



Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance Terms of Reference

Adopted August 29, 2013; Amended October 18, 2013
Amended November 28, 2014. Amended December 18, 2017.
Amended January 19, 2018. Amended October 22, 2019.
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Background

The Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Authority (SSIWPA) was created by the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee using coordination powers delegated by Islands Trust Council through Bylaw 154 to facilitate a coordinated approach to the management and protection of freshwater resources on Salt Spring Island. The group name was changed from Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Authority to Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance in December, 2017. SSIWPA Steering Committee is comprised of regional, local, and provincial government organizations, water providers, and water managers with interest, and responsibility, in the operation, and management of watersheds, surface, and groundwater resources in the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area. SSIWPA provides a cooperative framework for member agencies to pool resources, gather and share information, strategize on integrated policy development, and to coordinate individual agency actions for improved raw water quality, management of quantity, and the health and protection of watersheds, surface and groundwater resources in the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area.

These Terms of Reference have been developed for the purpose of guiding the procedures and scope of SSIWPA. They may eventually be replaced or form part of a formal coordination agreement between the member agencies, such as may be developed pursuant to s. 9 of the Islands Trust Act. SSIWPA and its member agencies recognize the involvement and participation of residents, stakeholders, and community organizations as a vital component of watershed management on Salt Spring Island.

Purpose

The purpose of the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance is to:

- Provide a framework for freshwater resources in the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area to be managed in a manner that integrates and considers both human and ecosystem needs through integrated planning, policy development and recommendations for implementation by member agencies and organizations;
- Advise on policies of regional, local and provincial government organizations that are related to freshwater resources;
- Coordinate the implementation of those policies.

1 Bylaw 154: <http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/media/222960/bylaw154delegationpowers.pdf>

www.ssiwpa.org

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Guiding Principles

SSIWPA members will:

1. Recognize that SSIWPA itself does not carry authority but is rather a collective of agencies, each with independent responsibilities or authorities;
2. Consider the interrelationships of the various values of the watershed towards maintaining a balance of the natural, cultural, social and economic values of the community;
3. Respect the ecological limits of watersheds, surface groundwater resources, keeping in mind the uncertainty introduced through climate variability and climate change;
4. Foster an environment of collaboration and enlarged thinking, where the collective goals of SSIWPA are focused on the health and protection of Salt Spring Island water resources;
5. Ensure that all discussions and dialogue promote a proactive, respectful and cooperative approach towards all issues and where all viewpoints are encouraged, respected and considered;
6. Respect each participant's commitment to professional associations or responsibilities to individual employers or self;
7. Consult and engage the community in stewardship initiatives;
8. Include all stakeholders that wish to be involved;
9. Operate and communicate in an open, respectful, transparent and accountable manner;
10. Share all relevant public information that may assist SSIWPA in its process of inquiry and coordination of strategic policy development, where possible;
11. Cooperate with other agencies and groups having jurisdiction or interests within the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area watersheds;
12. To respect that decisions or, recommendations made by SSIWPA are non-binding on any member agency and to respect the autonomy, authority and respective responsibilities of member agencies; and
13. Ensure all meetings will be conducted with decorum, and generally follow a Consensus decision-making model (see Guidelines for Decision-Making in this document).

Aims and Objectives

The SSIWPA Steering Committee will:

1. Coordinate the development and updating of an Integrated Water Management Plan for Salt Spring Island that strives to ensure a sustainable freshwater supply for human use that protects against over-demand and degradation of the resource and the natural systems that depend on it.
2. Develop recommendations that can be implemented by member agencies with the legislative authority to do so.
3. Align policy development with implementation strategies in order to secure the long-term health, protection and stewardship of watersheds, surface and groundwater resources.
4. Develop strategies that protect and/or improve water quality and explore root causes of water quality deterioration, providing evidence-based advice to agencies or groups where appropriate.
5. Be a champion of the British Columbia Water Sustainability Act (2016).
6. Cooperate with agencies and groups having jurisdiction or interests within the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area watersheds, surface and groundwater resources.
7. Share relevant information, technical reports and data wherever practical to avoid duplication of efforts.
8. Draw on the expertise and experience of groups and individuals that have a history of working to protect and restore Salt Spring Island's water resources, in transparent and inclusive dialogue.

9. Engage the community in consultation processes that enable consideration of proposed actions according to multiple values and objectives.
10. Support and carry out outreach and education that encourages watershed protection and that increases understanding of water science, stewardship and management activities.
11. Seek and support funding opportunities for priority actions.

Scope and Geographical Areas

The scope of SSIWPA includes watersheds, surface water bodies and groundwater resources in the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area.

Participants

SSIWPA Steering Committee

SSIWPA Steering Committee membership consists of representatives of agencies that have responsibility for water and/or watershed management, the delivery of potable drinking water, or the assurance of safe drinking water. This includes: First Nations, Water Improvement Districts, CRD Water Service Area Commissions, local and regional government organizations, the provincial government, the federal government and health authorities.

Membership on Steering Committee is allocated as follows:

Capital Regional District (1)
Islands Trust Local Trust Committee (1)
North Salt Spring Waterworks District (1)
Harbourview Improvement District (1)
Mt. Belcher Improvement District (1)
Scott Point Waterworks District (1)
Provincial Government Agencies (unlimited) whose representatives fill an ex officio role¹
First Nations (1-3)
Fernwood-Highland Water Service Area Commission (1)
Fulford Water Service Area Commission (1)
Beddis Water Service Area Commission (1)
Cedar Lane Water Service Area Commission (1)
Cedars of Tuam Water Service Area Commission (1)
Members at-large (up to 6)

All member agencies will provide written confirmation to the Chair regarding the name of their appointed representative on SSIWPA and any approved alternate(s). The appointed representative(s) will remain in their position until the member agency provides written notice of a replacement or at the discretion of the member agency.

¹ Ex officio indicates a non-voting participant. Provincial government staff may not vote as a representative of the Province, only elected members of the legislature may do so. Since provincial political representation is not feasible in this case, ex officio members may be involved with SSIWPA by virtue of their recognized position as staff of a provincial government agency that has responsibility and authority for water resources on SSI.

All Steering Committee members will devote their time to the operations of SSIWPA without remuneration by SSIWPA and will respect these Terms of Reference. It is the responsibility of each SSIWPA Steering Committee member who represents a government agency, or organization, to consult his/her host agency in connection to the work plan and to bring relevant agency information to the discussion. It is likewise the responsibility of each Steering Committee member to communicate relevant SSIWPA decisions back to their host agency and to advance implementation wherever feasible while maintaining respect for the autonomy of the member agency.

SSIWPA Members at-Large:

In addition to the Steering Committee, SSIWPA will also include members at-large (up to 6) to represent islanders with a legitimate interest in or knowledge of SSI water issues, watershed resources not already covered by seats allocated to Improvement Districts (for example the Erskine Water Society, and other recognized Small Water Systems). SSIWPA members at-large may also include different types of other surface or groundwater users, groups that represent them, licensed commercial/industrial users and water providers, domestic users, or licensed agricultural users, non-governmental organizations with an interest in water issues, and other stakeholders.

Members at-large will not participate in voting procedures; however, they are expected to follow these Terms of Reference, and to share the other duties of Steering Committee members. They will be invited to apply and will be selected by the current Steering Committee for the upcoming year. One year terms for members at-large are renewable by application. Alternates or substitutions on Steering Committee may not be made for members at-large.

Guidelines for Decision-making

Steering Committee meeting procedures will follow a Consensus decision-making model.

“Consensus decision-making” is defined as agreement by each steering committee member, and also includes members at-large and ex officio members.

Decisions of the Steering Committee require a quorum.

Consensus Decision-Making Procedure

Members of the Steering Committee agree to follow this process to achieve consensus:

- a) proposal,
- b) clarification and discussion stage,
- c) proposal modification (with assistance by those suggesting change; as necessary), and
- d) agreement by consensus, or withdrawal of proposal, by consensus.

Decisions will be made by unanimous consensus whenever possible.

When consensus is not reached at the close of the discussion about a proposal, the following options exist:

- i. The group consents to drop the proposal.
- ii. The group elects a subcommittee to refine the proposal for re-consideration by the Steering Committee at a later date.

- iii. A decision favoured by the majority is adopted with unresolved concerns listed. Those who stand aside from the decision are recorded, along with their concerns.
- iv. A refined proposal that has been brought for consideration for the third hearing may be blocked if a minimum of two members of the Steering Committee can substantiate their concerns that the proposal is in contravention of the Purpose or Objectives or Guiding Principles for the Steering Committee as stated above in this document.

Meetings

Regular Working Meetings of SSIWPA will be held monthly, if required, with the date, time and location of each Working Meeting being established by agreement of the representatives of member agencies in January of each year. Meetings may be re-scheduled by consent of SSIWPA members.

Special Working Meetings may be called by the Chair, as required, depending on the availability of quorum and provided that all members will receive a minimum notice of two working days in advance of the Special Meeting. Notice of Special Working Meetings may be waived by consent of SSIWPA members.

SSIWPA meetings will be open to the public to observe, provided that meetings may be closed to public in a manner consistent with s. 90 of the BC Community Charter.

Quorum

Meeting quorum of the steering committee current membership is considered 50% of the whole membership plus Chair or Vice-Chair. If there is insufficient quorum, the Chair agrees to postpone the meeting agenda until quorum can be reached.

Notice of Meetings

Notice of the date, time and location of meetings will be posted on the SSIWPA website in January of each year. Notice of rescheduled meetings will also be posted on the SSIWPA website in a timely manner.

Meeting Delegations

Members of the public who wish to address the SSIWPA may make a delegation request in writing one week prior to a scheduled meeting or by request to the Chair during attendance at a meeting. Each delegation will be limited to five minutes. Longer presentations may be requested, and agreed to by SSIWPA members. Members of the public are expected to behave with due decorum and to respect any rulings of the Chair.

Chair

At the first meeting of SIWPA each year a Chair and Vice Chair will be elected by the whole membership from among the authorized representatives of the core agencies, i.e. the Islands Trust, the Capital Regional District and the North Salt Spring Waterworks District.

The Chair is responsible for preserving order at SSIWPA meetings and may make such rulings as are necessary to do so. The chair is to serve without remuneration. The role of the Chair is to include the following duties:

1. Liaise with the SSIWPA Coordinator and Steering Committee members to set agenda topics.
2. Ensure distribution of meeting minutes to members and the public through the SSIWPA Coordinator.
3. Liaise with SSIWPA Coordinator, SSIWPA Steering Committee and Islands Trust to effectively facilitate and coordinate SSIWPA.
4. May act as a spokesperson for SSIWPA to the public wherever possible with Steering Committee pre-approval of messaging content.

SSIWPA Coordinator will act as facilitator for Steering Committee meetings, unless otherwise arranged, such that the Chair is free to participate in the discussions and technical proposals. As facilitator, the SSIWPA Coordinator is charged with group process functions within and outside of SSIWPA regular meetings to the extent that coordination resources allow. For more Coordinator duties, please refer to the SSIWPA Coordinator Contract with Islands Trust.

Conduct of Representatives of Member Agencies

1. It is understood that members are delegates from the agencies they represent and serve at the pleasure of the agency that has appointed them.
2. Representatives should have a common understanding of the mandate of SSIWPA, demonstrate mutual respect to other participants and be accountable to share information to and from the group or agency they represent.
3. It is understood that decisions of SSIWPA will be taken to the relevant agency for consideration.
4. Where a further decision is required by an elected body, the SSIWPA member agency representative will bring the position of SSIWPA forward in a neutral manner to their agency.
5. The member agency may oppose the position of SSIWPA if it does not consider it to be in the best interests of the electors.

Location

Meeting locations will be flexible and decided by SSIWPA and its Coordinator.

Sharing of Information

After a meeting the minute-taker who is responsible for taking minutes of each meeting will provide a draft to the Coordinator. The Coordinator will circulate the draft meeting minutes to the Chair and Islands Trust Planner soon after the meeting. The Chair, Coordinator, or other designate is responsible for ensuring that an agenda package is circulated to all participants at least one week prior to the next meeting.

Meeting minutes will be considered and adopted as soon as practicable, preferably at the next meeting.

Committees and Working Groups

In addition to the Steering Committee, SSIWPA may form standing committees or working groups to perform technical advisory, or other advisory functions as delineated clearly in the working group Terms

of Reference. Membership in such working groups is through application to and appointment by SSIWPA SC.

The Steering Committee may form an administrative committee, which will strive to achieve broad representation of all participants. The function of the administrative committee will be to ensure that the work of SSIWPA continues between meetings and to provide oversight for work done by the Coordinator.

Participation of community groups, ratepayers associations, business interests and other stakeholders is welcomed, and will be formalized at times through the creation of issue specific Public Advisory Committees. In the absence of a formal Public Advisory Committee, stakeholders and interested individuals are encouraged to attend meetings and participate in public feedback sessions.

Budget

SSIWPA shall, on or before the 30th day of August in each year, prepare and submit a proposed budget covering all anticipated costs for the following fiscal year.

Resources

Funding

The Islands Trust supports SSIWPA by funding coordination using a special property tax requisition collected from the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area. This funding source is at the discretion of Islands Trust Council and considered on an annual basis in the Trust Council budget process. Islands Trust Council is responsible for contract assistance and the administration of coordination funding, with direction from the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee, and with recommendations from the SSIWPA Steering Committee.

All SSIWPA participants will be encouraged to seek and to contribute funding or in-kind resources to meet the objectives of SSIWPA where possible.

Staff Resources

Coordination of SSIWPA activities including administrative support such as meeting coordination, records maintenance, financial management, and project management will be carried out by a contract coordinator and funded by Islands Trust.

In kind staff support to SSIWPA will be provided by each member agency at its discretion.

Contract Assistance

Contract assistance to fulfill SSIWPA objectives may be obtained:

- a) through the Islands Trust, subject to approval of the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee and subject to the procurement processes and policies of the Islands Trust Council, or
- b) through the Capital Regional District, subject to procurement processes and policies of the Capital Regional District Board.
- c) Through another member agency, subject to the procurement policies of that agency.

Volunteer Assistance

SSIWPA may, from time to time, consider proposals or invite specific individuals, groups or agencies to attend meetings on a voluntary basis to make presentations on specific technical issues which will contribute to the deliberations on specific agenda items.

Communications

SSIWPA will report to and consult with the community on issues and actions as appropriate.

A website, periodic public newsletters, brochures, other literature and/or media releases will be prepared as needed and as resources permit. SSIWPA will designate responsibility for external communications to one or more spokesperson(s). An annual report for the public will be produced by SSIWPA at the conclusion of each fiscal year.

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed at least every three years and may be changed as required by decision of the authorized representatives of the core agencies, i.e. the Islands Trust, The Capital Regional District, and the North Salt Spring Waterworks District.

Current SSIWPA Steering Committee (January 2020):

Agency	Name & Department or Area	Alternate or Note
British Columbia Ministry of Environment, Climate Change Strategy	Water Protection and Sustainability (Victoria)	On a project basis
British Columbia Ministry of Forest, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development	Pat Lapcevic, Water Protection (Nanaimo)	Ex-officio
British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture	Regional Agrologist, Southern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands	On a project basis
British Columbia Ministry of Health	Vacant	On a project basis
Capital Regional District (CRD)	Director Gary Holman, Salt Spring Island Electoral Area, Island-wide	
First Nations	Vacant	
Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee	Trustee Laura Patrick, Island-wide	
Beddis Water Service Area Commission (CRD)	Ruth Waldick , Cusheon Lake and Beddis Water Service Area	Simon Wheeler
Cedars of Tuam Water Service Area Commission (CRD)	Peter Wypkema, Isabella Point	
Cedar Lane Water Service Area Commission (CRD)	Jason Griffin, Cedar Lane Area	Cathy Lenihan
Fernwood-Highland Water Service Area Commission (CRD)	Vacant, St. Mary Lake North Watershed	
Fulford Water Service Area Commission (CRD)	Alan Martin, Weston Lake and Fulford Area	
Harbourview Improvement District	Allan Maynard, Chair	
Highland-Fernwood Water Service Area Commission (CRD)	Vacant, St. Mary Lake North End and Maliview Road	
Mount Belcher Improvement District	Vacant	
North Salt Spring Waterworks District	Michael McAllister, Maxwell Lake, St. Mary Lake Watersheds	
Scott Point Waterworks District	Tim Slaney, Scott Point Area	
Members At-Large January 1- December 31, 2020		
Agricultural Alliance and Transition Salt Spring Society	Nicholas Adamson-Jones, Member at-large	Represents two Boards of Directors
Cusheon Lake Stewardship Committee	Doreen Hewitt, Member at-large Cusheon Lake Watershed	
Salt Spring Island Conservancy	John Borst, Member at-large	
Salt Spring Water Company	Rhonon Heitzmann, Member at-large	
Salt Spring Island Water Preservation Society	Maxine Leichter, Member at -large	

