

# Budget 2019-2020

## 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 additional operations. The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee (SSILTC) has received a requisition to support watershed management since 2014 and is requesting it again for the 2019-20 fiscal year.

#### What kind of Additional Operations is the SSILTC proposing to undertake?

In 2012, the SSILTC 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 SSILTC acts 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 \(SSIWPA\)](#) (formerly the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Authority). The SSILTC 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?

The [Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance](#) (SSIWPA) was created in 2012 to provide a coordinated, inter-jurisdictional response to the protection and management of freshwater resources on Salt Spring Island. SSIWPA 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. Member agencies include: Capital Regional District, Highland-Fernwood Water Local Service Commission (CRD), Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee, and the Ministry of Forest, Lands, and Natural Resources.

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;
- Coordinate the implementation of those policies.

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

The SSIWPA Steering Committee holds regular meetings to develop strategies and recommendations to the 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 determine information 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 and Conservation and Efficiency Working Group, which consist of member agency staff and local volunteers with inter-disciplinary professional qualifications related to integrated freshwater resource management.

SSIWPA focused on the issue of water quality in the St. Mary Lake watershed in 2014-15; undertaking community-based research and monitoring, and integrating both technical and public advisory in a multi-stakeholder planning process that resulted in the [“Integrated Watershed Management Plan for the St. Mary Lake Watershed 2015”](#) on Salt Spring Island.

In 2016, SSIWPA expanded its focus from the St. Mary Lake Watershed to an island-wide effort called the Integrated Watershed Management Program (IWM) in order to coordinate efforts by member agencies to quantify water availability in select watersheds, and a mechanism to begin to estimate groundwater budgets through survey, modelling and monitoring, on an island scale. Member agencies developed [collaborative projects](#) to achieve the goals of this program.

The [2017 Annual Report](#) documents progress on the many inter-related projects in the IWM.

In 2018, SSIWPA also developed the Salt Spring Island [Water Sustainability Framework](#) through a strategic planning process that included members of Steering Committee and Working Groups. The Framework replaces the IWM program charter. The Framework as guidance document serves as an iterative tool for focussing collaborative efforts by multiple government and non-government groups in order to achieve the purpose of SSIWPA, and for tracking progress and relationships between actions and results.

## How much of a tax increase is proposed?

The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee is requesting a \$98,500 Special Property Tax Requisition for the 2019-2020 fiscal year in order to coordinate the IWM Program. The tax requisition is based on the following budget:

Coordination Contracts	\$ 83,700
SSIWPA Meeting Costs	\$ 5,500
SSIWPA Community Events and Communications	\$ 9,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$98,500</b>

## How much will the proposed \$98,500 watershed management tax cost me as a property owner or tenant?

Islands Trust property taxes represent about 12 per cent of the total property tax bill on Salt Spring Island. The amount of tax increase for individual property is based on a number of factors, such as, mill rate, type of

property etc., and may be different for each property. More information about how property taxes are calculated for Islands Trust Areas is available on the [website](#).

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

There are several agencies, including the province of British Columbia, partnering with SSIWPA and providing in-kind and other financial support for the project. 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 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 SSILTC, and cannot go into the Islands Trust's general revenues.

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

The SSILTC'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 2019. The Islands Trust's budget consultations are now underway. Further information about the Islands Trust's general budget proposal is available [here](#).

### **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 8th, the Islands Trust Council's Financial Planning Committee will consider your input as it makes its budget recommendations to Trust Council. Trust Council will approve the final budget at its quarterly meeting March 12-14, 2019 on Gabriola Island.

**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. Complete a short, anonymous survey at [www.islandstrust.bc.ca/budget](http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/budget)
2. Email [budget@islandstrust.bc](mailto:budget@islandstrust.bc).
3. Write to: 200 – 1627 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8R 1H8
4. In person by appointment at the Islands Trust Council's March 12-14 meeting on Gabriola Island.
5. Through one of your local Salt Spring Island trustees: [Peter Grove](#) or [Laura Patrick](#)

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: Jason Youmans 250-537-9144

For Information on the Islands Trust Council's proposed 2019-2020 Budget:

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