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ORGANIZATIONS TEAM UP TO ADDRESS WATER ISSUES ON SALT SPRING ISLAND

SALT SPRING ISLAND – The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee (SSILTC), the North Salt Spring Water Works District (the District) and the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Authority (SSIWPA) will collaborate on finding solutions to potable water issues that balance the need for future development with the limited resources on the island.

“Managing our limited water resource in a sustainable manner is a priority for the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee and we will work with all involved partners to find a lasting solution that is best for the community,” said Peter Luckham, Chair of the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee. “We are fortunate on Salt Spring Island to have the NSSWD with a long history of water management and SSIWPA’s leadership to collaborate and manage what we have today and plan for what we need in the future.”

The SSILTC recently commissioned and received a *Water Conservation Demand and Management Plan* (the Plan) with information about the potable water available on the island and recommendations on how to ensure sufficient supply for the island’s future.

Following the May 5th SSILTC meeting, the three organizations agreed that SSIWPA would review the Plan with a view to addressing some of the outstanding concerns. The peer review by SSIWPA will determine if the Plan needs further work before its implementation.

“We are committed to providing quality potable water in sufficient quantity at a reasonable cost to our customers. We are willing to work with partners who share our goal of meeting the water needs of current residents while planning for the needs of future users,” said Marshall Heinekey, Chair of the North Salt Spring Waterworks District. “While we are not entirely satisfied with some of the information and methods used by our partner agencies, our shared concern for the future of our water supply motivates us to find solutions together.”

“The Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Authority is committed to collaborative watershed governance on the island and has an established and successful process of engaging community organizations, governments, residents and agencies who care about the long-term health of our water resources,” said George Grams, Chair of the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Agency. “As an organization with its foundation in both strong science and socio-economic values of islanders, SSIWPA has the necessary framework and resources to review the Plan and work with both the SSILTC and the District to further our shared goal of managing our limited water resource.”

Both the SSILTC and SSIWPA support the District’s water conservation objectives and encourage the public to conserve water through activities such as rainwater harvesting and recycling as we head into another possible drought year.

The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee is part of the Islands Trust, a federation of local government bodies representing 25,000 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.

Preserving **Island** communities, culture and environment

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

The District was started in 1913 as the Ganges Power and Water utility and was incorporated as an improvement district in 1948. The District provides potable water to a large portion of Salt Spring Island, including over 5,500 year round residents, the hospital, schools, hotels and restaurants, and many island businesses in the village of Ganges. They also provide operation and maintenance to six other water districts on the island on a contract basis. The District has developed a comprehensive water distribution and conservation bylaw and continues to collect environmental data towards a better understanding of our watersheds. The District participates with local agencies and schools to raise conservation and watershed management awareness on the island.

The Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Authority is a multi-agency organization with a mandate "to cooperate on the development and implementation of policies and initiatives for improved raw water quality, and coordinated management of quantity of Salt Spring Island's water sources."

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