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## Stronger, more effective, more resilient

by Christianne Wilhelmson

*“The only way to make sense out of change is to plunge into it, move with it, and join the dance.”* Alan W. Watts

The last few years have brought considerable change for Georgia Strait Alliance—and we have indeed plunged in and joined the dance!

At GSA we’ve spent considerable time and energy refocusing our efforts: trimming down what was previously a wide-based agenda into a smaller set of issues, in order to be more effective in addressing those that require GSA’s unique strengths.

Like all change, it has been challenging at times. For example, we had to say goodbye to some talented staff members. But by keeping our eye on the goal of making our organization stronger, more effective and resilient, new initiatives have taken flight and some of our older ones have reached new heights.

Over the past year we’ve seen the positive results of this approach:

- *More marinas than ever before are now enrolled in our **Clean Marine BC** program and many are achieving the ongoing improvement in best practices that we’ve been working towards.*
- *In **Energy and Shipping**, we have developed new collaborations, strengthened existing ones and used innovative thinking to effectively convey the threats that more tankers would bring to our region.*
- *With the launch of our **Waterfront Initiative**, we are at the leading edge of creating a new way of building a vision for the waterfronts of our region.*

You’ll see more about our achievements in each of these areas, along with our **Ocean Literacy** and **Species at Risk** programs, in the pages of this *Annual Report*.

We’ve also invested time and person-power in better understanding how we communicate our message and how it is received by others. This is helping us to become more effective in engaging a broader range of citizens and leaders, which in

turn will further GSA in ultimately achieving our mission—to protect and restore the Strait and its adjoining waters.

What’s behind GSA’s success over the years? To me, a large part of it comes because we remain committed to:

- *working with experts to identify root causes and science-based answers;*
- *being active in local communities;*
- *engaging, empowering and mobilizing citizens by providing tools and information;*
- *collaborating and building relationships with other sectors, including identifying “champions” among them;*
- *servicing as the voice for our region, bringing key issues to the attention of government; and*
- *advocating for decisions that put ecological needs on an equal footing with social and economic needs—the only way to create true sustainability for our region.*

Throughout this time of transition and change, our vision has remained constant: a future for the region that includes clean water and air, healthy wild salmon runs, rich marine life and natural areas, and sustainable communities. We have also maintained our commitment to GSA’s belief that long-lasting environmental change can best be created by seeking practical and positive solutions to the threats facing the Strait and its adjoining waters, and working over the long-term to bring about these solutions.

Change is never easy, but thanks to the commitment of our Board of Directors, staff, members, volunteers, donors and other supporters, we have plunged into and through it. We’ve emerged as a stronger voice for the Strait of Georgia—one that is becoming ever more effective thanks to the broad and increasing support of individuals, businesses and philanthropic funders throughout the region.



# Ocean Literacy

Our new *Ocean Literacy* program brings together a number of GSA's ongoing projects that focus on public education, stewardship and community-based action—work that continues to be critical in advancing solutions to the threats facing our region. In its first year as an integrated program, Ocean Literacy was effective in furthering public awareness and appreciation of the richness and importance of Georgia Strait and in helping individuals and communities take leadership in creating positive change in their own backyards.

Among our accomplishments we:

- **Supported local community leaders** in their efforts to implement new and innovative liquid waste management plans in Metro Vancouver, the Regional District of Nanaimo and the Capital Regional District.
- **Provided tools and information** (both online and in person) to help people take action to protect their waters and shores, including renewing and re-launching *Stewards of the Strait* and promoting this pledge-based action program at events throughout the region.
- **Created enhanced feature maps** on our interactive, online *Communities Atlas*, providing practical, publicly accessible information on species at risk and eco-friendly marinas in Georgia Strait and the Salish Sea.



Photo by Sarama ([www.livingsalishsea.ca](http://www.livingsalishsea.ca))

## Energy and Shipping

In the last few years we've witnessed a dramatic and alarming increase in the number of tankers carrying tar sands oil out of Kinder Morgan's terminal in Burrard Inlet. In 2013, our work to turn the tide on the transport of these fossil fuels through Georgia Strait really took off. Over the past year, with new resources and partnerships in place and the full magnitude of Kinder Morgan's expansion plans finally on the table, we kicked our efforts into high gear, with some excellent results.

Among the highlights, we:

- **Made the threat of an oil spill on the south coast tangible.** Partnering with Raincoast Conservation Foundation, we carried out a study using drift cards and created an interactive, online *Salish Sea Spill Map*—showing how far and fast oil could travel if it spilled along the Kinder Morgan tanker route. The results are frightening: a spill could foul Vancouver's beaches within 24 hours, and reach as far as Tofino and Haida Gwaii.
- **Raised widespread public awareness of the combined threats of coal, oil and LNG expansion**, which together threaten to turn our spectacular Salish Sea into a global carbon corridor. Working with the Wilderness Committee, we launched the Save the Salish Sea campaign. We organized standing-room-only town hall meetings in coastal communities, talked one-on-one with thousands of people at events throughout the region, and launched a new website aimed at empowering people to track all the proposed fossil fuel projects and to take action.



Photo by Georgia Johnston

- **Successfully made our case to MPs, MLAs, local governments and other policymakers.** Not only did they hear us loud and clear, but some took action as well. For example, following our presentation, the Mayor and Council of North Vancouver passed a motion highlighting their concerns about the environmental impacts of an oil spill and stating they could not currently support Kinder Morgan's expansion plans.
- **Applied for and won intervenor status** in the National Energy Board hearings on Kinder Morgan's proposal, now underway. As an intervenor, GSA will be able to represent the voices of those who were ultimately excluded from the process under the agency's restrictive new rules.



Photo by Sarama ([www.livingsalishsea.ca](http://www.livingsalishsea.ca))

Over the past year we:

- **Launched the Waterfront Initiative**, to ensure that Vancouver's waterfront allows all of us to benefit from the opportunities a maritime city has to offer, while protecting and restoring our precious ecosystems.
- **Inspired organizations and individuals to begin building a vision for the future of Vancouver's waterfront.** By hosting a talk by Roland Lewis, Director of the initiative that transformed New York/New Jersey's shoreline, we initiated a visioning process that is continuing.
- **Secured funding** for a dedicated coordinator to lead the Waterfront Initiative and to allow this exciting new program to gain momentum and grow.
- **Brought key organizations to the table and started building a network of engaged stakeholders.** Our Advisory Committee includes representatives from government, industry and civil society, and is providing ongoing guidance for GSA as we move forward.



Photos by Sebastian Merz

## Waterfront Initiative

In 2013, after a year of research and outreach, GSA launched its newest program, the *Waterfront Initiative*. Aimed at creating a vision for the future of Vancouver's shoreline and engaging citizens in a collaborative process to make this vision a reality, the Waterfront Initiative is charting the way towards a resilient and prosperous urban shoreline. We believe it's important—and possible—for the city's waterfront to support recreation, access to nature, a strong economy for all who live and work here, and healthy natural habitats.

Rapidly growing support from partners and funders confirms that there is a need for action and that GSA is the right organization to lead the way. The *Waterfront Initiative* has the potential to transform our region's largest urban community, and GSA is committed to serving as the backbone of the project.



## Species at Risk

In 2013 we continued our work to highlight and mitigate factors affecting the quality of the habitat upon which the endangered Southern Resident Killer Whale depends, and to ensure that Fisheries and Oceans Canada considered these factors as it developed its new Action Plan and Protection Statement for the species.

Regrettably, the “Action Plan” released in early 2014 confirmed our worst fears: the government isn’t serious about protecting orca habitat. At the same time we learned that the number of at-risk species in the Salish Sea has risen from 113 to 119—strengthening our resolve to protect the quality of orca habitat in our region.

Over the past year we:

- **Partnered with other organizations** to demand that the *Species at Risk Act* be strengthened.
- **Provided a submission to the government** on why and how its Action Plan for the recovery of the Southern Resident Killer Whales needs to change.
- **Continued to promote the creation of a National Marine Conservation Area** in the Southern Strait of Georgia.
- **Participated in transboundary efforts** to raise awareness for the need for marine planning throughout the whole of the Salish Sea.

In the coming year, one of GSA’s priorities will be to find resources to strengthen our efforts to ensure that we have Southern Residents orca in our region—along with all the other amazing at-risk species—for generations to come.

## Clean Marine BC

Thanks to the ongoing efforts of GSA’s Clean Marine BC program, thousands of recreational boaters throughout our region have embraced the ‘green boating’ ethic, and to date, *almost two dozen marinas* have hopped on board to adopt voluntary environmental best practices.

We now have nine marinas that have earned their eco-certification (awarded after an independent audit), with another 13 marinas enrolled in the program and working towards eco-certification.

*Clean Marine BC*-certified marinas are experiencing impressive results in their efforts to protect the marine environment. For example, False Creek Fisherman’s Wharf has had a successful herring spawn after covering their creosote pilings to provide a safe spawning place, and Maple Bay Marina has seen its eelgrass return.

All of our *Clean Marine BC* marinas have taken the program’s philosophy of continual improvement to heart, and we look forward to more success stories in the years to come as we continue to engage boaters and marinas in protecting our cruising waters.

Over the past year we:

- **Provided information, support and advice to marinas** enrolled in the program or seeking to earn or renew their eco-certification.
- **Carried out audits of marinas** seeking to earn or renew their three-year certification. Among the four that successfully earned renewal, False Creek Harbour Authority became the first marina in BC to achieve the highest possible environmental best practices rating of “5 Anchors”, and Shelter Island Marina jumped ahead by two full Anchor ratings.
- **Reached thousands of individual boaters** with our green boating message through boat shows, community events, presentations, our *Guide to Green Boating*, social media and yachting magazines.



# YOU make it possible!

As an independent, charitable society, GSA depends on your support to continue working to protect and restore our coastal waters. Each year, funding for our programs comes from a variety of sources including grants and donations. We are honoured to have your support. Thank you! The list below includes grants, partnership contributions, donations and gifts in-kind in 2013 and the first three months of 2014. Our sincere apologies if there are any errors or omissions (please let us know).

## **SUSTAINERS** (\$25,000 or more)

Bullitt Foundation, Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch—Licensing and Grants Division, Global Greengrants Fund, Mountain Equipment Co-op, The Estate of Margaret Sizmann.

## **GUARDIANS** (\$10,000 – \$24,999)

Anonymous (1), Dragonfly Fund of Tides Canada Foundation, Eden Conservation Trust, Human Resources & Skills Development Canada, LUSH Fresh Handmade Cosmetics, Patagonia Environmental Grants Fund of Tides Foundation, The Schad Foundation, *SunCruiser*, Vancouver Foundation, Victoria Foundation.

## **RESTORERS** (\$5,000 – \$9,999)

Patricia Ajello, Barbara Blouin, Boating BC Association, The Late Joan Milne Stewart, RBC Foundation—RBC Blue Water Project, Scotiabank, The Estate of Jacqueline Sears, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, Wild Salmon Fund of Tides Canada Foundation.

## **PROTECTORS** (\$2,500 – \$4,999)

The Brainerd Foundation, Whole Foods Market—Kitsilano.

## **NAVIGATORS** (\$1,000 – \$2,499)

Anonymous (1), Birgit and Robert Bateman, BC Coast Pilots Ltd., BC Government and Service Employees' Union, Joyce Berry, Boldt Communications Inc., Canadian Direct Insurance, Clipper Vacations / Clipper Navigation Inc., Mike Cormack, Deep Cove Canoe & Kayak Center Ltd., Denman Island Chocolate Ltd., Dolphin Insurance Services Inc., Kathy Fletcher and Ken Weiner, Joel & Dana Solomon Fund of Tides Canada Foundation, Don Johnson, Laurie MacBride and Alan Wilson, Maple Bay Marina (553836 BC Ltd), Mel McDonald, Microsoft Software Donations, Donald Munro, Anne Murray, Carol Newell, Royal Bank of Canada, Salish Sea Pilot, Leonard Schein, Melinda Skeels, Tammy Hudgeon Glassworks, Alan and Linda Thomson, Vancity Centre, Victoria Labour Council.

## **MARINERS** (\$500 – \$999)

Jessica Alford, Michael and Rita Alton, Aqueduct Foundation, Darren Blaney, Peter Carter and Julie Johnston, John and Sharon Cashore, Deryck and Linda Cowling, False Creek Harbour Authority, Julia Gardner, Harbour Authority Association of BC, Janine Harris, Richard Hill, Hornby Island Residents & Ratepayers' Association, Gordon Horner, Island Natural Markets, Marjorie Kamp, F. Matthew Kirchner and Lisa Osoba, Walton Langford, Leon Judah Blackmore Foundation, Virginia Mathers, Ocean River Sports Adventure Centre, John and Kim Rich, Mary Russell, Robert Southcott, Michael and Ron Steele, Stellar Recruitment Inc., Terence Swean, Alan Thornett, Bob Turner, David Wiseman, Liz Wouters, Eileen Wttewaall.



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Photos on pages 5-6 were taken by Scott Fraser Photography at "An Evening with the Strait" held at the Robert Bateman Centre in Victoria last fall.

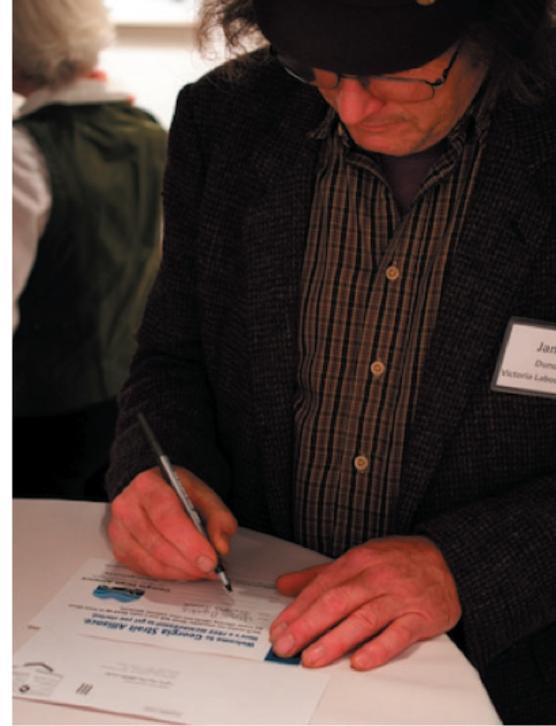


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***GSA is mobilizing people, with more than ever signing up to do their part.***

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  - Dave Macdonald\*, Vancouver—Vice-President (on leave)
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  - Jacqueline McGuire, Vancouver—Treasurer
  - Lesli Boldt, Vancouver
  - Karen Cooling\*, Vancouver
  - Ginnie Mathers\*, Vancouver
  - Leslie Dickout, Vancouver (June 2013-September 2013)
  - Ken Coach, Vancouver (as of December 2013)
  - Kate Storey, Vancouver (as of February 2014)
  - Rachel S. Forbes, Vancouver (as of April 2014)
- \* entered 2nd year of term in June 2014 (in office until Spring 2015)

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- Dr. Donald McQueen, Nanaimo
- Suzanne Siemens, North Vancouver
- Douglas White III, Kwalasultan, Snuneymuxw / Nanaimo

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- Christianne Wilhelmson—Executive Director
- Cathy Booler—Administrative Director
- Michelle Young—Financial Coordinator / Clean Marine BC Program Coordinator
- Rebecca Adams—Graphics and Web Development
- Megan Spencer, Mikaela Wilson (Summer Students 2013)

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- Alexandra Woodsworth—Energy and Shipping Campaigner
- Sebastian Merz—Waterfront Initiative Lead
- Ted Leather—Webmaster / Technical Support
- Laurie MacBride & Alan Wilson—Publications
- Pat Nordin—Office cleaning services

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EDITORIAL & LAYOUT: Laurie MacBride and Alan Wilson

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Photo by Sabrina Fox



Maureen Simmonds, Debra and Peter Simmons, Deborah Simpson, Olive Sims, Kelsey Singbeil, Beth Skala, James Skwarok, Dale Slattery and Vivian Sorensen, Patti Sloan, Lois Slotten, H. Leslie Smith, Janet Smith, Vivian Smith, Dr. Michael Smith, Rod Smith, Robert Smits, Stephen Snobelen, S. Camille Soer, Kathleen Sogge, Lee Sollitt, Richard Sones, Jean Stahnke, Mike Stamford, Jennifer Stanger, Sue Staniforth, Robert Stark, Elva Starr, Ernie Stefanik, Sara Steil, Al and Marjorie Stewart, Helen Stewart, Ellie and Hugh Stewart, Lorna Stirling, Sandra Stokmo, Susan Stout, Judi Stransman, Margaret Stronge, Colin Struthers, Kim Stubblefield, Hubertus Surm, Jacqueline Sutton, Elizabeth Swift, Richard Switzer, Clo and Julius Szalipszki, Alison and George Szanto, Dianna Talbot, Daphne Taylor, Doug Taylor, Lucie Teasdale, Liisa Tella, Frank Tester, Darrell Thomas, Arnie Thomlinson, Blair and Bonnie Thompson, Jim Thomson, Grace Tickson, Tracey Tomtene, David and Dorothy Torontow, Mildred and Ross Tremblay, Robert Tritschler, Claire Truesdale, Tonis Tutti, Janice Valdez, Louis Vallee, Kira Van Deusen, The Van Imschoot-Brown Family, Kathleen Vance, Elizabeth Vander Zaag, Anneke and Peter Vankerkoerle, Susan Vasilev, Carla Vassilopoulos, Marielou Verge, Andrew and Pamela Vest, Rebecca Vincent, Jillian Vivian, Caroline von Westarp, Nicola Von Westarp, Carole Waddell, Dr. Peter Walford, Dr. Rory Wallace, Victor John Wardlow, Mark Waslen, Thomas Watts, Suzanne Waverley, Ian and Paddy Waymark, Jane Webb, Kim Webb, Roger Webber, Amy Weiner, Jan Weiten, Robert and Marcie Welsh, Ling and Rick Weston, Scott White, Greg White, Nancy Wigen, Annie and Gordon Wilkinson, Rosemary Williams, Peter Williams, Patricia Willis, Ted Wilson, Germaine Wilson, John and Sheila Wilson, Ingrid Wilson, Shirley Winbourne, George and Monika Winn, Ingrid Witvoet, Marcia Wolter, George and Phyllis Wood, Edith Wood, Audrey Woodward, Oliver Woolcock, Dillon Worthen and Amanda Zaikow, Malcolm Wright, Irene Wright, Josephine Yard, Michelle Young, Tania Young, Teresa Young, Lorna Zaback, Betty Zaikow, Jeff Zamluk, Veronica Zehntner, Ann Zielinski. □

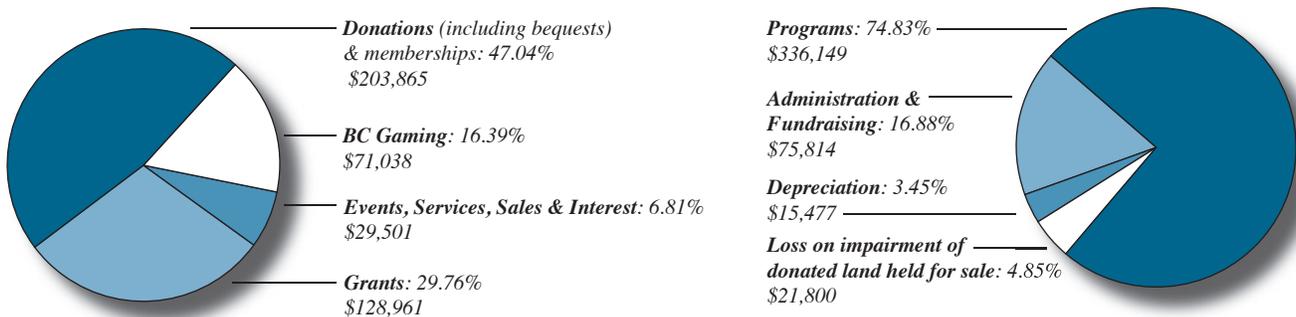
Photo by Chuck Russell



## Financial Highlights

Effective January 1, 2014, GSA's fiscal year-end was changed from December 31 to March 31. As a result, financial information is provided for the year ended December 31, 2013 and for the 3 months ended March 31, 2014.

### January 1 – December 31, 2013



**Revenues FY 2013: \$433,365**

**Expenses FY 2013: \$449,240**

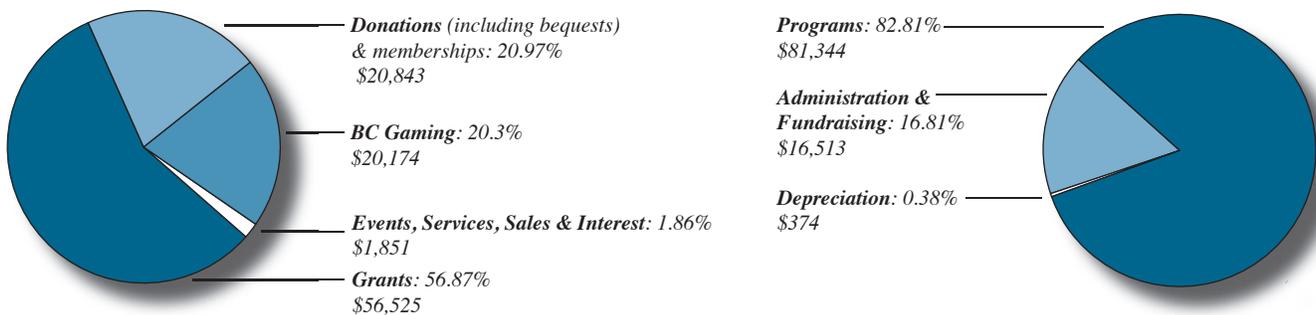
**Deficiency of Revenues over Expenses:** Georgia Strait Alliance was bequeathed land in 2011. Despite efforts it has not yet been sold and unfortunately experienced a decline in value which resulted in a loss on paper in 2013 of \$21,800. Depreciation is partly due to purchase of a new membership database in 2012 which improves our ability to engage and serve members, supporters and volunteers. Staffing commitments remained the same as in FY 2012.

#### Financial Position as of December 31, 2013

Current Assets	\$875,374	(includes bequeathed land held for resale of \$595,000)
Long-term Investment	\$ 31,685	
Capital Assets	\$ 5,062	
Payables & Accruals	(\$316,835)	(includes half of land held for resale)
Deferred Contributions	(\$263,222)	
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$332,064</b>	

**In-Kind Contributions:** In addition to the revenue above, GSA received an estimated value of \$15,500 in donated goods and services and \$46,100 in volunteer time in 2013 for a total of \$61,600.

### January 1 – March 31, 2014



**Revenues Jan-Mar 2014: \$99,393**

**Expenses Jan-Mar 2014: \$98,231**

#### Financial Position as of March 31, 2014

Current Assets	\$872,126	(includes bequeathed land held for resale of \$595,000)
Long-term Investment	\$ 33,020	
Capital Assets	\$ 4,688	
Payables & Accruals	(\$325,474)	(includes half of land held for resale)
Deferred Contributions	(\$251,134)	
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$333,226</b>	

**In-Kind Contributions:** In addition to the revenue above, GSA received an estimated value of \$15,646 in donated goods and services and \$8,900 in volunteer time in the first 3 months of 2014 for a total of \$24,546.