



BC's message to the federal government:

## Kinder Morgan will not be built

In the depths of summer, over 1700 British Columbians came out to the federal government's panel meetings on the Kinder Morgan pipeline and tanker project—and 91% of speakers were firmly opposed.

The panel meetings utterly failed to address the gaping flaws in the previous National Energy Board process. This was not the redo British Columbians were promised. And if the Prime Minister approves Kinder Morgan, he will be breaking other promises as well: commitments to climate leadership, democratic decision-making, restoring trust in government, and rebuilding Canada's relationship with First Nations.

Whatever Ottawa decides, First Nations, local governments and citizens across BC will stand strong, and stand united. Together, we will make sure that the Kinder Morgan pipeline is never built.



**TOGETHER WE CAN STOP KINDER MORGAN**  
[www.georgiastrait.org/StopKinderMorgan](http://www.georgiastrait.org/StopKinderMorgan)

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photo: Scott Veirs, beamreach.org



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# STRAIT THOUGHTS

## Padding through healing waters

by *Christianne Wilhelmson, Executive Director*



The greatest irony of the work that we do is that it can leave us with very little time to enjoy what we want so much to protect. Though we spend extensive time aboard BC Ferries, with everything it has to offer—and that sometimes includes spectacular sightings of resident or transient orcas—it's not the same as spending time along, in, or under the waves of the Strait of Georgia.

This summer, I was delighted to see many of my colleagues take some or all of their holidays in this region. Some visited the beaches of Cortes Island, others recharged with their families along the shores of the Sunshine Coast, and some visited secret gems in lesser known places along Vancouver Island (but I can't share the exact locations!).

My husband and I spent a week kayaking in the Discovery Islands, finding incredible locations to camp near Read and Maurelle islands, and were left breathless by the cliffs of Sonora Island (and the waters nearby where we dared to dive in!). It was incredible. The wildlife. The quiet. The richness. A place so remote and spectacular, yet so close to home. There is a beautiful calmness, and yet the richness of community is

everywhere. It's wonderful to see how many people make their permanent or holiday homes in that region.

I always return from our kayaking adventures feeling renewed, but this year I felt inspired. I was reminded so clearly what is being put at risk by governments and industry that have never visited these waters, and have no appreciation for all that these lands and waters give to our lives. The fight to protect the waters and communities of the Salish Sea from fossil fuel spills of all sizes, and from reckless development that harms our shores can leave one feeling somewhat empty. If the battle feels overwhelming at times, I recommend you turn to the waters and shores that feed our bodies and souls. They never fail to heal me, and I suspect they might do the same for you.

In the pages of this newsletter, you'll find what this organization, in which you have invested, is doing to make sure our waters are healthy for generations to come. I hope the work of Georgia Strait Alliance, and the successes that you've helped to make possible, give you continued hope that this region will not only survive but thrive in the years to come.

photos: top left - John Webber, middle left - Alexandra Woodsworth, bottom - Cheryl Onciul.





## LOCAL LEADERS UNITE AGAINST KINDER MORGAN

At the annual convention of the Union of BC Municipalities in September, 40 local government leaders from across the province sent a united message to the federal government: Kinder Morgan is not worth the risk. Georgia Strait Alliance staff were on hand throughout the convention, talking to community leaders, encouraging them to speak out, and creating a buzz on social media by sharing the photos we snapped of them holding messages opposing Kinder Morgan.

With our support, nine mayors, alongside the chief of the Tsartlip First Nation, took one step further and held a news conference calling on the Prime Minister to reject the Kinder Morgan proposal.

Stand with your local leaders. Help stop Kinder Morgan at: [www.georgiastrait.org/StopKinderMorgan](http://www.georgiastrait.org/StopKinderMorgan)



Photos (from top left, clock-wise): Mayor Aaron Stone of Ladysmith, Councillor Donovan Cavers of Kamloops, Councillor Julia Butler of Grand Forks, Mayor Jesso Lightfoot of Lytton, Mayor Patricia Heintzman of Squamish & Councillor Chuck Puchmayr of New Westminster, Councillor Andrea Reimer of Vancouver & Mayor Lisa Helps of Victoria, and Councillor Phil Brienesse of Smithers.



***NMCAs create opportunities for ongoing research, monitoring, enforcement of protection, and public engagement and enjoyment.***

# Back in motion

It's exciting to share that after years of inaction, the Government of Canada is recommitted to the proposal to create a [National Marine Conservation Area](#) (NMCA) in the Southern Strait of Georgia. The process continues to be in the feasibility study stage to assess whether criteria is met to develop an NMCA, and Parks Canada is continuing government-to-government consultation with members of each of the 19 First Nations whose traditional territories fall within the proposed boundary. Georgia Strait Alliance, along with a network of other environmental groups, is working with decision makers and communities as the process advances.

Over the coming months, Georgia Strait Alliance will be going into communities within the proposed boundary to hear what people who live, work and play in the Southern Strait of Georgia have to say. We'll also be providing information and resources to increase awareness

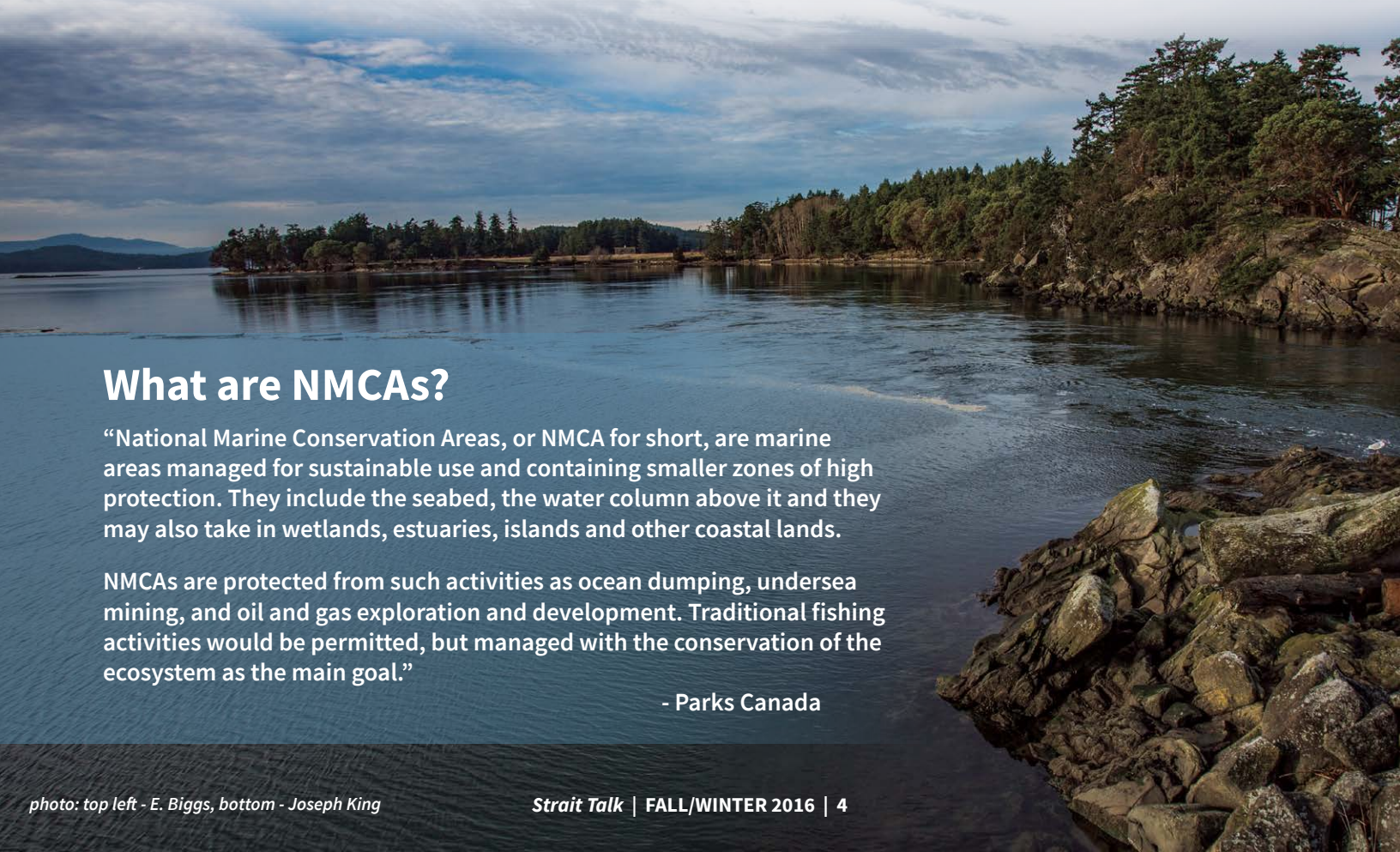
about marine conservation planning, and about the current state of the region.

## What do NMCAs do?

The Southern Strait of Georgia is in trouble. Forage fish stocks are declining, as are many populations of marine birds, invertebrates and the more visible majestic species such as the orcas and the harbour porpoises. The numbers of species that are ending up on the "Species at Risk List" are steadily growing, and it is apparent that we must do things differently.

NMCAs have the explicit goal of continued sustainable human use of the area. They give us the ability to have strategically placed no-take zones and various other levels of restriction and use. No-take zones, are areas where fishes and other vulnerable and declining

*...continued on next page*



## What are NMCAs?

“National Marine Conservation Areas, or NMCA for short, are marine areas managed for sustainable use and containing smaller zones of high protection. They include the seabed, the water column above it and they may also take in wetlands, estuaries, islands and other coastal lands.

NMCAs are protected from such activities as ocean dumping, undersea mining, and oil and gas exploration and development. Traditional fishing activities would be permitted, but managed with the conservation of the ecosystem as the main goal.”

- Parks Canada



populations can replenish themselves and are often placed in a core part of critical habitat, which is necessary for their survival at key parts of their life cycle. These zones also replenish ocean stocks in the greater area.

An NMCA will not solve all of the existing threats to the Salish Sea; however it is one of the many tools that we may ultimately use to ensure protection of this incredible ecosystem and the species within it. It is a solid first step to restore and protect thriving marine ecosystems, as it comes with management tools, including monitoring and enforcement, that will be a solid step forward for this region.



Proposed boundary of the National Marine Conservation Area (NMCA) in the Southern Strait of Georgia

## The short history

**2003:** The federal government and BC's provincial government sign a Memorandum of Understanding to commit to carrying out feasibility studies for an NMCA in the Southern Strait of Georgia.

**2004-2010:** The feasibility study was initiated by Parks Canada in conjunction with BC's provincial government. Initiatives include public consultations, initial discussions with the 19 First Nations whose territory is within the proposed area, and a complete technical study.

**2011:** Parks Canada and Government of BC release an amendment to the proposed NMCA boundaries.

**2016:** Parks Canada has renewed momentum to see this project through. It is currently continuing the feasibility study and engaging in Nation-to-Nation dialogue with the 19 First Nations whose territories could be impacted by proposed boundaries.

**Next steps:** The feasibility study is expected to take several more years to allow for adequate consultation with First Nations. If they conclude that establishing an NMCA in this region is beneficial, the next steps would be for:

- Parks Canada to create the Federal-Provincial agreement to establish an NMCA.
- Parks Canada, along with collaborating Nations and governments, to implement a five-year interim-management plan, during which time a longer-term management plan would be developed.
- Parks Canada to recommend to Parliament the protection of the areas under the Canada National Marine Conservation Areas Act.





Above - The removal of the abandoned vessel Viki Lyne II from Ladysmith Harbour. Below (left to right) - Ladysmith Maritime Society Marina's Executive Director Rod Smith, MP Sheila Malcolmson and Mayor of Ladysmith Aaron Stone. Photos: Michael Snoddon

## DOWN AT THE DOCK DIALOGUE TURNS INTO ACTION

Ladysmith Harbour is no longer home to the abandoned and decaying Viki Lyne II thanks to its safe removal in early October.

This is an excellent example of the action needed to tackle the risks that these abandoned vessels present to our marine life and our communities. However, the road is long and the reality is that the BC coast is littered with decaying vessels. The rusty-hulled Viki Lyne II sat idle and at risk of sinking in Ladysmith Harbour for years with 13,000 litres of oils, solvents and paint on board – hardly quick action!

With this small victory propelling our sails, Georgia Strait Alliance will continue to advocate for a timely and comprehensive approach, which must include support from the federal level. The local governments have been trying to deal with these problem vessels in the absence of a national strategy for long enough.

### What's next?

Georgia Strait Alliance is participating in the federal government's stakeholder consultations on a strategy to address abandoned, derelict and wrecked vessels. It's clear that BC needs a comprehensive approach if we are to adequately address the risks these vessels pose to marine life and coastal communities, and we'll be at the table to ensure both prevention and action on existing problem vessels are part of the plan. View our submission at:

[www.georgiastrait.org/derelictsubmission](http://www.georgiastrait.org/derelictsubmission)



*We'd like to offer a special thank you to Executive Director Rod Smith and his team at CMBC-certified Ladysmith Maritime Society Marina, Stz'uminus First Nation Chief John Elliot, Ladysmith Mayor Aaron Stone, and MP Sheila Malcolmson for their roles in the successful removal of the Viki Lyne II*

## Another Clean Marine BC success!

Marinas, yacht clubs, boat yards and wharves continue to embrace the Clean Marine BC environmental best practices ethic. Royal Victoria Yacht Club's Cadboro Bay marina is the latest facility to earn eco-accreditation, with a commendable four-anchor rating (out of a possible five).

Royal Victoria Yacht Club receives their CMBC flag. Left to right: Mike Kory - RVYC member, Dunnery Best - RVYC Commodore, Simon Gatrell - RVYC General Manager and Natasha Olekshy - RVYC CMBC summer student. Photo: Michelle Young





photos: Annie Walton-Teter

# WATER'S EDGE DAY

## A wonderful way to spend a day

There's nothing quite like being on the water, and that's what Water's Edge Day is all about. Georgia Strait Alliance dedicates this special day to getting people in our communities on the water, whether it's their first or 100th time!

This year, nearly 1,300 people gathered at Kits Point to celebrate, experience and learn about Vancouver's amazing and diverse waterfront. There were more than a dozen activities to try, and everyone had a wonderful time even if there were a few drops of rain! Climbing aboard a pirate's ship, exploring a gigantic migration map, and visiting the Coast Guard's vessel were tremendously successful additions to the Tsleil-Waututh canoe tours, kayak expeditions, electric boat cruises and free admission to the Vancouver Maritime Museum. We look forward to welcoming everyone again next year!

**Thank you** to our event sponsor [Port of Vancouver](#), media sponsors [The Georgia Strait](#) and [The Tyee](#) and event host [Vancouver Maritime Museum](#). We would also like to thank the [Bullit Foundation](#), [RBC: Blue Water Project](#), [The Boag Foundation](#), [Vancouver Foundation Greenest City Fund](#), [Sitka Foundation](#), [Real Estate Foundation of BC](#) and [The McLean Foundation](#) as well as all the businesses and organizations who helped make this year's Water's Edge Day a success!

Highlights from this year:

[www.georgiastrait.org/WatersEdgeDay](http://www.georgiastrait.org/WatersEdgeDay)

*Water's Edge Day is part of the Waterfront Initiative—a growing network with the strength of 60+ organizations in Vancouver.*

[www.georgiastrait.org/WaterfrontInitiative](http://www.georgiastrait.org/WaterfrontInitiative)



photo: Cheryl Onciul

## What's next?

The State of the Waterfront report is our effort to tell the story of the current state of Vancouver's waterfront. The report will form a baseline, or an initial report card, of the health of Vancouver's waterfront as measured by a series of indicators. Over time, we will return to this benchmark to provide Vancouverites with a sense of how our shoreline health is improving and how the network is making positive changes.

# Why Kinder Morgan fails BC's five conditions

The Province of BC has laid out five conditions that must be met before it will approve a heavy oil pipeline. Speculation is rampant that all parties—Kinder Morgan, the federal government, and the provinces of BC and Alberta—are strategizing behind closed doors to be able to put a check mark on each of BC's conditions, but the conditions have not been met.

## KINDER MORGAN'S FAILING GRADE

### 1. Successful completion of the environmental review process

**F** The National Energy Board review was a sham, and the Ministerial Panel process that followed failed to plug the gaps. Kinder Morgan has yet to go through a rigorous public hearing.

### 2. World-leading marine oil spill response

**F** Spill response can only be considered world-leading if it is effective at recovering spilled oil. But the latest science proves that bitumen sinks, and there is no technology to clean it up once it does.

### 3. World-leading land-based oil spill response

**F** The province's new land-based spill regime puts industry in charge, and ignores fundamental principles of a world-leading spill regime recommended by its own experts.

### 4. Aboriginal legal requirements and treaty rights are addressed

**F** Sixteen BC First Nations are firmly opposed to Kinder Morgan. The government promised a new nation-to-nation relationship with Canada's First Nations people, and that means respecting their rights to withhold consent.

### 5. BC receives a fair share of the economic benefits

**F** Only 50 permanent jobs in BC would be created by the project. Provincial tax revenues would be microscopic. And with oil prices staying low, the share of pie that BC wants is shrinking. Kinder Morgan is a bad deal for BC.

**FAIL**





photo: Dogwood Initiative

## Thank you for packing the meeting halls this summer!

In Vancouver and Burnaby, the public town halls ran into the night. In North Vancouver, time ran out before everyone had spoken, including people who had travelled from out of town to have their chance to be heard. In Victoria, an over-capacity crowd left 120 people locked out of the meeting room entirely.

This was ‘drive-by consultation,’ as the Chief of the Cheam First Nation put it. Meetings held on short notice, in the middle of summer, during work hours. Coastal communities largely excluded. No hearing record but the private notes taken by panel members, one of whom

has a past relationship with Kinder Morgan.

The depth of feeling at these meetings was powerful. Here in BC, we are passionate about defending our home: about protecting the land, water and wildlife we all love, and about leaving a strong, sustainable economy and a liveable climate for future generations.

Your voices had an impact, and the panel’s final report made it crystal clear that approving Kinder Morgan would undermine some of the federal government’s top priorities. Thank you!



## Aligning spill response approaches

With both the provincial and federal governments overhauling spill preparedness, we face a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to finally introduce the levels of protection that BC’s coastal communities deserve.

Unfortunately (and incredibly), the two processes are unfolding completely separately. The province is developing new land-based oil spill preparedness regulations, while the federal government is simultaneously exploring new approaches to planning for spills on the

West Coast. However, there is limited consideration of how the two sets of plans will work together in practice—and both proposals suffer from a preference for industry self-regulation, and a disregard for community input and public oversight.

To address these glaring deficiencies, Georgia Strait Alliance worked with world-renowned spill experts Nuka Research to [publish a vision for spill planning and response on the West Coast](#). In it, we call on the provincial and federal

governments to work together to make planning, preparedness, and response work seamlessly across jurisdictions; and ensure communities are meaningfully engaged in all response planning efforts.

***The provincial government received 250 public comments, with more than 200 coming from Georgia Strait Alliance supporters.***

The Nathan E. Stewart tug ran aground in October, sending huge amounts of diesel into the clam harvesting grounds of the Heiltsuk Nation near Bella Bella. This provided yet another stark reminder of how much is at stake, and how much work remains to be done to improve spill response in BC. Getting the provincial and federal governments to work together and do it right won’t be easy. It won’t happen overnight, and we are definitely going to need your help.



photo: Ian McAllister, Pacificwild.org

# COMINGS & GOINGS

## *Introducing Katie and Kate!*

**Katie Rasmussen** has joined us as Marine Planning Coordinator for Georgia Strait Alliance's involvement in the creation of a National Marine Conservation Area, which is a provincial and federal initiative in the Southern Strait of Georgia. Katie completed her BSc with Specialization in Animal Biology from the University of Alberta, and a Masters in Environmental Design with a focus on Conservation Planning from the University of Calgary. She has worked in the field of conservation and land stewardship for over a decade and is now based in Victoria on unceded Lekwungen Territory.



Since May of this year, **Kate Lodge** has been supporting the organization as a Volunteer Coordinator. During the week, Kate works downtown at the YMCA, supporting a youth-employment program, and she enjoys hiking, bouldering, and exploring the waterfront in her spare time. At Georgia Strait Alliance, Kate is ensuring that we provide rewarding experiences for people, like you, who offer a helping hand every now and then. If you're interested in volunteer opportunities, contact Kate | [volunteer@georgiastrait.org](mailto:volunteer@georgiastrait.org).

## *Welcome to a new Board member*

**David Lane** was recently elected to our Board of Directors, and he brings two decades of experience in the field of non-profit environmental research and management to our organization. He worked for 20 years at the T. Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation, including 10 as the executive director. He has also served as Environment Director for the United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union. David is an avid hiker, tennis player and he's the keyboard player for the Left Coast Labour Chorus. He lives in North Vancouver.



## *With thanks,*

We would like to offer our most sincere thanks to outgoing Board members **Melinda Skeels, Jacqueline McGuire, Leslie Hoffman and Jen Farr**. In particular, we would like to thank Melinda for seven years of service, three of them as President. She led us through some challenging times and helped to implement new systems and processes at the Board level that have strengthened the governance of our organization. Both Jen and Jacqueline served the organization as Treasurer at different times, while Leslie was an active member of our Fundraising Committee. Georgia Strait Alliance has benefited tremendously from the input each of these women has made to the organization, and wish them well.

We also want to thank **Annie Walton-Teter**, who was volunteering with us for a month this fall. Annie was generously on loan through a program by Patagonia (she chose Georgia Strait Alliance as the partner for the exchange), and she did an amazing job of creating awareness for our very successful Water's Edge Day.





photo: Mark Malleson, Center for Whale Research

# Species Protection: You gave orcas a voice

The long-awaited and desperately needed draft action plan to protect orcas, released by the federal government over the summer, is heavy on research and monitoring, and seriously lacking in action. It lacks any immediate and actionable tools that could protect northern and southern resident killer whales. In a nutshell, it essentially maintains the status quo. It fails to prioritize the implementation of measures that will prevent extinction. And that's why we asked for your help.

Georgia Strait Alliance was prepared, ready to mobilize community input during the 60-day consultation period, but it's you that allowed us to be the conduit for nearly 800 submissions to the federal government. Together we said: this action plan needs big improvements if we're going to see orca numbers rise, and the population survive.

We then added our voice to yours. Seven environmental organizations, including Georgia Strait Alliance, submitted a [26-page document of comments](#) to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. In it, we call on the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans to develop a separate and distinct action plan for Southern Residents. These orcas need it now more than ever as two adults in the population recently died.

Georgia Strait Alliance will keep you up-to-date on the final release of the action plan.

*Thank you for lending your support. Let's hope our collective voices are heard loud and clear: the 80 remaining southern resident orcas in the Strait are depending on it.*



GSA team breaks from a hiking adventure to take a selfie

## Donate your Miles

As a registered charity, Georgia Strait Alliance is part of an Aeroplan program that lets you donate your miles. Why is this important? It means that staff can take advocacy messages from communities in the Georgia Basin directly to Ottawa and/or take part in broader conversations in-person, ensuring your region is represented at decision-making tables.

### Donate Now



## Find us on social media

@GeorgiaStraitBC



## THANK YOU TO SOME OF OUR RECENT FUNDERS AND PARTNERS...



**We would also like to thank**—BC Provincial Employees Community Services Fund, Beverly Corners Liquor Store, The Georgia Strait, Greenrock Liquor Store, Microsoft, Mountain Equipment Co-op, Patagonia Vancouver, Port Metro Vancouver, PWL Partnership Landscape Architect Inc., Roundhouse Radio, Suncruiser, The Tyee, Vancity 4th Ave Community Branch, West Vancouver Yacht Club

# YOU MAKE IT POSSIBLE!

Georgia Strait Alliance is proud of our recent accomplishments, which are possible because of your support, and the support of special people like long-time donor Ruth Simons.

*“When I became a monthly donor, about nine years ago, Georgia Strait Alliance was one of the very few advocacy organizations that had a focus on boating and clean marinas. I’m a boater, I’ve lived my entire life on the South Coast, and I really appreciate the Clean Marine program.*

*On a personal level, I’m drawn to the advocacy the organization carries out. I like what the organization has been doing, and the work the group does today continues to resonate with me. It’s important to protect this piece of the Strait of Georgia; to conserve this piece of the Salish Sea and the Howe Sound.*

*I’m also impressed with how Georgia Strait Alliance has evolved as an organization. The whole team—the board and staff—everybody is doing an excellent job, and I’m proud to be part of this advocacy network that is growing.”*

*– Ruth Simons, executive director of The Future of Howe Sound Society*



## BECOME A CHANGE MAKER...

Your tax deductible donation to Georgia Strait Alliance is an investment in our shared vision for our local waters, for today and future generations.

**TO DONATE TODAY**, call 250-753-3459, email [gsa@GeorgiaStrait.org](mailto:gsa@GeorgiaStrait.org) or visit [www.GeorgiaStrait.org/donate](http://www.GeorgiaStrait.org/donate)

