



## Budget 2023-2024

### Water Sustainability

#### Salt Spring Island Special Property Tax Requisition

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#### **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 proposed additional operations. The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee (SS LTC) has received a requisition to support watershed management since 2014 and is requesting it again for the 2023-24 fiscal year.

#### **What kind of Additional Operations is the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee proposing to undertake?**

In 2012, the SS LTC 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 SS LTC can now act as more than a land use planning and regulatory body – it also acts as a coordinating body for the [Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance \(SSIWPA\)](#). The SS LTC 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 Alliance (SSIWPA)?**

[SSIWPA](#) was created in 2013 to provide a coordinated, inter-jurisdictional response to the protection and management of freshwater resources on Salt Spring Island. The [SSIWPA Steering Committee](#) 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, as well as other water purveyors and freshwater-interested organizations. The SSIWPA Steering Committee operates on a consensus decision-making model.

The purpose of SSIWPA 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; and

- Coordinate the implementation of those policies.

## **What does the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance do?**

The SSIWPA Steering Committee holds quarterly meetings to develop strategies for, and recommendations to, member agencies, in order to secure the long-term health, protection and stewardship of watersheds, surface and groundwater resources. These meetings are a forum for member agency representatives to cooperatively identify information, regulatory, and policy gaps, and to coordinate joint actions to fill those gaps. The Steering Committee also relies on technical review, advice and reports prepared by its Technical Working Group, which consists of member agency staff and local volunteers with inter-disciplinary professional qualifications related to integrated freshwater resource management.

Agency-led work supported by SSIWPA over 2022/23 has included:

- Completion of a Weston Lake Water Availability and Climate Change Assessment (CRD/Islands Trust). The contract report by GW Solutions was presented to the Islands Trust Local Trust Committee in a regular meeting held September 6, 2022;
- Review of proposed Salt Spring Island Bylaw 530 concerning proof of water in suites, cottages and accessory dwellings by SSIWPA Technical Working Group and Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations staff (Islands Trust);
- A Situation Analysis and Options Identification Report to improve watershed protection coordination on Salt Spring Island (Islands Trust). The contract for this project was awarded through a competitive process to Econics Services and was completed in January, 2022;
- A Watershed Protection and Stewardship Plan for Salt Spring Island (Islands Trust). The contract for this project was awarded through a competitive process to Econics Services and work is now underway.

SSIWPA-led communications and education work over the past year has included:

- Development and digital promotion of [rainwater education materials](#), including an in-person [rainwater harvesting tour](#) of systems on the Island, connecting the public with professional rainwater system installers and the production of 2 rainwater harvesting videos ([Outdoor Use and Indoor Use](#));
- Distribution of [rainwater education materials](#) and the “[Know Your Groundwater Well](#)” brochure at the Fall Fair and local government reception areas;
- Development and digital promotion of [lake water quality information](#) and social media campaigns;
- Development and digital promotion of [groundwater well](#) educational resources with materials co-prepared by the Ministry of Forests Water Authorizations branch.

Following on the development of the Water Systems Survey Report, SSIWPA has coordinated a Water Systems Working Group that brings together representatives from the Island’s piped water systems to share information, and to collaborate on shared resources and efficiencies.

SSIWPA’s 2022/23 workplan is available [here](#).

Information on past SSIWPA work can be found in [annual reports](#) and elsewhere on the [SSIWPA website](#).

Beyond outreach and education, SSIWPA is not authorized to lead projects. Rather, it provides a forum that brings together agencies with jurisdiction over the Island’s freshwater, services that provide freshwater to users, and members of the Island community with an interest in freshwater. This group helps identify pressing water sustainability issues, recommends paths to resolving those issues, and helps coordinate the efforts of lead agencies where required.

The majority of the annual special property tax requisition is used to hire a contractor to administer/coordinate SSIWPA and lead its education and outreach efforts.

### **How much is being proposed?**

The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee is requesting a \$75,500 Special Property Tax Requisition for the 2023-2024 fiscal year in order to coordinate freshwater sustainability work on Salt Spring Island. The tax requisition is based on the following proposed budget:

Coordination Contract	\$ 60,000
SSIWPA Meeting Costs	\$ 1,340
SSIWPA Community Events and Communications	\$ 14,160
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$75,500</b>

### **Are other agencies sharing the cost?**

There are several agencies, including the Government of British Columbia, that partner with SSIWPA to provide in-kind and other financial support for specific collaborative watershed protection projects. 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 (which includes Prevost Island, Piers Island, Secretary islands and various other smaller islands adjacent to Salt Spring Island) 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 SS LTC, and cannot go into the Islands Trust’s general revenues.

### **Who Approves the Special Property Tax Requisition?**

The SS LTC’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 2023.

### **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 6th, the Islands Trust Council's Financial Planning Committee will consider your input in its final budget recommendations to Trust Council. Trust Council will approve the final budget at its next quarterly meeting, to be held electronically March 7-9, 2023.

**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. Survey**

Complete a short, [anonymous survey](#). Survey is open from **January 26th to February 6th, 2023**

**2. Email or Call**

By February 14, 2023 send us an email with your thoughts about the budget – write to [budget@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:budget@islandstrust.bc.ca) , or call 250.405.5151 to have your say.

**3. Present to Trust Council**

Visit the [meeting calendar](#) for more information. If you wish to make a presentation as a delegation, rather than making a short statement during the public comments section, please submit a [delegation application form](#) by February 14, 2023.

Click here for more information on the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance:

<http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/islands/local-trust-areas/salt-spring/projects-initiatives/water-sustainability/>

<https://ssiwpa.org>

How to Contact Us for Information on SSIWPA:

Email: [ssiinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:ssiinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca)

Phone: Anthony Fotino, 250-247-2212

For Information on the Islands Trust Council's proposed 2023-2024 Budget:

<http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/trust-council/budget.aspx>