



News Release

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Islands Trust Council Approves 2013-2014 Budget

VICTORIA - On March 6th at its meeting on Thetis Island, the Islands Trust Council approved a 2013-2014 budget of \$6.9 million. The budget represents a \$101,269 increase in expenditures and will result in a 1.3% increase in Islands Trust property taxes in 2013. A typical property assessed at \$450,000 is expected to see a tax increase of approximately \$4.

The approved budget supports current service levels, improves bylaw enforcement resources, provides a new permanent position to manage the website and other computer applications for trustees and staff, and supports the following projects:

- Further research and advocacy for sustainable and affordable ferry services;
- Nearshore mapping (eelgrass and forage fish); and
- Riparian areas mapping to meet the provincial regulation that requires local governments to protect potential fish habitat.

The 2013-2014 budget will complete or advance programs to address land use planning issues in all local trust areas in consultation with islanders. Examples of these initiatives are affordable housing, farm plans, groundwater and shoreline protection. Each of these topics includes public consultation activities.

Islands Trust Council Chair Sheila Malcolmson reflected, "During our budget deliberations, we were challenged with a reduced 2013-2014 contribution from the province and increased wages negotiated by the province under the BCGEU collective agreement. Before proposing this budget, Trust Council's Financial Planning Committee carefully considered the options for keeping taxes as low as possible while providing the many projects islanders ask for and meeting mandatory obligations facing local government. Trust Council carefully considered input from trustees and constituents before making its final decision."

Budget details are available from the Islands Trust website at <http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/trust-council/budget.aspx>

The Islands Trust Council 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 Island. It includes 13 major and more than 450 smaller islands covering 5200 square kilometres.

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Preserving *island* communities, culture and environment

Bowen, Denman, Hornby, Gabriola, Galiano, Gambier, Lasqueti, Mayne, N. Pender, Salt Spring, Saturna, S. Pender, Thetis