

Maps at Your Fingertips

“Maps codify the miracle of existence.” – Nicholas Crane, *Mercator: The Man Who Who Mapped the Planet*

Put a map in front of someone and they are immediately engaged. Usually, the first thing they want to do is find themselves – to put their finger, literally, on where they live. There’s something so satisfying about saying, “This is my place in the world.”

Maps are not just fun ways to help us locate ourselves in space. They also hold valuable information to help us understand the physical realities of our world. And as we seek to live in harmony with those realities, maps help us make wise choices.

The Islands Trust creates and maintains a range of maps. These are available online, in the Denman library, and at the Islands Trust office at the Old School (check community calendars for office hours). You can also order maps from the Islands Trust Gabriola office (250-247-2063/northinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca)

Here’s a guide to what’s available:

MapIT software: one portal takes you to an interactive map world covering the whole Islands Trust Area. You can zoom in and out, and find your property by clicking on it or typing in the address. You can toggle between an orthophoto (aerial photograph), zoning/land use designation map, cadastral map (showing property lines), contour map, and more. **Where?** Islands Trust website, www.islandstrust.bc.ca; bottom right corner.

Sensitive Ecosystem Maps: the Islands Trust Area is home to a disproportionate amount of land within sensitive ecosystems. Our maps are a good place to start learning about these special places. **Where?** The Denman Island page of the Islands Trust website; click on “Resources” on the right.

Nearshore Ecosystem Maps: The health of the ocean surrounding our island depends to a large degree on the health of unglamorous but heroic species such as sand lance, smelt and eelgrass. We have maps showing where these are, and along with them, information for anyone wondering just why this is important enough to warrant the outlay of money and energy needed to create maps. **Where?** The Denman Island page of the Islands Trust website; click on “Resources” on the right.

Maps to download, print or consult in a PDF version: We have maps showing aerial images, land use designations and zoning, property boundaries, terrain (contours), and parks and protected areas in versions that you can download and print. **Where?** Islands Trust website; click on “Maps” on the top horizontal menu.

Denman Island Official Community Plan maps: Beach Rights-of-Way, a Parks and Greenways Vision, and Development Permit Areas (which include wetlands, streams and lakes) are mapped as part of our OCP. **Where?** The Denman Island page of the Islands Trust website; click on “Bylaws,” on the right.

More maps: a density/subdivision map which shows the total possible number of properties on the island; a protected areas map; maps associated with Denman’s Farm Plan – types of crops, pasture, forage and livestock, and soils. **Where?** The Denman Island page of the Islands Trust website; click on “Resources” on the right.

Get Involved! A Volunteer Opportunity

Do you want to learn more about land use decisions on Denman? Could you provide useful input about bylaws, zoning, etc, especially if you had a chance to read up on issues and discuss specific questions with others? If so, **please consider becoming a member of the Denman Island Advisory Planning Commission (APC).**

The APC advises the Denman Island Local Trust Committee on applications, proposed bylaw changes, policy development and more. No prior experience needed (you’ll receive an orientation) but you will be expected to do some reading and thinking, and show up for meetings anywhere from zero to about six times a year.

Why join the APC? From personal experience I can say that being an APC member is a great way to learn about local government and community issues. I liked the challenge of articulating my ideas and seeing how they compared to others’ ideas in a small group format. And I appreciated having input into local decisions.

The APC is not a great venue to promote a single issue or niche point of view, but rather is an opportunity to consider what is best for the whole island.

To apply, send an expression of interest (generally including a cover letter and resume) to: Denman Island Local Trust Committee, c/o Islands Trust Northern Office, 700 North Road, Gabriola Island, BC V0R 1X3, or email: northinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca.