



News Release

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NEW BYLAWS TO PROTECT DRINKING WATER ON SALT SPRING

Coast Salish Territory, Salt Spring Island—The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee (SSI LTC) has adopted two bylaws that will help maintain water quality in the Island’s drinking water lakes while also respecting the role that farming plays in the island’s culture and economy.

“Our understanding of just how precious freshwater is on an island like Salt Spring deepens every day,” said SSI LTC Chair, Peter Luckham. “In adopting these bylaws, the committee was responding to community concern about the quality of freshwater drawn from local lakes. These new policies and regulations were informed by the efforts of a special working group that included representatives from the agricultural community and water protection groups, working alongside local residents. We thank everyone who was involved in this process and who helped us to take this step to ensure the protection of fresh drinking water now and into the future.”

Bylaw 496 amends the Salt Spring Island Official Community Plan to allow the SSI LTC to make new regulations for farming on lands that are outside of the Agricultural Land Reserve, but only if those proposed regulations are for the purpose of water quality protection.

Bylaw 487 applies to land in the Rural Watershed 1 and 2 zones. These are the areas that surround the Island’s main drinking water lakes: St. Mary, Cusheon, Maxwell, Stowel, and Weston. Bylaw 487 amends the Salt Spring Island Land Use Bylaw to remove “intensive agriculture” as a permitted use in the watershed zones, introduces a 15 metre setback from water bodies for agriculture in the watershed zones, and also introduces a 30 metre setback from water bodies in all zones for storing hazardous materials used in farm operations.

For more information:

- To view Bylaws 496 and 487 and to learn more about this project, visit the project webpage [here](#)
- See the final report from the Agriculture in Rural Watershed Zones Working Group [here](#).

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The Islands Trust is a federation of local government bodies representing 26,000 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 and amenities of the Islands Trust Area through planning and regulating land use, development management, education, co-operation 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 islands and more than 450 smaller islands covering 5200 square kilometres.

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