

Protecting Savary's Groundwater



“When you drink the water,
remember the spring”
Chinese Proverb



By Liz Webster

Life depends on water. On average our bodies are approximately 60% water. Health care and fitness experts tell us to drink at least eight glasses of water each day. When you turn on the tap and draw a glass, what thoughts do you have for the source?

On Savary, water links us deeply to our neighbours and neighbourhoods. A single main aquifer underlying the entire Island unites us all. Several smaller perched aquifers have been documented, yet little is known about the hydrogeology of the Island.

A walk, run or cycle around the Island reveals the results of another year of increased and unregulated development. Pressures on transportation, land-use, water resources, and ecology are apparent all over the Island. The carrying capacity of the Island is still unknown. How long will it take before continued unregulated development threatens public health and safety?

The final report by Thurber Engineering Ltd., completed for the Powell River Regional District is now available on their website at: <http://www.powellriverrd.bc.ca> or at the PRRD office (604) 483-3231. Thurber Engineering measured erosion rates at 51 locations on the Island and have noted (plus or minus 1 meter) a maximum erosion rate of 13m for the south side of the Island and 8m for the north side over a period of 32 years. Average rates of erosion were .41m/yr on the south side and .025m/yr on the north side. (Thurber 2003:1)

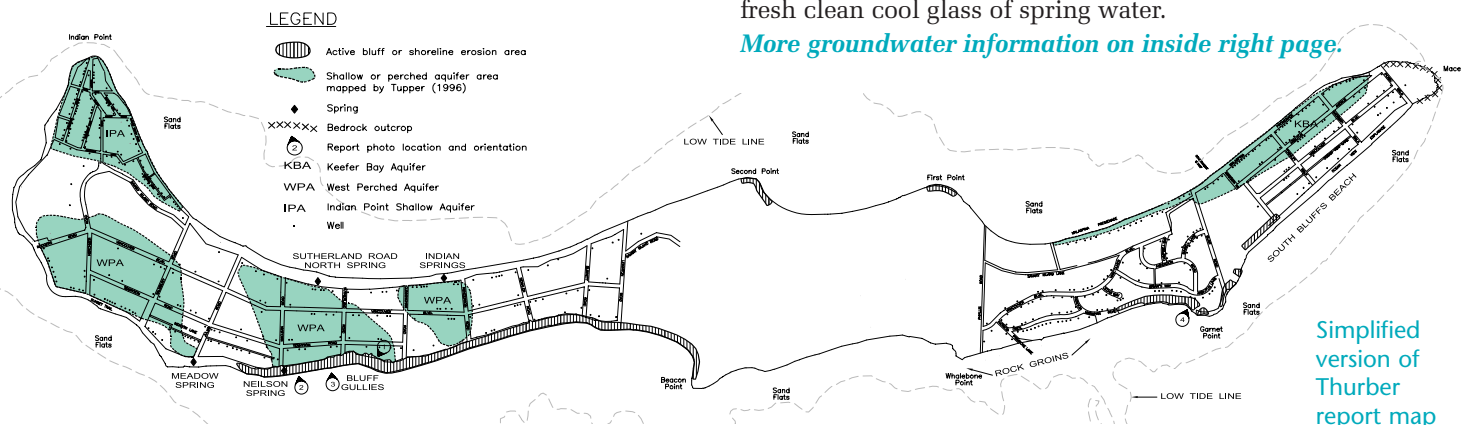
Nature has limits. What are the limits of Savary and what will it take to find out? A lament for the past and the way things used to be, will not return the old days – honouring the past in a vision for the future, based on knowledge, will allow us to learn and lead, so that generations to come can enjoy the spirit of Savary with a fresh clean cool glass of spring water.

More groundwater information on inside right page.

Our review of existing draft development guidelines suggests that their non regulatory nature will not adequately protect public health and safety along high bluff areas or provide assurance over the quality and quantity of shallow aquifers utilized for domestic water supplies. ”

Excerpt from the final Thurber Report recently completed for the Powell River Regional District.

The entire report, plus diagrams, can be viewed at <http://www.powellriverrd.bc.ca>



Simplified version of Thurber report map