

7 March 2012

Dear Tag Team,

The problem with the gas tax grant, as I see it, is we are trying to close the barn door after the horses are out.

We, as island communities under the Islands Trust, needed to know about this gas tax when the grant was advertised for application.

We also needed to learn about the gas tax grant through our Trustees and CRD representative when it first came out.

Islands Trust obviously applied for it without any consultation with the taxpayers in the Trust area.

I believe the Policy Statement Review is a foregone conclusion and we, as island communities, are all going to have to dig in and fight to try to get the kind of things written into it like enhancements of local economies, density for affordable housing, and other things that a healthy community needs instead of some punitive document that does not recognize the diversity between island communities and their Local Community Plans and Land Use Bylaws, and that is consumed with trying to stop any development in the gulf islands.

One of the main problems with the Islands Trust is that it is a single purpose land use planning agency. All it can do is create horrendous amounts of paper and punitive by-laws. This form of local government cannot address things like potable water, economies, and the many infrastructure and every day problems that a community needs its local government to address.

Maybe this grant and Policy Statement Review can be used to change the Islands Trust to a more functional form of government that could represent us more holistically.

We need healthy, economically sustainable communities throughout the Trust area and a local government that can help us achieve these aims, not just push paper and punitive by-laws with an ever increasing budget.

Regards,
John