

Sustaining the Islands – Community Stewardship Awards Program



Islands Trust

2013 Nominee Profile

Salt Spring Island Water Council

- Category:** Group
- Project:** Leadership on water issues on Salt Spring Island
- Nominator(s):** Salt Spring Island Conservancy
- Letters of Support:** N/A

Project Description:

The Salt Spring Island Water Council, which celebrates its 10th anniversary this year, provides a forum for sharing information on the quality and quantity of Salt Spring Island's surface and groundwater resources. The Council undertakes research and analysis, advocates for appropriate government legislation, regulations and policies and educates the public. All of the agencies and individuals responsible for providing, protecting, conserving and managing drinking water on the island benefit from this work.

The Council meets bimonthly in public with representatives of fourteen water districts. Over the last decade, it has addressed a wide range of topics, including potable water supply and demand, watershed management, water quality, water conservation, groundwater, septic systems and storm water management.

Recent highlights of their work include: support for the Cusheon Lake Watershed Management Plan and the coordination of the St. Mary Lake Watershed Management Plan, two low-flush rebate programs, a Soft Path (conservation) Strategy with the POLIS Institute (UVic) and a groundwater workshop. Another project was a community dialogue and expert panel talking about the complexities of the current problems with St. Mary Lake.

The Water Council has also worked in cooperation with the Water Preservation Society and others to produce a brochure on St. Mary Lake; has made submissions to the Local Trust Committee on the proposed Riparian Area Regulations and is currently collaborating to support a Simon Fraser University hydrogeological study of impacts of climate change on Salt Spring Island's groundwater resources.