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Islands Trust Council Approves 2021/22 Budget

Lək'wəḡən, METULIYE/Victoria, B.C. – Islands Trust Council approved a budget of \$9 million for 2021/22.

"This budget responds to priorities expressed from across the entire Trust Area," said Islands Trust Council Chair Peter Luckham. "In total, 953 people provided input via survey and e-mail. Thank you to everyone who participated in the consultation. Your input was heard and considered carefully when we made final decisions on the budget that will guide the coming year's work. This year, Islands Trust is grateful to have received a record \$563,000 in grants in support of Islands Trust Conservancy's work and the Regional Freshwater Sustainability project."

The approved operating and projects budget for 2021/22 (\$9,059,919) assumes that Islands Trust will maintain existing land use planning service levels, add a full-time bylaw enforcement officer, a temporary community communications specialist, a freshwater co-op student, a Conservancy species at risk program coordinator, and a Conservancy co-op field technician, and will implement the following initiatives from [Trust Council's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan](#):

- Islands Trust governance and management review
- Islands Trust Policy Statement update that includes engagement with First Nations, the public, and referral agencies
- Technology investments for online streaming of Islands Trust in-person public meetings to foster transparency and public engagement
- Completion of a freshwater sustainability strategy for the Trust Area and implementation of freshwater projects for select local trust areas
- Development of heritage preservation overlay mapping
- Continued groundwater mapping and development of water budgets for groundwater aquifers in the Trust Area
- Continued mapping of eelgrass beds in the Trust Area
- Development of model bylaws for local trust committees and Bowen Island Municipality that address groundwater use, rainwater catchment, and greywater recycling to promote freshwater sustainability
- Development of model bylaws for local trust committees and Bowen Island Municipality that exchange bonus density for affordable housing
- Development of model development permit areas for local trust committees and Bowen Island Municipality to protect Coastal Douglas-fir and associated ecosystems throughout the Trust Area
- Delivery of a secretariat program which gives administrative support to regional coordination groups
- Development of climate change indicators specific to the Trust Area
- Delivery of a stewardship education program

Preserving and protecting over 450 islands and surrounding waters in the Salish Sea

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

In addition, Trust Council will continue to implement its [Reconciliation Action Plan](#).

Highlights of the approved 2021/22 budget:

- 3.5% (\$237,617) tax increase overall for the Islands Trust Area (other than Bowen Island Municipality), plus 0.87% (\$59,013) in new tax funds from new development and construction
- 2.7% (\$8,167) tax requisition increase to Bowen Island Municipality; of this amount, 1.08% (\$3,273) is expected to come from new development and construction
- \$563,000 of overall budget funded by approved grant funding
- \$657,660 draw from accumulated surplus funds to pay for:
 - Strategic Plan projects (\$373,660), including \$75,000 for a Council-directed review of Islands Trust governance and management
 - Local trust committee projects (\$204,000)
 - Salt Spring Island local trust committee freshwater projects (\$80,000)
- \$548,458 increase in total operating expenditures (including expenditures covered by grant funding), which includes the following:
 - \$411,992 increase in salaries and benefits costs due mainly to five new staff positions (a full-time bylaw enforcement officer, a temporary part-time community communications specialist, two grant-funded positions to support a new Islands Trust Conservancy species-at-risk program, and a temporary fresh-water co-op student position) and staff wage increases per union agreements and BC Public Service policies, which includes a 2.0% wage increase for all union staff and an up-to 2.0% wage increase for excluded staff
 - 1.1% increase to trustee base remuneration. [Learn more](#).
 - \$253,500 increase in local trust committee project spending, mainly associated with work in the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area for Ganges Village planning, a housing action program, a Coastal Douglas-fir ecosystem protection project, freshwater projects associated with SSIWPA, as well as grant-funded freshwater projects on Hornby and Lasqueti Islands
 - \$78,000 increase in amortization expense, which is a non-cash expense that is not funded by Trust taxation
 - \$172,750 increase in spending associated with the Strategic Plan projects
 - \$53,742 increase to insurance and legal costs
- \$65,400 reduction in spending for capital assets

Further details of the approved 2021/22 budget are available on the Islands Trust website:

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

- 30 -

Islands Trust is a federation of special-purpose local government bodies representing 26,000 people living within the Islands Trust Area and another 10,000 non-resident property owners. The Islands Trust Area is located within Coast Salish territory and is the homeland to over 28,000 Coast Salish Peoples who have called this place home since time immemorial. Islands Trust is responsible for preserving and protecting the Islands Trust Area's unique environment and amenities by planning and regulating land use, development management, education, cooperation 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 5,200 square kilometres.

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