

Denman Farm Plan Implementation Project

☆ Proposed bylaws No. 228 and 229 need to be questioned if only for their impact on water ☆

The “multi-year community project,” which culminated in the Denman Island Farm Plan, was in essence run by the Ministry of Agriculture. I know that because I was a committee member who quit in protest because input by islanders was missing in 95% of the recommendations.

The recommendations discard “preserve and protect” and pave the way for Denman to join the provincial agribusiness industry. The recommendations are silent on water, island scale, island style economy, sustainability and food sovereignty.

Proposed Bylaws No. 228 and 229 are two of many steps to implementing the Farm Plan. On August 2nd at 6:00 in the Activity Centre, a Community Information Meeting will allow a Q&A about the proposed bylaws. Once these bylaws reach the second public stage– the Public Hearing– the process becomes far more regulated and stilted. So listen, talk and ask questions when you can.

Feed lots and intensive agriculture use massive amounts of water while polluting ground water. We should be discussing removing these uses from the bylaw, not tweaking them. To my knowledge, no one on Denman is advocating feedlots or intensive piggeries.

Industrial cannabis production uses massive amounts of water and may result in cementing over Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) land for greenhouses.

Protection of Denman’s surface water should have priority.

The proposed bylaws give priority to agriculture. Half of Denman is in the ALR. How many more parcels have farm status? These landowners can drain wetlands on their property. Two wetland areas have already been drained. Many of the wetland areas which feed our wells are in ALR designated land.

Denman Conservancy (DCA) and the Islands Trust Conservancy protect some wetlands on land designated as ALR. The proposed bylaws will make future conservancy difficult if not impossible.

I own ALR land and have farm status. And, I support protection of surface water and water conservation. Water is key.

Submitted by *Harlow Adams*

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