

New Legislation needs for Local Government and the social impact of SAR related bylaws

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Regional Districts (RD) can have the ability to protect SARs. What is needed are innovative laws that permit RDs to give tax incentives to private land holders that set aside identified, ecologically sensitive areas. Additionally, RDs need to be granted, by senior government, the ability to protect trees much like municipalities can. Both of these initiatives appear small in the great scheme of preserving our SARs, yet these baby steps have significant a social impact. Efforts in these directions have been rewarded by recent lobbying results. The 2003 Convention of Union of British Columbia Municipalities endorsed the resolution asking the Provincial Government to permit RDs to protect trees. The Island's Trust has a pilot project in place granting tax incentives. By permitting the "'lowest' form of government to create an environment that supports taxpayers and rewards them as well will do much to make inroads in the acceptance of SAR by the public at large.