

Budget 2017-2018

Watershed Management:

Salt Spring Island Special Property Tax Requisition

What is a Special Property Tax Requisition?

Islands Trust Council policy enables individual Local Trust Committees to request the Islands Trust Council to include a special property tax requisition within their Local Trust Area to fund “additional operations” that are not included in their general land use planning and regulatory role. The Salt Spring Island Special Property Tax Requisition (SPTR) will only apply to the [Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area](#), which is the only local trust area to benefit from the additional operations. The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee (SSILTC) has received a requisition to support watershed management since 2014 and is requesting it again for the 2017-2018 fiscal year.

What kind of Additional Operations is the SSILTC proposing to undertake?

In 2012, the SSILTC requested that the Islands Trust Council delegate it the authority to *coordinate* and *assist* in the *determination* of regional, improvement district and Government of British Columbia policies; and to *coordinate* the *implementation* and *carrying out* of regional, improvement district and Government of British Columbia policies for the purposes of preserving and protecting water resources in the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area. The Islands Trust Council passed [Bylaw 154](#) in June 2013 in response to this request.

With these delegated powers, the SSILTC acts as more than a land use planning and regulatory body – it also acts as a coordinating body for the [Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Authority \(SSIWPA\)](#). The SSILTC proposes to continue to fund this work through a special tax levy in the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area.

What is the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Authority?

The [Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Authority](#) (SSIWPA) was created in 2012 to provide a coordinated, inter-jurisdictional response to the protection and management of freshwater resources on Salt Spring Island. SSIWPA is comprised of public agencies with responsibility and authority for the use and management of water resources and the watersheds in the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area. Member agencies include: Capital Regional District, Fernwood Water Local Service Commission (CRD), North Salt Spring Waterworks District, Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Forest, Lands, and Natural Resources.

The mission and purpose of SSIWPA is to “cooperate on the development and implementation of policies and initiatives for improved raw water quality and the long-term remediation, protection, sustainability and stewardship of Salt Spring Island watersheds.”

What does the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Authority do?

In late 2015, SSIWPA completed a multi-stakeholder planning process that resulted in the [“Integrated Watershed Management Plan for the St. Mary Lake Watershed 2015,”](#) on Salt Spring Island. As implementation of the Plan was underway, SSIWPA determined the need to expand its focus to respond to climate change and drought patterns, as well as assessment of the freshwater resource as a whole (groundwater and surface water, in combination).

SSIWPA launched an island-wide effort in late spring of 2016 called “Salt Spring Integrated Watershed Management Program”, (IWM) in order to address the need to:

- quantify the volume of freshwater available (in a renewable manner) for human use;
- measure and optimize the efficiency of potable water resource uses/demand;
- if necessary, adjust bylaws and regulations to sustainably manage development and the built environment in areas where water quantity sensitivities exist.

How much of a tax increase is proposed?

The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee is requesting a \$98,500 Special Property Tax Requisition for the 2017-2018 fiscal year in order to coordinate the IWM Program. The tax requisition is based on the following budget:

Coordination Contracts	\$ 85,000
SSIWPA Meeting Costs	\$ 5,500
SSIWPA Community Events and Communications	\$ 8,000
Total	\$98,500

As the proposed [Islands Trust Council’s budget for 2017-2018](#) does not include any tax increases, the SSILTC’s request represents the total proposed increase on Salt Spring Island.

How much will the proposed \$98,500 watershed management tax cost me as a property owner or tenant?

Islands Trust property taxes represent about 12 per cent of the total property tax bill on Salt Spring Island. The amount of tax increase for individual property is based on a number of factors, such as, mill rate, type of property etc., and may be different for each property. More information about how property taxes are calculated for Islands Trust Areas is available on the [website](#).

Are other agencies sharing the cost?

There are several agencies, including the province of British Columbia, partnering with SSIWPA and providing in-kind and other financial support for the project. In past years, SSIWPA has raised over \$150,000 in grants, direct funding, and in-kind contributions from its member agencies and other sources.

How will the special property tax requisition affect the other islands in the Islands Trust Area, outside of the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area?

This increase is only proposed for the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area and funds can only be spent in that area. If any funds are unspent at the end of the fiscal year, they can only be used for the work of the SSILTC, and cannot go into the Islands Trust’s general revenues.

Who Approves the Special Property Tax Requisition?

The SSILTC’s request for a Salt Spring Island Special Property Tax Requisition for watershed management will be considered by the Islands Trust Council during its budget decisions in March 2017. The Islands Trust’s budget consultations are now underway. Further information about the Islands Trust’s general budget proposal is available [here](#).

How Can I Have My Say?

We want to hear from you. You can send your comments on any aspect of the Islands Trust Council's budget, including the Salt Spring Island Special Tax Requisition in several ways as indicated below.

If we receive your feedback by February 10th, the Islands Trust Council's Financial Planning Committee will consider your input as it makes its budget recommendations to Trust Council. Trust Council will approve the final budget at its quarterly meeting March 14-16, 2017 on Gabriola Island.

Please note: All feedback will be included in public documents (subject to Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy legislation) and posted to the Islands Trust website.

You can make your comments in one of the ways listed below:

1. Complete a short, anonymous survey at www.islandstrust.bc.ca
2. Email budget@islandstrust.bc.
3. Write to: 200 – 1627 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8R 1H8
4. Fax to: (250) 405-5155
5. In person by appointment at the Islands Trust Council's March 14-16 meeting on Gabriola Islands.
6. Through one of your local Salt Spring Island trustees: Peter Grove or George Grams

Click here for more information on the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Authority:
<http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/islands/local-trust-areas/salt-spring/projects-initiatives.aspx>

<http://ssiwatersheds.ca/>

How to Contact Us for Information on SSIWPA:

Email: ssiinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca

Phone: Stefan Cermak 250-538-5608

For Information on the Islands Trust Council's proposed 2017-2018 Budget:

www.islandstrust.bc.ca/budget