



News Release

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March 10, 2014

2014-05-IT

Islands Trust Council Approves 2014-2015 Budget with No Tax Increase

VICTORIA - On March 5th at its meeting on Hornby Island, the Islands Trust Council approved a 2014-2015 budget of \$7.1 million. There is no tax increase associated with this budget except for the special requisition for Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area taxpayers requested by the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee for watershed management, which was also approved by Trust Council.

“Before proposing this budget, Trust Council’s Financial Planning Committee carefully considered the options for providing the many projects islanders asked for as well as meeting the legal responsibilities of being a federation of local governments,” said Sheila Malcolmson, Islands Trust Council Chair. “The final budget represents many hours of discussion, debate and difficult decisions. We also asked islanders for their input on the proposal and received fewer than 20 e-mails about the Salt Spring Island watershed tax requisition and several e-mails asking for more spending on research and mapping and more focus on threats such as climate change and increased tanker traffic.”

The approved budget includes an increase of \$171,917 in expenditures, which includes the cost of the 2014 local government election in November. The budget will also enable the Islands Trust to maintain its core functions and continue its work on the following strategic priorities:

- Compliance with provincial requirements under the *Riparian Areas Regulation*. This provincial regulation requires local governments to ensure that potential fish habitat within their jurisdiction is protected to specific standards. Funding to continue the work to bring the Islands Trust Area into compliance includes public consultation to develop necessary bylaws and mapping streams where the regulation would apply.
- A modest increase in planning staff hours to benefit service delivery for Galiano, Mayne, North Pender, Saturna and South Pender work programs.
- Completion of eelgrass mapping for the major islands in the Islands Trust Area.
- Continuation of forage fish habitat mapping, with a focus on Howe Sound.
- Continuation of the Grants Manager position but with service reduced from three days to two per week.

The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee requested a Special Property Tax Requisition of \$110,000 (in the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area **only**) for coordination of watershed management on Salt Spring Island. The funds will be used to support management of the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Authority (SSIWPA), and enable a coordinated, inter-jurisdictional response to the protection and management of freshwater resources on Salt Spring Island. The amount approved will result in a tax of \$3.38 per \$100,000 of assessed property value in the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area. [Click here](#) for more information on the requisition.

Budget details are available from the Islands Trust website [here](#).

The Islands Trust Council is a federation of local government bodies representing 25,000 people living within the Islands Trust Area and another 10,000 non-resident property-owners. 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
