



# News Release

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## **Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee to host special meeting to review stream maps**

Salt Spring Island – The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee has been working since 2010 to comply with BC legislation aimed at protecting and restoring BC's fish habitat, improving riparian protection and enhancement, and providing stronger local government powers in environmental planning. Within this legislation is the Riparian Areas Regulation (RAR) under which local governments are required to protect the features, functions, and conditions that are vital in the natural maintenance of stream health and productivity for fish habitat, potential fish habitat, and streams that carry water to them. In short, compliance with the RAR is contingent upon the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee amending their bylaws to include riparian area protection provisions.

The implementation of the RAR in the Trust Area had been delayed principally due to issues with identifying watercourses that are subject to the RAR and in accurately mapping those watercourses. The Islands Trust had previously obtained watershed mapping derived from 2-metre contour Digital Elevation Mapping (DEM) for most of the Trust Area. Based on their records and knowledge, the Ministry of Environment regional staff identified 26 watersheds within the Salt Spring Island Trust Area that would be subject to the RAR. The Salt Spring Local Trust Committee has delayed further consideration of bylaws until the feasibility of mapping the precise locations and attributes of the watercourses in these 26 watersheds can be assessed, starting with a pilot project to map the streams of the St. Mary Lake and Cusheon Lake watersheds.

On October 3, 2012, the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee received the results of the peer-reviewed mapping project (accurate within 1-5m) that shows the location of fish-bearing streams or potentially fish bearing streams within the St. Mary Lake and Cusheon Lake watersheds. The maps include tributaries and ditches that flow into these streams and lakes. The maps show that approximately 27 % and 35% of lots within the St. Mary Lake watershed and Cusheon Lake watershed respectively are either lakefront or they have a stream on or adjacent to the lot. The maps, reports, staff reports and other background information are available online in the Projects section of the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area webpage:

<http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/ltc/ss/edparpl2010.cfm>

Mapping provides the evidence upon which future drafts of bylaws may be based. The local trust committee wants to hear your feedback during this research stage before any policies or bylaws are drafted. Stream mapping will be the subject of a Special Business Meeting on the evening of November 21<sup>st</sup> at Central Hall (The Fritz Theatre). Doors open at 5:30 pm, the meeting starts at 6:00 pm. The meeting will include information about the maps, issues arising from the mapping and the prospect of having more mapping done on other parts of the island.

The Islands Trust is a federation of local government bodies representing 25,000 people living within the Islands Trust Area. The Islands Trust is responsible for preserving and protecting the unique environment of the Islands Trust Area through planning and regulating land use, development management, education, cooperation with other agencies, and land conservation. The area covers the islands and waters between the British Columbia mainland and southern Vancouver Islands including Howe Sound and as far north as Comox (excluding Texada Island). The area is approximately 5200 square km in size and includes 13 major islands and over 450 smaller islands.

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