing strip.” Clearly, Brian must have been viewed from the back. Adjustments (not to Brian but to the driving) were made.

When it was time for the electrical work to begin, the country inspector rather strongly suggested that local help be used to wire the cabins. At that time Moki and his brother George were the electricians on Lopez Island. As it turned out, Moki also entertained ‘til the wee hours—singing in a local bistro. Electrifying audiences was much closer to his heart than electrifying cabins. When Moki began arriving at 3:30pm and leaving at 5:00pm it created quite a slow down in the whole project and required action. Arrangements were made to pick up the electricians early in the morning at Lopez. So, ashen of face, a captive Moki would arrive and work proceeded. Moki no longer lives on Lopez and one prefers to believe he has returned to his native Hawaii and is singing ‘til dawn and sleeping ‘til dusk. (Rumor has it he is a success on the night club circuit—which is certainly an electric thought.)

The docks were built, the buoys were put in place and the earliest member-owners began arriving. (Not necessarily in that order.) All in all it was a happy time. There was a certain feeling of camaraderie in spite of some problems and frustrations.

And of course, no matter the changes, there is a timelessness about Decatur Head.