



DATE OF MEETING: October 18, 2018
TO: Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee
FROM: William Shulba, Senior Freshwater Specialist
Local Planning Services
COPY: Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance
SUBJECT: Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance Strategic Planning Project Update

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the SSI LTC endorse the 2018 Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance strategic work plan and request staff bring recommendations to the new LTC for how staff resources can be allocated to achieve the plan's objectives related to land use planning and project work by the Islands Trust Freshwater Specialist.

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee (SSI LTC) an update of the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance (SSIWPA) Strategic Planning Project and the resulting strategic framework for an updated SSIWPA strategic work plan.

BACKGROUND

The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee (LTC) has been coordinating the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance (SSIWPA) since 2013 using delegated authority from the Islands Trust Council (*Islands Trust Act*, Section 8(2)b, via Trust Council [Bylaw No. 154](#)). The Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance provides a forum within which to engage multi-jurisdictional planning for the sustainability and protection of freshwater resources on Salt Spring Island. The purpose of the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance 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.

The SSIWPA [Terms of Reference \(ToR\)](#) provides guidance for how the member agencies collaborate and provide a framework for the scope of work undertaken.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance Strategic Planning Project (Strategic Project) has produced a revised Strategic Workplan directed by two main themes, Integrated Watershed Protection and Integrated Freshwater Sustainability. A Strategic Planning Subcommittee (Subcommittee) was formed during the Strategic Project process. Through an evidence-based strategic process the Subcommittee investigated the existing SSIWPA Integrated Freshwater Management Program to produce a revised Strategic Workplan of projects that identify freshwater challenges and prioritize opportunities to preserve freshwater resources and protect Salt Spring Island's watersheds.

A main vision of the Strategic Project process was to reach consensus on current freshwater problems faced by the Salt Spring Island community and identify program deliverables that require coordination to be achieved. These problems were phrased into several SSIWPA objectives during the SSIWPA Strategic Planning Day that occurred on June 12, 2018. The meeting was attended by the SSIWPA Steering Committee, Technical Working Group members, Conservation and Efficiency Group members, Agency Staff, other elected officials, and a visit from the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia.

To initiate the Strategic Planning Process, Islands Trust retained Mike Wei, P.Eng, a Professional Hydrogeologist who recently retired from Ministry of Environment and was one of the key staff involved in development of the Water Sustainability Act, the Water Sustainability Regulation and the Groundwater Protection Regulation. Mike's direction and suggestions were instrumental in the creation of the SSIWPA Strategic Workplan.

The Strategic Planning Subcommittee met on July 16, 2018 and August 22, 2018 to discuss the Strategic Workplan. The subcommittee have considered the existing Integrated Freshwater Management Program workplan, the Hydro.Geo.Logic report, SSIWPA member agency recommendations, outcomes of meetings, and general watershed research to produce the SSIWPA Strategic Workplan.

SSIWPA STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

SSIWPA work plan objectives were created by grouping identified freshwater challenges, issues, and opportunities from the strategic planning process. The identified objectives are:

- Objective A: Develop and implement strategies to maximize conservation and efficient use of the Salt Spring Island's limited water resource.
- Objective B: Quantify how anthropogenic changes will impact the availability of water resources and watershed hydrological function.
- Objective C: Develop tools to preserve Salt Spring Island's limited water resources and to protect watershed hydrological function.
- Objective D: Communicate to alliance agencies and public the state of the Salt Spring Island's watersheds, water resource, and water use.
- Objective E: Provide access to watershed and water resource data and information

WATERSHED PRIORITIZATION

A watershed prioritization decision matrix was developed based on the ability of SSIWPA to coordinate tasks within a project and the impact that a particular project has on an identified watershed.

The decision matrix is based on two main metrics that are a summation of two variables each;

Metric 1: Practical Impact

- The **Impact** of a project on SSIWPA objectives, on a watershed by watershed basis;
- The **Do-Ability** of a project and feasibility to complete tasks and achieve SSIWPA objective;

Metric 2: Coordination Priority

- The **Coordination** needs of a project on a watershed by watershed basis; and
- The **Urgency** with which SSIWPA should undertake the work with respect to identified watershed vulnerability.

SSIWPA STRATEGIC WORKPLAN PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Strategic Workplan is organized into two main themes;

- *Integrated Watershed Protection* - projects based on inventorying and prioritizing watersheds to address monitoring needs to protect the natural function of watershed hydrology and ecology that support freshwater resources by creating evidence-based policies.
- *Integrated Freshwater Sustainability* – projects based on inventorying and prioritizing watersheds to address water use, demand, and the future of freshwater in a changing climate through Water Sustainability Plans, Area-based Regulation, or other policies.

The projects that are included with the themes are result of the identified questions that related to the problems identified by SSIWPA. The Strategic Workplan is based on prioritizing identified problems in a watershed context. The Strategic Workplan identifies what projects are of high impact in a particular watershed and identifies the ability of SSIWPA to assist those projects through short and long term coordinated tasks.

PROJECT SCOPING FORMS

Islands Trust staff created a project scoping form for the member agencies to identify and log priority tasks for each individual project. This involves identifying the problem or vulnerability needs to be assessed, the identified watersheds, task management including lead agency, supporting agency, and task steward, and identifies potential funding options. Currently the scoping document is being reviewed by member agency staff and will provide on-going support of the work plan.

RATIONALE FOR THE STRATEGIC WORKPLAN

The strategic work plan will improve the coordination of SSIWPA member agencies with the needs of the Salt Spring Island community, water purveyors, Provincial and Local governments; and stewardship organizations. The plan is designed to enable the completion of deliverables and develop Integrated Watershed Protection and

Freshwater Sustainability tools that preserve and protect freshwater as a unique amenity for a vibrant Salt Spring Island community.

NEXT STEPS

Please see the staff report on SSIWPA coordination, also on the agenda for the October 18 2018 SSILTC meeting. Implementation of the SSIWPA Strategic Work plan requires coordination of member agency staff, resources, and priorities.

Attachments

- 1. SSIWPA Project Framework Overview
- 2. SSIWPA Project Scoping Form

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Concurrence:	Stefan Cermak, Regional Planning Manager	October 10, 2018

