

Questions for August 6th.

This version of the OCP is not a document that reflects the IT mandate. There is a complete absence of metrics, baseline stress indicators and time-based priorities. While the draft highlights urgent need for ecosystem stewardship, it fails to identify specific elements of Gabriola's natural environment and to protect: the quality and quantity of the groundwater, the critical recharge areas and the forests that resupply the groundwater.

The island groundwater is declining year over year and this is as a result of increased demand and climate crisis. Currently, in many areas on Gabriola it has reached hazardous proportions. The OCP does not distinguish between hazard mitigation (avoiding localized failure) and hydrological integrity (ensuring systemic health). The GW Solutions report is a baseline for the establishment of a Hydrological Integrity Framework and the OCP must be the springboard for the protection of clean healthy groundwater, now and into the future.

Why has such an important framework not been integrated into the OCP and will it be done before the community plan is released?

Islanders have overwhelmingly expressed their concerns at meetings, in letters and surveys about over population effecting the groundwater and the declining health of the ecosystem. In its present form the draft OCP does not provide any policies, bylaws or covenants that protect the island groundwater and the forests that resupply it. **Will the island Trustees be expected to make important land-use development decisions for these critical areas when there are no directives, covenants or land use bylaws to guide them?**

As it is now written the draft OCP completely ignores the deterioration of the natural environment and instead choses to focus on development: multi -density housing, flex housing, Village commercial housing, etc. There are DPA's for multi-density housing, flex housing and Village housing units and policies for multi or flex housing on subdividable lands. But there are no bylaws or covenants to protect the groundwater recharge areas, privately owned forested areas and lands, and no provisions made for reforestation and groundwater recharge protection on subdividable lands or for that matter any other lands on the island. **How will this be rectified in the draft OCP?**