



## Budget 2021-2022

### 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 2021-22 fiscal year.

#### **What kind of Additional Operations is the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee 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 can now act 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 \(SSIWPA\)](#). 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.

Current Steering Committee member agencies with voting privileges are as follows: Islands Trust; Capital Regional District, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development; Beddis Water Service Commission; Cedar Lane Water Service Commission; Cedars of Tuam Water Service Commission; Fulford Water Service Commission; North Salt Spring Waterworks District; and Scott Point Waterworks District.

Non-voting “members-at-large” sit at the SSIWPA table from Cusheon Lake Stewardship Committee; Salt Spring Island Water Preservation Society; Salt Spring Island Conservancy; Salt Spring Water Company and Transition Salt Spring.

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; and
- Coordinate the implementation of those policies.

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

The SSIWPA Steering Committee holds quarterly meetings to develop strategies and recommendations to 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 identify information, regulatory, and policy 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, which consists of member agency staff and local volunteers with inter-disciplinary professional qualifications related to integrated freshwater resource management.

A summary of, and links to, outreach and education projects undertaken by SSIWPA in fiscal 2020/21, as well as member-agency-led projects in which SSIWPA has played a role this fiscal year, is available [here](#).

Information on past SSIWPA work can be found in annual reports available here, and elsewhere on the [SSIWPA website](#).

Beyond outreach and education, SSIWPA is not authorized to lead projects. Rather, it provides a forum that brings together agencies with jurisdiction over the Island’s freshwater, services that provide freshwater to users, and members of the Island community with an interest in freshwater. This group helps identify pressing water sustainability issues, recommends paths to resolving those issues, and helps coordinate the efforts of lead agencies where required.

The majority of the annual special property tax requisition is used to hire a contractor to administer/coordinate SSIWPA and lead its education and outreach efforts.

### **How much of a tax increase is proposed?**

The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee is requesting a \$75,500 Special Property Tax Requisition for the 2021-2022 fiscal year in order to coordinate freshwater sustainability work on Salt Spring Island. The tax requisition is based on the following budget:

Coordination Contract	\$ 60,000
SSIWPA Meeting Costs	\$ 1,760
SSIWPA Community Events and Communications	\$ 13,740
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$75,500</b>

## **How much will the proposed \$75,500 watershed management tax cost me as a property owner or tenant?**

Historically, Islands Trust property taxes have represented about 12 per cent of the total property tax bill to Salt Spring Island property owners. Impacts of the current COVID-19 pandemic may cause a shift in this percentage based on how operations of the various taxing authorities have been impacted. Understanding of any potential shift is not fully known at this time.

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 Government of British Columbia, that partner with SSIWPA to provide in-kind and other financial support for specific projects. 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 (which includes Prevost Island , Piers Island, Secretary islands and various other smaller islands adjacent to Salt Spring Island) 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 2021. 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 7<sup>th</sup>, the Islands Trust Council’s Financial Planning Committee will consider your input in its final budget recommendations to Trust Council. Trust Council will approve the final budget at its next quarterly meeting, to be held electronically March 9 to 11, 2021.

**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](#). Survey is open from Friday, Jan 22<sup>nd</sup> to February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021
2. Email: [budget@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:budget@islandstrust.bc.ca)
3. Write to: 1 - 500 Lower Ganges Road, Salt Spring Island, BC, V8K-2N8 or 200 – 1627 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8R 1H8
4. On Zoom by [appointment](#) at the Islands Trust Council’s March 9 to 11, 2021 meeting. Submissions are due by Thursday, Feb 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021
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 2021-2022 Budget:

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