



File No.: Groundwater
Implementation

DATE OF MEETING: January 20, 2023
TO: North Pender Island Local Trust Committee
FROM: Narissa Chadwick, Island Planner
Southern Team
COPY: Robert Kojima, Regional Planning Manager
SUBJECT: Groundwater Implementation Project

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the North Pender Island Local Trust Committee revise the project charter for the Groundwater Sustainability Implementation Project.
2. That the North Pender Island Local Trust Committee request staff organize a special meeting for the LTC to review all materials related to the Groundwater Sustainability Implementation Project including options for Groundwater Protection Development Permit Area boundaries.
3. That the North Pender Island Local Trust Committee request staff organize an in person community information meeting prior to March 31, 2022 related to the Groundwater Sustainability Implementation Project to include options for Groundwater Protection Development Permit Area.

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides a summary of status of the North Pender Island Local Trust Committee's Groundwater Sustainability Implementation Project and suggests next steps if the LTC wishes to proceed.

BACKGROUND

At the February 1, 2021 meeting the LTC endorsed a project charter for the implementation phase (Phase 3) of the Groundwater Sustainability Science Program (see Appendix 1). Previous phases involved: data and information inventory, groundwater recharge potential mapping and groundwater availability assessment.

A community information webinar was held in September 2021 to introduce the community to the data and mapping work that had been done. [The reports can be found here.](#)

At the February 24, 2022 LTC meeting resolutions were passed supporting the development of a new Groundwater Protection Development Permit Area. The LTC also supported amendments to the OCP and LUB that were not directly related to the data gathered but will support freshwater sustainability these include: updates to definitions, the addition of cistern requirements for all new builds and updated to subdivision regulations related to potable water. These were similar to the amendments proposed for Galiano.

Draft Bylaw No. 229 (LUB amendments) was included in the staff report provided to the LTC at their April 22, 2022 meeting. The LTC supported the staff recommendation to incorporate the Groundwater Sustainability Project draft land use bylaw regulations into the LUB Review Project. As a result the amendment proposed to be in Bylaw No. 229 are now incorporated in draft Bylaw No. 224. These LUB amendments are similar to those drafted for Galiano. Staff have been working on additional updates to the proof of water regulations. These revisions will be presented to the LTC in the revised Bylaw No. 224 (as part of the LUB Review Project).

Draft Bylaw No. Bylaw 228 (OCP amendments -See Attachment 2) containing draft Development Permit Guidelines for a new Groundwater Recharge Protection DPA were also included in the April 28, 2022 staff report. Due to time constraints the LTC moved the discussion regarding Bylaw 228 to the May 26, 2022 LTC meeting. Draft Bylaw 228 contains:

General Amendments to OCP (Attachment 2)

- Updates to Objectives and Policies for Land Use to include focus on groundwater sustainability and acknowledgement of indigenous cultural knowledge.
- Removing reference to “Schedule F” which will be updated to include groundwater regions.
- Updating Water Systems (3.2) to align with other proposed changes.
- Updating Groundwater Resources (4.1) to align with other proposed changes including reference to the Islands Trust Freshwater Sustainability Strategy.

The Creation of a Groundwater Recharge Protection Development Permit Area (Attachments 2)

- New DPA guidelines based on those proposed for Galiano Island.
- The draft bylaw does not yet include a map of DPA boundaries. This is still to be determined by the LTC. The attached Memo (Appendix 3) provides the methodology for identifying DPA boundary options.

At the May 26 2022 LTC meeting the North Pender Island Local Trust Committee identified the need for focussed time to review the provisions in draft Bylaw 228 and requested staff schedule a Special Meeting regarding the Groundwater Sustainability Project. Due to the focus on the LUB Review Project this special meeting was not scheduled. No further staff reports regarding the Groundwater Sustainability Implementation Project were presented to the LTC.

A memo describing the methodology related to the identification of the groundwater recharge protection development permit area was drafted to be presented at the June 2022 LTC meeting.. This memo has been updated and is attached as Appendix 3.

All relevant staff reports can be found here: <https://islandstrust.bc.ca/island-planning/north-pender/projects/>

ANALYSIS

While the former LTC supported the Groundwater Sustainability Implementation Project, the LTC’s focus was on the LUB Project toward the end of the term. There is budget left for the 2022/23 fiscal to support public engagement on this project.

Staff hosted a successful in person workshop on Galiano in July 2022 which included a presentation and informal discussion opportunities. Large maps explaining the groundwater science and how it was used to identify options for DPA boundaries were posted to wall to facilitated informal discussion opportunities. A similar approach could be taken on North Pender.

Before engaging the public staff recommend that the LTC request a special meeting to go through materials related to the project and answer any questions the LTC may have. This meeting can be conducted over zoom. In addition to the materials already provided through past staff reports, staff can develop maps identifying options for DPA boundaries.

Rationale for Recommendation

That the North Pender Island Local Trust Committee revise the project charter for the Groundwater Sustainability Implementation Project.

- The project charter is currently out of date.
- Most of the major work on this project has been done and there is funding for this fiscal year. If the project requires additional funding next fiscal year, this can be supported as a minor project, with a budget under \$5000.

That the North Pender Island Local Trust Committee request staff organize a special meeting for the LTC to review all materials related to the Groundwater Sustainability Implementation Project including options for Groundwater Protection Development Permit Area boundaries.

- This will provide an opportunity for the LTC to develop a clear understanding of what is contained in the draft bylaws and how the groundwater science has been used to inform the development permit area boundary options.
- The LTC can choose to send questions to staff ahead of the meeting.
- Staff recommend this meeting be held before the community engagement meeting.

That the North Pender Island Local Trust Committee request staff organize an in person community engagement meeting prior to March 31, 2022 related to the Groundwater Sustainability Implementation Project to include options for Groundwater Protection Development Permit Area.

- This will provide the community with an opportunity to discuss the groundwater science and options for development permit area boundaries.
- Staff recommend that a similar approach to the community engagement meeting for the Galiano Groundwater Sustainability Implementation Project be taken. This would involve formal presentation as well as informal discussion, printed maps and handouts.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Request further information

The LTC may request further information prior to making a decision. The LTC will need to specific the information they require.

That the North Pender Island Local Trust Committee request staff provide the following information:....

2. Put the project on hold

The LTC may decide they want to put the Groundwater Sustainability Implementation Project on hold until a certain time.

That the North Pender Island Local Trust Committee proceed no further with the Groundwater Sustainability Implementation Project until.....

3. Proceed no further

The LTC may choose not to proceed with the project.

That the North Pender Island Local Trust Committee proceed no further with the Groundwater Sustainability Implementation Project.

NEXT STEPS

If the LTC chooses to support staff recommendations staff will:

- Update the project charter
- Create maps identifying DPA boundary options
- Schedule a special meeting for the LTC prior to the community engagement meeting
- Schedule a community engagement meeting

Submitted By:	Narissa Chadwick, Island Planner	January 10, 2023
Concurrence:	Robert Kojima, Regional Planning Manager	January 10, 2023

ATTACHMENTS

1. Project Charter
2. Draft Bylaw 228 (OCP)
3. DPA Methodology Memo