

Reprint **Island Tides**

Visit www.islandtides.com for more interesting articles on other BC, national & international topics

Reprint from Volume 19 Number 4

February 22, 2007

Save property taxes *and* protect the environment

This year property assessments in the Southern Gulf Islands rose by an average 15.5% according to Brian Hawkins, Capital Area Assessor with BC Assessment. Pender Island waterfront acreages were up by an average 42%. Meanwhile, Salt Spring assessments have begun to level off.

Recognizing that landowners, faced with high property taxes, are more likely to develop or log their properties to pay their bills, the Islands Trust developed the Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program (NAPTEP). Launched in 2005, NAPTEP rewards landowners with a 65% property tax reduction on the portion of their land protected by a conservation covenant.

NAPTEP participants report saving \$1,300 to \$3,700 annually on their property taxes and protecting areas ranging in size from 1.8 hectares (4.4 acres) to 23.7 hectares (58.5

acres).

'NAPTEP provided the incentive I needed to protect my land,' says Salt Spring Island property owner Ilse Leader. 'I recouped the costs of entering the program in the first year.' Leader recommends the program adding, 'the primary intention of NAPTEP is protecting land with high ecological values.'

The Islands Trust Fund is now accepting NAPTEP applications from landowners wishing to start reducing their taxes in 2008. To be eligible for the program, properties must be in the Southern Gulf Islands or Gambier Island Local Trust Area and must have high ecological value. The 2007 deadline for application to the Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program is April 1. ✉

© Island Tides Publishing Ltd. This article may be reproduced with this attribution, in its entirety, with notification to Island Tides Publishing Ltd.

'This article was published (February 22, 2007) in 'Gulf Islands, Island Tides'. 'Island Tides' is an independent, regional newspaper distributing 15,000-20,000 copies in the Southern Strait of Georgia from Tsawwassen to Victoria, BC.'

Island Tides, Box 55, Pender Island, BC, Canada. Phone: 250-629-3660. Fax: 250-629-3838.
Email: islandtides@islandtides.com. Website: <http://www.islandtides.com>
