

**Salt Spring Community Alliance
June 24, 2019 Meeting Notes**

Taking Action Together on the Climate Crisis

Sixty Salt Springers came to Lions Hall on June 24th to connect with others about climate action. Participants met in small circles to talk about the actions they are taking to reduce their impacts and respond to the climate crisis. They also invited others to join in on collective initiatives. So even if you weren't at the meeting, we invite you to get connected with these community actions, and to use the ideas that were shared to inspire you on a personal level too!



Personal Actions

Question:

What are you doing for climate change, and what can you share to inspire others?

Responses, though varied, emphasized simplifying our lives, growing our own food, avoiding fossil fuels, and consuming less.

The following themes emerged from all three small groups:

Avoid Fossil Fuels:

- Try not to fly, ride your bike, and scythe your grass rather than mowing,
- Have an energy audit done for your home. You can decrease emissions by as much as 8 tons a year.
- Improve your home insulation, use a heat pump and solar panels.
- Drive an electric vehicle. They save on the environmental cost of delivering fuel to Salt Spring.
- Demonstrate at banks that invest in fossil fuels.
- Complain to PARC. They should not be buying oil-based astroturf for the soccer field.

Local, Responsible Food Production and Consumption:

- Grow your own food.
- Share your garden space in exchange for help.
- Refreshments at meetings need to be locally produced.
- See the climate crisis through the lens of food. Food is tied to water, biosphere, poverty, and oppression. Learning how to grow food that supports the ecosystem is the key. We can all begin now to build an intentional community of regenerative permaculture. Rather than humans being “bad,” find ways we can benefit the eco-system.
- We are running out of food. We do not grow the bulk of our food - we are very vulnerable.
- Make food production with as little input as possible.

Reduce Consumption, Waste, and Plastics:

- Lobby local coffee shops to stop using plastic coffee containers.
- Start a movement at local stores that allows us to bring our own containers and wrappers.
- Green burial - make that transition beautiful.
- Close to zero waste: one black garbage bag every 8 months.
- Garden, don't shop; buy everything used.

Take Political Action:

- We need more Green politicians to support Elizabeth May's initiatives.
- Riled up over clear cutting action – 45 acres on Beddis. A group is lobbying the Islands Trust to stop allowing clear cutting on residential land. The Islands Trust refers to the Province – the Province refers back to Islands Trust. Suggestion: one person go every day to speak to the Islands Trust. Be like the mosquito in the tent. We have to scream loud and long.
- Our political system doesn't work. If only our voices mattered – they don't. In Quebec, student movement actually worked, and it got the government going.
- We need to update and implement a climate action plan; the CRD Board has declared a "climate emergency." Capture more methane at the landfill, and use captured methane.
- If ships went slower and packed more efficiently, they would save 30% emissions.
- Underlying issues that must be addressed - oppression and building connections.
- Take-back works in Europe: The retailer must take back all packaging. When we recycle, we are cleaning up for corporations. If we had the courage, instead of using the Recycling Centre, select a day and take back all the packaging to Country Grocer and Windsor.



- We should make sure there is enough public transportation here so that tourists leave their cars at home.

- We need to get the government to help builders who are building green by tax reductions or subsidies.

Learn from Others; Teach Others:

- We need to be an example of conservation for those coming to Salt Spring.
- We need to learn from what others are doing - fields of solar panels in California.
- We need to inspire others. How can we influence other communities?
- Salt Spring is very very small - we could reduce our carbon footprint, but would that make a difference? Get it right and and teach the world.

Take Action Together!

The following local actions were presented at the Community Alliance meeting, and people were invited to get involved by contacting the leader who stepped up for each idea.

Get active today!

Action: Get our lawns off fossil fuels: Promote alternatives to grass lawns. Get rid of lawn motors and use non-fossil fuel implements like scythes. Leader: Elisa Rathje elisa@appleturnover.tv

Action: Fundraise for Transition Salt Spring: Volunteers needed for (July 28) Eco Home and Living Tour. Volunteers will get a free ticket and will get to see tiny homes, solar, permaculture, and many other eco innovations. This is a fundraiser for Transitions Salt Spring, providing two years of operational expenses. Leader: Anne Parkinson - annepar2@gmail.com

Action: Reduce single use plastics. Join the SUPER group. Leader: Tom Mitchell - tommymitchell@shaw.ca

Action: Electric Vehicles: Buy an electric vehicle. Join the EV Group. Transition Salt Spring's Electric Vehicle group needs volunteers, especially in educational events and public relations. Leader: Jim Standen - jstanden@ucalgary.ca

Action: Personal Property Stewardship: Volunteers needed for the SS Conservancy's Stewardship Committee committed to managing properties in environmental ways plus cultural involvement with First Nations. Personal property stewardship and regeneration. Leader: Jean Wilkinson - jdwilkin@telus.net

Action: SS Climate Action Plan: Seeking volunteers for the update of Salt Spring's Climate Action Plan, a 10 year strategy. A wide variety of skills needed. Leader: Elizabeth White - elizwhite@saltspring.com

Action: Sustainable Building: Seeking volunteers to eliminate resource extraction home building. Rammed earth is a model of how to accomplish this. Also eliminate the use of plastics in homes. Explore cradle to grave consumption cycle. Leader: Meror Krayenhoff - meror@sirewall.com

Action: Working Together: Seeking those interested in meeting in small groups to decide upon actions. Find out to how facilitate your own discussion/action/sharing group on climate crisis. Leader: Samantha Sanderson - swsanderson22@gmail.com

Action: Make Art: Seeking volunteers for an artists' activist group. Take action on the climate crisis through art. Leader: Jean

Action: Wired Internet: Let's Connect Salt Spring using wired infrastructure rather than wireless. Safe G uses less energy. Food security is impacted by wireless - bees are being affected by electro-magnetism. We can become a prototype for our own renewable resource – smart technology is wired.. Leader: Oona McQuat oonasong@yahoo.com

Action: Protect Forests: Seeking volunteers to address forest issues, especially clear-cutting on private land. Lobby to stop clear cutting on private lands. Retain forest cover. Leaders: Sheila Dobie and Darryl Martin - darryljmartin@yahoo.com

Action: Social Change: We, the converted, live in a bubble, but there is still lots of pushback from mainstream society, especially regarding electric vehicles. Let's engage them in conversation. How can we do that? Leader: John (email unknown)

Action: Cars: There are 10,000 vehicles on Salt Spring, and the downtown noise and smell is awful. Petition to reduce Salt Spring speeds to 30k and needs signers. Action on car culture/traffic Leader: Myna Lee Johnstone johmyn@gmail.com

Action: Affordable Housing: One demographic missing. We need all elements of a community, not just retirees. We need to find ways workers can stay on Salt Spring by building small homes and sharing living spaces. Improve affordable / social housing. Wagon wheel concept. Leader: Tim Hunt ethomephone54@gmail.com

Action: Increase Local Food Production: Food production is declining, only 10% of our food grown locally. We need sustainable agriculture. Volunteers needed to work toward this as well as connecting with existing groups that are already actively seeking sustainable agriculture. Grow local foods in better ways. Strengthen the Agricultural Alliance Leader: Nick Adamson-Jones ajones.nick@gmail.com

Action: Build Relationships with Indigenous People: How can we take action that also includes indigenous peoples? Meaningful connections need to be made. Leader: Vincent (email unknown)

Top Priorities for Climate Action on Salt Spring

Salt Spring Green New Deal Town Hall- June 17, 2019

Suggested Local Climate Actions

**indicates level of support/ repetition from 100 participants at Green New Deal Town Hall*

These actions were identified as top priorities for Salt Spring Island.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

- ******* Full time paid position for Non profit supporting local agriculture and food security (*ie: The Root properly funded)**
- *****Banning pesticides/ GMO farming** Community organic soil production
- Deer cull and more 1st Nations engagement with deer hunting.
- Indicate which foods are destroying the planet (labelling) eg. Tiger prawns destroy mangroves
ALC recognize small island farms have special/ different needs
- Utilize all ALR land for agriculture No concrete pads on ALR
- Plant based diet

FORESTRY AND LAND

- *******Century scale sustainable forestry plan, sequester C (includes slash piles), no clearcutting, no raw log exports, fire management, rewards and incentives**
- Rehabilitate shorelines and wetlands. All foreshore leases are owned and operated locally
Managing our carbon sinks

HOUSING AND LAND USE PLANNING

- *******Green building and renovation incentives, carbon neutral (limit size and offer efficiency incentives)**
- *******Plan to provide housing for low income and homeless people (increase Ganges Density)**
- *****Promote zoning to support Eco-villages, co-housing, farm worker dwellings.**
- *****Institute an island wide DPA and then examine proposals one by one**
- ****Provide more worker housing to lower off island commuting (allow coops, subsidized housing)**
- *Free community centre, free showers, laundry
- Locate radio and telecommunications facilities in line with precautionary principle.
- Ban watering lawns
- Build local paths between communities No more unoccupied vacation homes (big)

WATER

- *******New Buildings - legislation, incentives for all water collection and storage and use of grey water, etc.**
- ****Become world leaders in water conservation and management**
- Step pricing for water use
- Drinking water fountains, refill stations

TRANSPORT

- *******Safer island-wide bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure**
- *******Free and increased public electric transportation**
- *****Ferries, Public and School buses electric**
- ****More hitchhiking and car-pooling, ridesharing**
- \$ reduction for EV's on ferries and charging stations Cut ferry diesel emissions
- Analyze bridge idea from an ecological POV
- Supplemental small electric vans around island Bike share program
- Provide e-bike shares at ferries
- Rideshare app for ferries, seniors, hitchhikers
- Prioritize people over cars in Ganges Village
- No cars in Ganges except seniors
- Mechanic for electric vehicles
- No anchorages in the Salish sea

PUBLIC EDUCATION

- ***Website to show the true cost of food and other products (the carbon footprint, fair-trade) (like wikipedia- additions can be made by public)**
- More Documentary films as part of youth's public education Increased education in renewable energy, nutrition, climate crisis
- Encourage knowledge of and stewardship of local watersheds by all residents

WASTE MANAGEMENT

- *******Ban single use plastic**
- *******Community Composting, Chipping and composting vegetable/ tree wastes, School board more supportive in expanding the cafeteria program to include organic and liquid waste to keep nutrients on island.**
- ****Set up local repair cafe**
- *****Initiatives that reduce food waste e.g. CG Harvest Kitchen, SSI zero waste goal, local growing**
- ****Stop sending septic off island, support installation of composting toilets**
- ***Local business charging for waste (coffee cups). Less packaging in grocery stores**

- Putting limits on importing packaged foods Recycling building supplies

ENERGY

- *******Coop energy production- community energy, renewable energy, solar farms and localized grids**

GOVERNMENT

- *******Implement climate action plan, bring all bylaws in the trust in line with climate emergency**
- ****Citizens councils, Community involved long term planning** Trust needs more authority for better management Extinction rebellion group
- No 5G tower
- No whale watching

LOCAL ECONOMICS

- ****Revive Salt Spring Dollars, alternative currencies.**
- Subsidies to shop locally
- Sourcing locally (restaurants)
- Buy local Incentives local ag, food production Communal shopping