

**REPORT TO ELECTORAL AREAS COMMITTEE  
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2021**

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**SUBJECT**     **Salt Spring Island Liquid Waste Bylaw Amendment - Composting Facilities**

**ISSUE SUMMARY**

To seek approval to amend Bylaw No. 2118, "Salt Spring Island Liquid Waste Disposal Additional Local Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 1993", to allow for the construction and operation of a liquid waste and organics composting facility.

**BACKGROUND**

At its February 10, 2021 meeting the CRD Board approved a motion supporting the submission of an application by the CRD on behalf of the Salt Spring Island Composting Project (SSICP) to the provincial CleanBC Organic Infrastructure and Collection Program (CleanBC) seeking funding for construction of a composting facility on Salt Spring Island (SSI). SSICP is proposed by a not-for-profit consortium consisting of the Salt Spring Abattoir Society and the SSI Farmland Trust Society, two groups which generate liquid waste currently treated by the SSI liquid waste service, along with organics, such as animal products and feedstock, disposed of as solid waste. As only regional districts, municipalities and indigenous governing bodies are eligible to apply to the CleanBC program, SSICP must partner with CRD in order for the project to receive CleanBC funding. Understanding this requirement, the Board also approved a motion directing that staff bring back a service delivery model for approval that would allow for the CRD to partner with SSICP project proponents.

Amending Bylaw No. 2118 to allow for the co-composting of organic waste, along with fats, oils, greases and other compatible agricultural liquid wastes, would provide a means through which the CRD could establish a composting facility on SSI, and operate it by entering into an agreement with the SSICP members. Amendment Bylaw No. 4085 is provided in Appendix A.

**ALTERNATIVES**

*Alternative 1*

The Electoral Areas Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That Bylaw No. 4085, "Salt Spring Island Liquid Waste Disposal Additional Local Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 1993, Amendment Bylaw No. 3, 2021", be introduced and read a first, second and third time;
2. That Bylaw No. 4085 be forwarded to the Inspector of Municipalities for approval.

*Alternative 2*

That staff be directed to provide a subsequent report with additional information and options to advance the Salt Spring Island Composting Project.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### *Environmental & Climate Implications*

Establishing a composting facility on SSI will provide an on-island option to manage up to 80 tonnes per year of liquid waste, fats/oils/greases (FOG), abattoir offal, and some food waste. An on-island facility will reduce the greenhouse gas emissions associated with hauling and managing these materials off-island, but primarily will provide an on-island destination for organics and wastes that otherwise may complicate other processing facilities on-island. The end-product is intended to be a source of finished compost for use by SSI farming operations on the SSI Farmland Trust Society property, or to be sold to offset the cost of the service, and reduce the need to import soil amendments from off-island.

### *Financial & Governance Implications*

By accepting CleanBC funding, the CRD would ultimately be responsible and liable for meeting the obligations tied to receiving that funding, including paying back CleanBC funding if the project deliverables are not met. The key requirement of the CleanBC program is ensuring that the facility will remain in operation until at least March 31, 2034. As the facility is a fixture, its use and installation on the property of the SSI Farmland Trust Society will need to be secured in some form. If the facility is not able to meet its obligations through fees and charges, it may require subsidization from the SSI Liquid Waste Service.

While the composting operation would be delivered by the SSICP members by way of contract, the operation's outcomes would be overseen by the Salt Spring Island Liquid Waste Committee. Salt Spring Island staff may have an increase to their administrative responsibilities as a result of broadening the SSI Liquid Waste Service to increase its scope, which may result in a request for additional resources in future. Support to the composting operation may also be required in form of consultants or internal CRD resources from the Solid Waste Service assisting on a charge-out basis as determined between the two services. If the composting operation were to be assumed by CRD staff and not the SSICP members, additional resources would be required.

### *Service Delivery Implications*

Partnering with SSICP will require that Bylaw No. 2118 be amended and will require the preparation of a service agreement with SSICP to provide the service. Elector approval can be provided by the Electoral Area Director consenting on behalf. Provincial approval to this service change would be required. Existing service authority permits composting of animal and farm liquid wastes (such as FOG or liquid products generated by the abattoir) at present with wood waste, but does not permit general organics to be co-composted. Given the small nature of the system and the need for different feedstocks to generate good quality compost, a general organics composting power is required. The system contemplated is in-vessel composting. It is not anticipated this system or portion of the service would ever become a full solid waste composting operation, as that would require a further change to the establishing bylaw and the system as designed could not handle such a load.

### *Alignment with Board & Corporate Priorities*

Establishing a composting facility on SSI aligns in principle with the CRD Board's climate emergency declaration, though the net benefits have not yet been fully determined.

The anticipated load of 80 tonnes per year is about eight dump-trucks full of product. It is intended that the liquid waste for this operation will come from sources that do not contain human wastes. The liquid waste portion will consist of fats, oils, and greases from local restaurants; liquid waste from the abattoir and other farm activities, diverted from the current liquid waste facilities; and organics from farm sources and potentially on-island grocery facilities.

#### *Legal Implications*

Environmental controls, odour vectoring, and leachate management would be required under Bylaw No. 2736, "Capital Regional District Composting Facilities Regulation Bylaw No. 1, 2004". Per CRD's typical contracts for services, any agreement with the SSICP would require insurance and an indemnity for negligence and wrongful acts.

### **CONCLUSION**

On behalf of the Salt Spring Island Composting Project, the CRD has applied for provincial CleanBC program funding for the purpose of establishing an 80 tonne per year composting facility on Salt Spring Island that would accept liquid waste from animal and organic sources, fats/oils/greases, abattoir offal and some food waste from on-island sources for on-island composting. Approving the amendment to CRD Bylaw No. 2118 will allow the co-composting of organic waste along with permitted liquid wastes, will divert liquid wastes from current facilities, and will provide a means for the CRD to enter into an agreement with the project proponents to establish the facility and will enable the use of CleanBC funding. Once the bylaw is amended, staff will be able to prepare a service agreement with the project's proponents that will allow for the composting facility to be built and operated on Salt Spring Island. There are risks involved in this project, in that if it is not successful, CRD's SSI Liquid Waste service would be required to repay the CleanBC grant.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Electoral Areas Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That Bylaw No. 4085, "Salt Spring Island Liquid Waste Disposal Additional Local Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 1993, Amendment Bylaw No. 3, 2021", be introduced and read a first, second and third time;
2. That Bylaw No. 4085 be forwarded to the Inspector of Municipalities for approval

Submitted by:	Karla Campbell, BPA, Senior Manager, Salt Spring Island Electoral Area
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

### **ATTACHMENT**

- Appendix A: Bylaw No. 4085, "Salt Spring Island Liquid Waste Disposal Additional Local Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 1993, Amendment Bylaw No. 3, 2021"
- Appendix B: Redlined Bylaw No. 2118, "Salt Spring Island Liquid Waste Disposal Additional Local Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 1993"