

Sustaining the Islands – Community Stewardship Awards Program



Islands Trust

2012 Nominee Profile

Saturna Ecological Education Centre, Saturna Island

- Category:** Group
- Project:** Building an ecological school on Saturna Island
- Nominator(s):** Priscilla Ewbank
- Letters of Support:** N/A

Project Description:

The Saturna Ecological Education Centre is a joint project with School District #64 to create a live-in environmental centre on Saturna Island for 12 elementary students per semester. The Saturna Ecological Education Centre site, or Haggis Hollow as it is known, has innovative buildings that use state-of-the-art wood sections and other newly developed design features. The school's mandate is to teach, live and learn in a natural system on a micro and macro level on Saturna Island. The school encourages stewardship of the land and provides the opportunity for students to study and understand their impacts on the environment. Integration into the local community is key. The students are valued members of the community and in turn, respect and value the community.

Project partners are

- School district #64 Superintendent, Jeff Hopkins
- Saturna Island Community
- Saturna Ecological Education Society (SEES), a Liaison group
- Saturna Island School Trustee, Susanne Middleditch
- Cameron Fraser Saturna Elementary teacher and vice principal
- Saturna Islander builder, architect, project manager, Richard Blagborne
- Haggis Farm, where the school is located.

The project benefits the Saturna community by keeping the elementary school viable and retaining or attracting young families to the island. It can benefit visiting high school students from all over southwestern BC by teaching them about ecological concepts using the unique ecosystems of the Gulf Islands, along with community values and skills. The people who collaborated to make the centre possible worked with determination, enthusiasm, trust and vision.