

From: Dave Paton [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 24, 2022 9:01 PM
To: Islands2050
Subject: IT Revised Policy Statement - Non Support for the Proposed Tree Cutting By-Law

I've lived on Saturna Island for around 14 years. Over that period it's been my experience that the IT executive has devoted ever greater amounts of its disproportionately large budget trying to duplicate the responsibilities of senior levels of government. Inclusion of tree-cutting bylaw authority in the Revised Policy Statement is a classic case.

Forestry is the preserve of our Province. They have extensive experience in the role, employ world class experts in the discipline and their departmental budget is spread over a large jurisdiction. The Province does a good job in this area – as a Provincial tax payer I appreciate that. The IT, as our municipality, is responsible for land use management - regulation of forestry management is not their role. They don't have any expertise in the area and do not (and should not) have the budget to duplicate the Province's responsibilities in this area.

Many aspects of the revised policy statement are based on the "sky is falling" premise – an exaggeration of the precautionary principle. On Saturna roughly 50% of our forests are protected to a high level – particularly in the case of our Federal Park. Logging is limited and mostly confined removal of storm/disease damaged trees or selective cutting for house building. Often the felled trees are input for artisanal mills producing lumber for local use, providing much needed local employment. Commercial logging within the Trust area is likely to remain uneconomic.

My biggest objection to the IT being given power to regulate in this area is the likely expense to property owners. One aspect of climate change is the increasing amount of tree-disease and enhanced likelihood of storm-damage deadfall. Currently removal of a tree is easy and relatively inexpensive – as is should be for a rural area with lots of trees. A city-style tree bylaw is totally inappropriate.

Having no expertise in tree regulation, the IT will require a property owner (at his own expense) to contract the services of a certified arborist to report and authorize removal. Quite likely this will involve the expense of hiring an off-island specialist with the consequent cost for captive ferry time – essentially a day's work in the case of Saturna. Forest cover on our island is expanding and would do so at a faster rate if something was done to control feral goats and the overpopulation of deer. The sky isn't falling.

Authority for a tree-cutting bylaw should be removed from the Revised Policy Statement.

Regards,

Dave Paton
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Saturna Island