

B.6 RESOURCE LAND USE OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

B.6.1 OBJECTIVES

- B.6.1.1 To recognize and retain traditional resource-based livelihoods such as agriculture, forestry and fishing. To maintain and protect their land bases, support *sustainable* management practices and to develop zoning that accommodates supportive land uses. To resist pressures to manage agriculture, forestry and fishing for reasons that are primarily aesthetic.
- B.6.1.2 To maximize the local economic benefits of industries that consume island resources by providing for value-added processing of island resource products.

B.6.2 Agriculture Land Uses

B.6.2.1 OBJECTIVES

- B.6.2.1.1 To support farming as a social, cultural and economic priority, and an ecologically responsible land use on Salt Spring Island.
- B.6.2.1.2 To maintain and protect the long term potential for farming and agro-forestry on Salt Spring Island; to preserve *agricultural land* and necessary water supplies.
- B.6.2.1.3 To incorporate the spirit and intent of the provincial *Agricultural Land Commission Act, the Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision And Procedure Regulation, and the Farm Practices Protection ("Right to Farm") Act* into local land use policies and bylaws.
- B.6.2.1.4 To limit the non-farm use of *agricultural land*.
- B.6.2.1.5 To accommodate a level and type of residential use on *agricultural land* that reflects the business needs of farm operations and is consistent with objectives for island population.
- B.6.2.1.6 To reduce the potential for conflicts between agricultural areas and those areas that have been identified for higher density settlement.
- B.6.2.1.7 To encourage the creation and implementation of environmental farm plans.
- B.6.2.1.8 To ensure that sufficient water supplies remain available for agricultural purposes.
- B.6.2.1.9 To recognize agriculture's contribution to the island's social, economic and environmental nature and appeal, and to retain and build on the island's agricultural base, especially organic.



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B.6.2.2 POLICIES

Note: Where land is located within the North Salt Spring Waterworks District, any rezoning proposals that would result in a net increase in water demand must also take into account the severe restraints on the District's available water supply. Policies in Section C.3.2.2 must also be considered.

- B.6.2.2.1 The Local Trust Committee should maintain an Agricultural Advisory Committee to:
- a. provide community advice about bylaw changes, applications for rezoning or subdivision, and applications to the Agricultural Land Commission.
 - b. help in developing and interpreting local policies about farming.
 - c. identify other ways that the Local Trust Committee can encourage and support farming in the community.
- B.6.2.2.2 The Local Trust Committee will work with the local farming community, the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, and the Agricultural Land Commission to develop common policies to the benefit of farming on Salt Spring Island and to support implementation of the Area Farm Plan.
- B.6.2.2.3 The areas designated for Agriculture and Watershed-Agriculture are shown on Map 1. Map 27 shows land in the ALR and non-ALR land used for agriculture.
- BL488
(07/20) B.6.2.2.4 Zoning within the Agriculture and Watershed-Agriculture Designations will continue to allow the land uses, structures and densities allowed by existing zoning and subdivision bylaws. Where existing zoning allows *general employment* and commercial uses, these will remain as permitted uses unless the property owner applies for a zoning change.
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(02/19) B.6.2.2.5 Farming activities and necessary structures should continue to be allowed by zoning in other Designations on all properties where they are currently allowed.
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(02/19) B.6.2.2.6 The Local Trust Committee will not make changes to local bylaws to prohibit or restrict farming in the Agricultural Land Reserve or that are obstacles to the creation of local abattoirs, cold storage facilities, or other facilities that would improve local food security.
- BL496
(02/19) B.6.2.2.7 The Local Trust Committee could consider changes to local bylaws to prohibit or restrict farming in areas outside of the Agricultural Land Reserve where farming is now allowed in order to protect water quality.
- B.6.2.2.8 On the advice of the Agricultural Advisory Committee, the Local Trust Committee should continue to support local farming by:
- a. addressing the need for additional housing on *agricultural land*.
 - b. permitting appropriate farm uses as defined by the Agricultural Land Reserve Act and Regulations.
 - c. recognizing the traditional uses of the property owned by the Salt Spring Island Farmer's Institute on Rainbow Road.
 - d. allowing for the processing and warehousing of island farm products on the Institute's property.
 - e. supporting zoning that would allow various forms of community farming activities.
 - f. supporting the development of farmers' markets.
 - g. considering changes to the Land Use Bylaw, based on the objectives of the Area Farm Plan and in consultation with the Agricultural Land Commission and the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, to permit additional dwellings for farm workers.
 - h. considering changes to the Land Use Bylaw to further support agri-tourism.
 - i. supporting efforts to ensure a viable local livestock *industry*.
 - j. updating agricultural information, monitoring changes in the agricultural sector and helping to identify unused or available farmland.
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- B.6.2.2.9 The minimum average size of lots that can be created by subdivision in the Agriculture and Watershed-Agriculture Designation will remain the same as permitted by existing zoning. The Local Trust Committee could consider amending the minimum size of individual lots, if such a change would benefit local farming or protect *agricultural land* by allowing clustered development.

<i>Background Note:</i>	<p><i>The minimum parcel sizes and minimum average parcel sizes outlined in the Land Use Bylaw apply only when land is:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. excluded from the Agricultural Land Reserve, or</i> <i>b. approved for subdivision by the Agricultural Land Commission.</i> <p><i>An exception to the minimum lot sizes can be made where a home site is being created for a relative as outlined in Section 946 of the Local Government Act. Such subdivisions must also be approved by the Agricultural Land Commission.</i></p>
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- B.6.2.2.10 The Local Trust Committee could consider changing zoning to permit the following land uses, where permitted by the Agricultural Land Reserve Act or regulations, on individual properties in the Agriculture Designation: small-scale processing and sales of island-grown forest products; farming schools; farm-based tourist accommodation; waste management facilities. Such uses should only be allowed where farming capability is minimal and the planned use would not interfere with land productivity. Preference should be given to proposals that would improve the viability of an existing farm operation.
- B.6.2.2.11 The Local Trust Committee should consider rezoning applications from property owners with productive *agricultural land* outside the Agricultural Land Reserve who wish to transfer their development potential to maintain their farm. Such Land could be considered a Development Potential Donor Area, despite the development potential transfer status of the Designation it is in. Such applications should follow the guidelines in Appendix 4.
- B.6.2.2.12 The Local Trust Committee could consider rezoning applications to allow higher density in exchange for community owned farmland or land for community farm product processing or storage facilities. Such applications should follow the guidelines in Appendix 3. Such land is an eligible community amenity, which could be exchanged for a higher density of development as outlined in Appendix 3.
- B.6.2.2.13 The Local Trust Committee will support the inclusion of *agricultural land* within the Agricultural Land Reserve.
- B.6.2.2.14 The Local Trust Committee could support applications to the Agricultural Land Commission to subdivide land within the Agricultural Land Reserve if:
- a. the subdivision results in improved farming capability or production on all proposed lots in a way that would be impossible without subdivision.
 - b. the subdivision is to provide a house site up to 0.6 ha in size for an adult relative of the property owner, as defined by Section 946 of the *Local Government Act* and the parcel was held by that owner (or a blood relation) before the adoption of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* on December 21, 1972.
 - c. the subdivision is clearly in the public interest consistent with other objectives of this Plan.
- B.6.2.2.15 The Local Trust Committee should only support the use of lands in the Agriculture or Watershed-Agriculture Designations for road access to other lands if the proposed road does not interfere with farming capability.

- B.6.2.2.16 The Local Trust Committee could support applications to the Agricultural Land Commission for non-farm use or exclusion of land within the Agricultural Land Reserve in some situations where local farming or the greater community would benefit. Support for such applications should only be considered if the application has been referred to the Agricultural Advisory Committee and falls into one of the following categories:
- a. the proposed non-farm use or exclusion would allow an active farm to diversify and broaden its income, but not decrease the farming capability of the property.
 - b. the proposed non-farm use or exclusion is consistent with local zoning or a land use designation or policy in this Plan, including policies B.3.3.2.10 and B.7.2.2.7.
 - c. in the instance of a proposed exclusion, the Local Trust Committee may consider an application that would result in inclusion of existing non-ALR farmland into the ALR.
 - d. the non-farm use or exclusion of property for essential community services, if the location of the service is limited by engineering constraints, or by strategic considerations such as those that determine the best location for an emergency response station, and the proponent has demonstrated that there is no suitable alternate, non-ALR property.

Background Note: This policy suggests the types of applications to the Agricultural Land Commission which could be supported by the Local Trust Committee. However, the final decision regarding all such applications rests with the Commission.

B.6.2.2.17 When it considers rezoning applications that are not related to farming, the Local Trust Committee will ensure the availability of water for farming would not be reduced because of a zoning change. If a rezoning application would result in an increase in water use, the Local Trust Committee will ask the Agricultural Advisory Committee for advice about the potential impacts on farming.

B.6.2.2.18 The Local Trust Committee encourages subdivision layouts that reduce the potential for conflict with farming. When subdivisions are proposed for land that drains towards agricultural lands, the staff shall request that the Subdivision Approving Officer consider how changes to natural drainage patterns could affect agricultural activities. Such applications may be referred to the Agricultural Advisory Committee for advice and the Advisory Committee's suggestions for the protection of farming operations will be forwarded to the Subdivision Approving Officer for consideration.

B.6.2.2.19 When it considers rezoning applications for land that borders or drains into *agricultural land*, the Local Trust Committee will ensure that zoning changes are not made in a way that would have a negative effect on farming. For example, the Committee could require that a vegetation buffer be maintained on land that is being rezoned next to farm land, if the proposed use could result in conflicts with a farming operation. The Committee should also ensure that a zoning change would not result in detrimental changes to natural drainage or pollution of water supplies. The Agricultural Advisory Committee will be asked for advice about rezoning applications on land that borders or drains into *agricultural land*.

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B.6.2.2.20 Zoning changes should not be made to allow large new multi-family, *general employment*, institutional or commercial developments in the Agriculture or Watershed-Agriculture Designation. An exception could be considered for community facilities or limited *general employment* zoning that would provide broad benefits to the community and are specifically mentioned in this Plan.

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B.6.2.2.21 The Local Trust Committee will use the Development Permit process to ensure that development in higher density areas such as commercial, *general employment* and multifamily zones remains buffered from agricultural areas, is designed to reduce conflicts with agriculture, and does not result in detrimental impacts due to water pollution or changes in the drainage regime.

B.6.2.2.22 The Local Trust Committee will consider impacts on local food security when making land use decisions.

Others are encouraged to support the objectives of this Section in the following ways:

- B.6.2.2.23 The farming community of Salt Spring Island is recognized and encouraged in its ongoing efforts in support of local agriculture.
- B.6.2.2.24 The Islands Trust Fund Board is encouraged to help in the creation of an *agricultural land* trust.
- B.6.2.2.25 The B.C. Assessment Authority is urged to carefully consider its impact on local farming. It is encouraged to develop policies and procedures that recognize the unique challenges faced by the local farming community. The Local Trust Committee will develop and recommend specific policies in consultation with local farmers through the Agricultural Advisory Committee.
- B.6.2.2.26 The B.C. Ferry Services Inc. is encouraged to consider an assured loading policy for farm vehicles carrying livestock or perishable produce.
- B.6.2.2.27 The B.C. Ministry of Environment is urged to give greater priority to the needs of local farms in its decisions regarding water allocation on Salt Spring Island. The Ministry is also encouraged to provide ongoing assistance to the local farming community about water license applications.
- B.6.2.2.28 The B.C. Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands are requested to help develop mutually acceptable recommendations in consultation with the community about the management of wetlands, stream corridors and other *environmentally sensitive areas* on *agricultural lands* on Salt Spring Island.
- B.6.2.2.29 The Local Trust Committee will encourage and support efforts by others to promote and sustain local food security.
- B.6.2.2.30 B.C. Parks and other agencies are encouraged to support farming in park lands where this has been a traditional use of these lands.
- B.6.2.2.31 The Local Trust Committee will support efforts to discourage the use of genetically engineered seeds or plants for locally grown products.
- B.6.2.2.32 The Local Trust Committee will support the implementation of the Area Farm Plan by the Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance.

Background Note: "Where properties are located within the Agricultural Land Reserve, they are subject to the Agricultural Land Commission Act, Regulations and relevant Orders pursuant to the Act. The approval of the Agricultural Land Commission will therefore be required in addition to any authority obtained in accordance with the policies contained in this Plan or other bylaws governing land use. Furthermore, policies and bylaws must be consistent with the Act, failing which they will have no force or effect." - Agricultural Land Commission

B.6.3 Forestry and Watershed-Forestry Land Use Designations

B.6.3.1 OBJECTIVES

- B.6.3.1.1 To retain forestry, logging and wood processing as traditional resource-based land uses that contribute to the local economy and the island's rural nature.
- B.6.3.1.2 To protect the local forestry land base and large areas of unfragmented forest habitat.
- B.6.3.1.3 To encourage forest management that sustains or improves yields and that is compatible with other uses for forested land.
- B.6.3.1.4 To ensure local zoning allows the economic benefits of value-added wood processing to be retained in the community.
- B.6.3.1.5 To reduce the environmental, aesthetic and neighbourhood impacts of forestry, logging and wood processing.
- B.6.3.1.6 To protect the water quality of Maxwell Lake, a major source of the island's drinking water.

B.6.3.2 POLICIES

- B.6.3.2.1 The areas designated for Forestry and Watershed-Forestry are shown on Map 1.
- B.6.3.2.2 Zones within the Forestry and Watershed-Forestry Designation will continue to allow the residences, forestry and public service uses permitted by existing zoning. Zoning changes for large new commercial, *general employment* or institutional developments should not be made in this Designation.
- B.6.3.2.2 Zones within the Forestry and Watershed-Forestry Designation will continue to allow the residences, forestry and public service uses permitted by existing zoning. Zoning changes for large new commercial, industrial or institutional developments should not be made in this Designation.

Background Note: Land uses permitted under local zoning must be consistent with Private Managed Forest Lands Act for lands that are within that designation.

- B.6.3.2.3 The minimum size of lots that can be created by subdivision in zones within the Forestry and Watershed-Forestry Designation will remain the same as allowed by existing zoning.
- B.6.3.2.4 The Local Trust Committee should consider rezoning applications from property owners within the Forestry Designation who wish to:
 - a. sort and process island-grown wood products.
 - b. undertake forestry education and research.
 - c. operate low impact campgrounds.

If the Local Trust Committee considers such applications, it should ensure that the proposed use would not have a negative effect on the forestry potential of the affected lands, on *environmentally sensitive areas* or on neighbouring homes.

- B.6.3.2.5 The Local Trust Committee will support the development of a community-owned and managed woodlot. The Committee could consider rezoning applications that would allow higher density in exchange for a community owned and managed woodlot. Such applications should follow the guidelines in Appendix 3.
- B.6.3.2.6 The Local Trust Committee will encourage the use of island-grown timbers, logs and wood products in its Design Guidelines for villages.

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Others are encouraged to help achieve the objectives of this Section as follows:

- B.6.3.2.7 The Provincial Government is encouraged to develop forestry policies and regulations that ensure and support *sustainable* forest practices and protect drinking water sources on all privately owned forest lands.
- B.6.3.2.8 The Provincial Government is encouraged to develop forestry practices and regulations that ensure and support forest practices that protect the cultural, spiritual and traditional uses of forests by First Nations.

B.6.4 Sand and Gravel Deposits

The location of known sand and gravel pits (abandoned and existing) is illustrated on Map 14a. The majority are located within the "Qualicum" soil map unit, which occurs over old drainageways and beaches (van Vliet et al, 1987). The extent of Qualicum soils is also illustrated on Map14a. Information about the suitability of these areas for future sand and gravel extraction is not available.

Background Note: This section is included in fulfilment of Section 877(1)(c) of the Local Government Act which requires Official Community Plans to contain "statements and map designations ... respecting the approximate location and area of sand and gravel deposits that are suitable for future sand and gravel extraction".

- B.6.4.1 The Local Trust Committee may consider adopting regulations to manage the deposit and removal of soil in order to manage the impacts of aggregate operations.