



News Release

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GULF ISLANDERS SAVE WITH PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS

VICTORIA — As another year's property assessments roll in and landowners across the province anticipate their property tax notices, the Islands Trust offers Gulf Islanders a unique opportunity to save, Thetis Island landowners included. Thanks to a unique program available nowhere else in British Columbia, Gulf Island landowners willing to conserve natural areas on their property may be eligible to receive an annual reduction in their property taxes of up to 65%.

The Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program (NAPTEP) is the only local government program in British Columbia to offer property tax exemptions as an incentive for conservation. By registering a conservation covenant on their property through the program, landowners throughout the Gulf Islands can receive an annual 65% property tax reduction on portions of their land protected by the covenant. Some NAPTEP participants report saving more than \$3,000 annually with the program.

"Though there are up-front costs associated with NAPTEP, the yearly savings its provides can mean participants re-coup those expenses within only a few years, making private land conservation affordable for island landowners" said Sue French, Thetis Island Local Trustee. "With nearly all of Thetis Island's land base privately owned, this type of program offers our region a great opportunity for natural area conservation. I encourage landowners throughout the Thetis Local Trust Area to take advantage of the program for the sake of both their own wallets and the island habitats we cherish".

To be eligible to the program, landowners enlist the help of the Islands Trust Fund to ensure the permanent protection of the natural features on their property. A conservation covenant is registered on the title of the property, ensuring that the ecosystems will be protected even after the land is sold.

"While we knew that we would care for our land in our lifetime, we realized that without a covenant there was no guarantee as to what may happen to our cherished forest and Garry oak meadow after we are gone," said Sylvia Pincott, donor of the Woodwinds NAPTEP covenant on North Pender. "With a NAPTEP covenant, it's comforting to know that habitat will remain on this property in perpetuity. And with the special encouragement of a reduction in property taxes, it's a win/win arrangement".

Properties on Thetis Island and its associated islands are eligible for the program, including:

- Dayman Island
- Pylades Island
- Scott Island
- Hudson Island
- Reid Island
- Tree Island
- Kendrick Island
- Ruxton Island
- Valdes Island
- Leech Island

The Islands Trust Fund would be happy to discuss how NAPTEP could suit you and your property. To learn more, please contact the Islands Trust Fund at 250-405-5186 (Victoria) or toll free through Enquiry BC at 1-800-663-7867 (604-660-2421 in Vancouver), or visit us online at <http://islandstrustfund.bc.ca/naptep.cfm>.

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Preserving **island** communities, culture and environment

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