



Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance

Regular Meeting Minutes

- Date of Meeting:** Monday, June 27, 2022
- Location:** Electronic Meeting
- Members Present:** Laura Patrick, Chair, Islands Trust Trustee
Sylvia Barroso, Ministry of Forests (MOF)
Alan Martin, Fulford Water Service Area Commission
Gary Holman, Vice Chair, Capital Regional District SSI Electoral Area Director
Tim Slaney, Scott Point Waterworks District
Margaret Thomson, Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance
- Member Regrets:** Karla Campbell, Capital Regional District, Electoral Area Senior Manager
Dale Green, Capital Regional District, Senior Environmental Science Officer,
Environmental Protection
Jason Griffin, Cedar Lane Water Service Area Commission
Mike McCormick, Beddis Water Service Area Commission
Michael McAllister, North Salt Spring Waterworks District Trustee (Alternate
for Sandra Ungerson)
- Members At-Large:** Ian Peace, Salt Spring Island Water Preservation Society
- Members At-Large
Regrets:** Rhonan Heitzmann, Salt Spring Water Company
Deborah Miller, Transition Salt Spring Society
Doreen Hewitt, Cusheon Lake Stewardship Committee
Pierre Mineau, Salt Spring Island Conservancy
- Technical Working
Group Liaison Present:** John Millson, Technical Working Group Chair
- Staff Present:** Shannon Cowan, Coordinator, Recorder
William Shulba, Senior Freshwater Specialist
- Others Present:** Ken Nentwig, (TWG) members of the public

These minutes follow the order of the agenda although the sequence may have varied.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Patrick called the meeting to order at 10:01 am.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Member Peace requested addition of a late item under 4.8: A motion regarding the importance of Salt Spring Island groundwater availability assessment. The Chair approved the addition.

By general consent, the agenda was approved, as amended.

3. MINUTES

3.1 **By general consent**, the draft minutes of the April 29, 2022 Meeting of the SSIWPA Steering Committee were approved as amended.

Amendments to the draft minutes include the following corrections:

- Provincial Staff Barroso's ministry has changed to Ministry of Forests,
- "Member Milson" in the item 4.2 Updates section should read "TWG Chair Millson", and
- "Member Campbell" should read "CRD Staff Campbell".

4. BUSINESS ITEMS

4.1 Chair's Report

Chair Patrick acknowledged the work of Transition Salt Spring and the Conservancy in the Maxwell Watershed, especially at the time of SSIWPA putting emphasis into its strategic planning for watershed stewardship and protection.

4.2 Informal Member Updates (< 1 minute)

Member Thomson introduced herself and had no update from the Agricultural Alliance regarding water.

Member Martin introduced himself and there was no update from the Fulford Water Service Commission.

Member Holman provided an update on the Local Community Commission proposal, and indicated there are no direct implications for either water districts or for SSIWPA.

Member Peace introduced himself as a board member of the Water Preservation Society and introduced item 4.8 briefly regarding the advocacy for groundwater availability assessment mapping on Salt Spring Island.

TWG Chair Millson provided a quick update about the Technical Working Group's recent meeting content, including a public call for Rainwater Harvesting Tour hosts and support to the Transition Salt Spring's EcoAction group on the Maxwell Watershed project.

Staff Shulba introduced himself and provided an update about working with Staff Youmans and Dale Green of the CRD on the Weston Lake Water Availability Assessment project. He is also engaged with data analysis for the Salt Spring Island Groundwater Wells Monitoring project and mentioned that the Data Dashboard has potential as a public-facing tool. He commented that the funding has come in for Groundwater Recharge mapping across the Islands Trust area, including the update to Salt Spring Island's Groundwater Recharge mapping, including an updated 3D hydrogeological model. This update will enable a regional Groundwater Availability assessment. He sat in on the NSSWD town hall with consultant Kerr Wood Leidal.

Provincial Staff Barroso, Regional Hydrogeologist at the Ministry of Forests indicated that the Province had the first Drought Preparedness workshop and set up working groups providing surface water monitoring. There is a BC Drought Information Portal that includes updates on watersheds in the west coast region including Fulford Creek.

Member Slaney with the Scott Point Waterworks District had nothing unusual to report.

4.3 The following were received for information:

4.3.1 Current Action Log and Actions Completed March 31, 2022

4.3.2 SSIWPA Coordinator Report – May 2022

4.3.3 The Annual Report 2021 <https://www.ssiwpa.org/reports/annual-reports/>

4.3.4 SSIWPA Workplan Update to Salt Spring Local Trust Committee July 12, 2022

4.4 Workplan Project Reports and Updates:

4.5.1 Weston Lake Water Availability and Climate Change Impact Assessment

Staff Shulba noted that the work of the report has been largely completed. He reported that the real-time lake level data was “calibrated” in a way with the Water Preservation Society's Freshwater Catalogue data for outflow at Weston Creek. This report makes it obvious both types of data are required to establish accurate water balance. All the drinking water lakes should have outflow monitoring.

There was a question about how the consultant has addressed environmental flow needs. Staff Shulba replied that the consultant has provided a good estimate on environmental flow needs based on withdrawals from the lake, yet due to the groundwater baseflow to the creek and lake in the summer, groundwater contribution to environmental flow needs more study.

There was a suggestion from Staff Barroso that a short presentation from the consultant would be a good idea. Other members queried timing and intention to publicize the Weston Lake Watershed Availability report. Coordinator Cowan clarified from Technical Working Group minutes that CRD Staff reported at TWG that the report would be made public after the summer as coordinated by CRD and Islands Trust staff.

From the chat section of the meeting, the following was noted:

- It would be good to ensure that the Weston Lake study is shared officially with the [Ministry] FOR Water Authorizations.
- I would also suggest that the Lake Weston study be placed in the [provincial online] Ecological Catalogue.

It was generally agreed that robust education and communication is a necessary part of every project coordinated at SSIWPA.

4.5.2 Watershed Stewardship and Protection Plan Phase 2 (Trust Planning Staff)

Coordinator Cowan provided an update on the work of the consultant and coordinator to code and track the Salt Spring Island watershed protection actions from previous plans and setting forward a process for engaging with the subcommittee of SSIWPA that will develop a draft plan over the summer. Chair Patrick reported on Staff Youmans' outreach to First Nations and efforts to engage in an innovative, new and coordinated way with First Nations regarding this along with other similar projects in the region.

4.6 Working Group Updates or Reports

4.6.1 Technical Working Group Secondary Suites Potable Water Technical Recommendations

TWG Chair Millson outlined the memo describing the outcome: an internal map product was generated by the TWG to assist Islands Trust staff with planning and bylaw development.

Staff Shulba clarified that the regional Groundwater Recharge mapping project must precede the Groundwater Availability Assessments for each island. The Local Trust Committee may be presented with the option to schedule and support Salt Spring Island's Groundwater Availability Assessment once the updated Groundwater Recharge mapping is updated for Salt Spring Island, which is planned in the current fiscal year.

A question was posed regarding whether occupancy was considered for households with secondary suites. Several members of TWG responded to clarify that TWG was considering that since occupancy is difficult to consider, all dwellings that wish to establish a secondary suite should only require to prove

2,000 L/day (the deemed right for domestic use per parcel in the Water Sustainability Act). There was further discussion.

The following comments were made in the chat section:

- [From the Water Sustainability Act section 22.8.], “(b) authorizes the use of the greater of i) 2,000 Litres of water per day for each private dwelling on a parcel, or ii) the amount of water the engineer is satisfied the person has been using for domestic purposes.

4.6.2 Water Systems Working Group (WSWG Representative)

Member Holman provided a brief update that Member McCormick (Beddis) is furthering pursuit of a less expensive and more environmentally-sound method of disposal for the Dissolved Air Flotation plant residues from water treatment island-wide. He is working with CRD staff to forward a new residue processing method.

4.7 The following financial statements were received for information:

- 4.7.1 Updated Budget 2022-2023
- 4.7.2 F2021 SSIWPA Financial Statement
- 4.7.3 F2022 SSIWPA Financial Statement

4.8 Motion regarding Mapping from the Water Preservation Society

Member Peace brought forward a request for the SSIWPA Steering Committee to consider supporting the Water Preservation Society’s motion which will be submitted to the Islands Trust Local Trust Committee and the Driftwood local newspaper. After considerable discussion the motion was revised by the collective of SSIWPA members present:

By general consent, the SSIWPA Steering committee urges the Islands Trust to undertake the Salt Spring Island Groundwater Availability Assessments in coordination with the province and the CRD for the development of land use planning tools.

The following points were made during the discussion of the above motion and its intent:

- this “open letter” (as summarized above) from Water Preservation Society could be forwarded to the Ministry of Forests to keep the islands and freshwater needs visible to the provincial staff. Getting initial work to the public will engender questions about next steps and incur buy-in from the public, which affects the political will.
- over 5,000 km² has been mapped for groundwater recharge on Salt Spring Island and GW Solutions used these data for the Weston Lake study.

- these data can inform rezoning, enable adjudication of water licenses and enable MOTI to adjudicate water rights per parcel. The water budgets (Golder work) need to be revisited
- only through partnership with the Province will these efforts be worthwhile
- the “Water Sustainability Strategy Fund” and discussions at Islands Trust Council about equity of water sustainability assessments for new housing in the Local Trust Area were mentioned; Equity requires us to not put extra requirements on one form of housing over another.
- is the Water Preservation Society requesting that scientific data be utilized to inform land use decisions (water allocation planning, aquifer protection planning, OCP amendments etc.)
- Staff Shulba re-affirmed that the work needs to continue and to be updated by effective monitoring in order to improve local decision making by the regional and other local governments.
- Under the Groundwater Science Program at Islands Trust, recharge mapping and “water availability monitoring” are both projects
- There may be a need for existing water service providers to add/consolidate in areas where there is significant water stress. Hundreds of straws into the groundwater in stressed areas may not be the best way to manage the water resource.

5. UPCOMING MEETINGS

Friday September 23, 2022 10:00 – 12:00

Friday November 25, 2022 10:00 – 12:00

6. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent, the meeting adjourned at 11:49 a.m.

Laura Patrick, Chair

Shannon Cowan, Recorder