



Georgia Strait Alliance
Caring for Our Coastal Waters

Strait Talk

Summer 2015

www.GeorgiaStrait.org

Vancouver spill is the wake-up call we need

by Alexandra Woodsworth

Vancouverites woke up on Thursday, April 9 to the words so many of us hoped we would never hear on our local news: “There’s been an oil spill”. A grain ship on its maiden voyage had spilled at least 2700 litres of bunker fuel into Vancouver’s iconic English Bay, and the public was being warned to stay away from local beaches to prevent contamination with the toxic substance.

Later that day we saw aerial photos of an oil sheen coating English Bay and the rest of Burrard Inlet’s outer harbour, as well as the first signs that the official response to the spill was unacceptably poor. By Friday, the political finger-pointing was in full swing, public health warnings were being posted on our formerly pristine beaches, and reports of oiled birds were coming in. And on Saturday, clean-up crews in hazmat gear were scrubbing rocks next to Stanley Park—a scene that immediately brought to mind old photos of the Exxon Valdez disaster.



Photos by Christianne Wilhelmson



Workers hit the beaches around Vancouver.

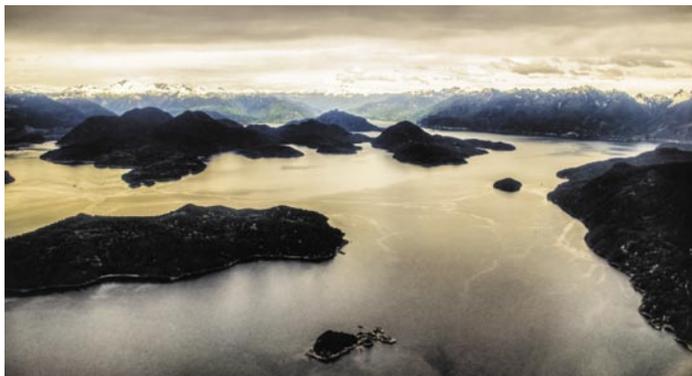
Although the long term impacts on our environment remain to be seen, we know that over 6 km of Vancouver’s magnificent shoreline has been treated for oiling, and officials warn that we will have oil washing up on our beaches for some time to come. We know that at least 20 to 30 birds have been harmed, and fisheries in Burrard Inlet have been closed.

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Also in this issue...

MORE PROOF OF UNPREPAREDNESS

Photo © Evan Leeson
www.flickr.com/photos/ecstasticist/4623867926/



In light of the inadequate response to the Squamish Terminals fire and Vancouver oil spill, how prepared are we for the liquid natural gas terminal proposed for Woodfibre and the tanker traffic it would bring to island-studded Howe Sound?

SEE PAGE 6

CLEAN MARINE BC GROUNDSWELL

Photo by Lynn Paris



Okeover Harbour Authority has earned its eco-certification and other marinas have recently joined the Clean Marine BC program. Learn more about the groundswell of support Down at the Dock.

SEE PAGE 8

Strait Thoughts: The wild ride

by Christianne Wilhelmson, Executive Director

After many years with GSA, I've come to the conclusion that the work we do is akin to riding a roller coaster—you're heading in one direction, then suddenly, you're looking at a completely different view.

When I first sat down to write this column, my mind went back to the many stories that fill our 25 years of history. It was enjoyable to take time to look back on our history—our successes, our challenges—and to appreciate the position of strength and impact that GSA holds today.

Then the roller coaster hit a turn.

Like so many of you, I awoke on April 9th to the news that there had been a bunker fuel spill in Vancouver's English Bay. My stomach felt like it was in my throat. This couldn't be happening.

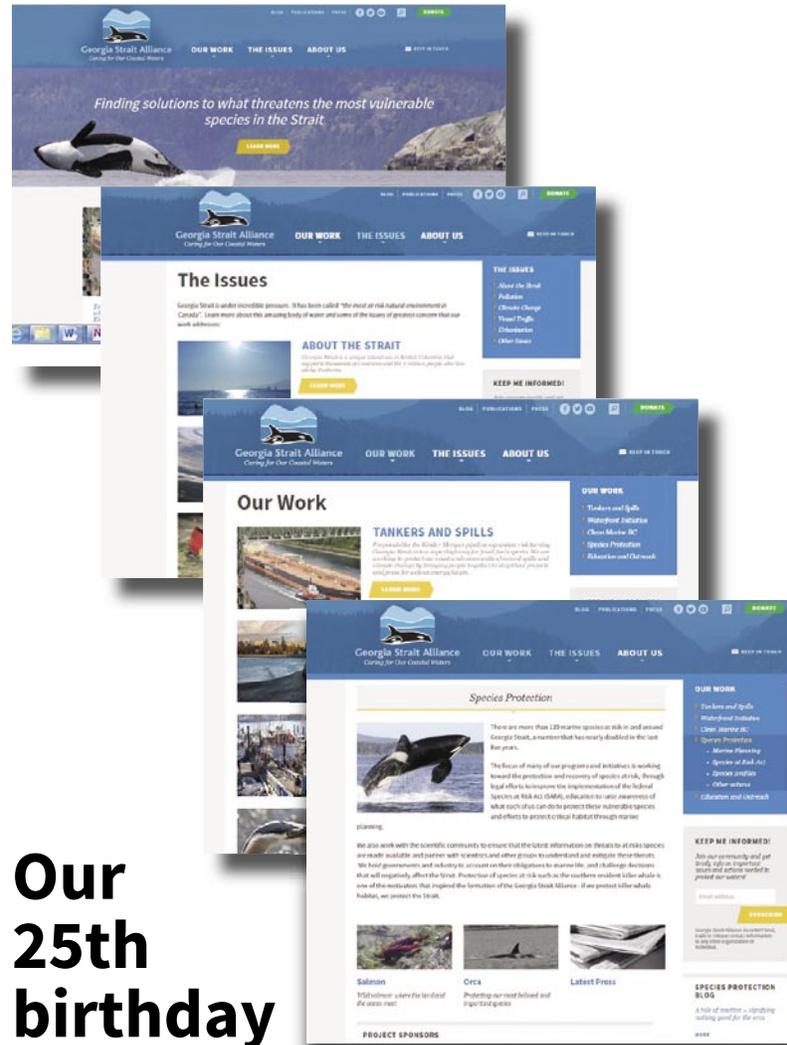
GSA has been saying for years that our communities are not prepared to respond effectively to a spill from the ships that currently ply our waters, never mind the 400+ tankers that Kinder Morgan proposes to bring to the region.

We were told not to worry: "A spill from a ship is unlikely to happen but if it does, we're ready." In April we learned just how untrue that assurance was—and that hollow words won't clean our beaches.

When news of the oil spill broke, GSA went out into the community, where we heard widespread shock and dismay at the unacceptable pace and level of response. We spoke to the media, highlighting people's concerns and demanding more than platitudes from our government leaders. As of press time, though, our questions remained unanswered.

Just as our beaches started to re-open, my roller coaster hit another turn, taking me to the American Planning Association Conference in Seattle. There I had the opportunity to speak to planners from across the US and around the world about our Waterfront Initiative. I was energized by creative and progressive thinkers, all trying to tackle our cities' challenges. I heard about the links between equity and sustainability, the progress that cities are making to balance their communities' competing needs, and how they are planning to ensure that cities and waterfronts are healthy in all the ways we can imagine. I also met a lot of people who were excited about the work we're doing in Vancouver and wanted to learn more. Being among people in positions to make a difference, who are working every day to make towns and cities healthy places, gave me a great deal of hope.

I'm certain that by the time this article hits your mailbox, we'll have taken a few more turns on the roller coaster that is the work of Georgia Strait Alliance. But through 25 years of ups and downs, of the challenges and successes that make up our history, we've stayed true to our mission. It's been quite the ride so far and I hope you will join us and stay aboard for another 25 years, to continue making a real difference for the health of our coastal environment and the sustainability of our region's communities.



Our 25th birthday upgrade!

In April, we celebrated GSA's 25th birthday with the launch of our new website!

Along with getting a new look and improved functionality for mobile devices, our website has lost a lot of weight. What was once an overwhelming 1200 pages has been streamlined under the artful touch of the talented people at [Raised Eyebrow Web Studio](#), to an easy-to-navigate and beautifully svelte new site.

One thing hasn't changed: you'll still find us at the same address: www.GeorgiaStrait.org. We'd love to know what you think of our new baby: drop us a line, [tweet](#) or [Facebook](#) post or give us a call.

We want to give a big thank you to [MEC](#) for supporting this project and to a seeming cast of thousands who made the development and launch of the new site possible.

A waterfront for all

by Michelle Gaudry

“A Waterfront for All” was the motto we chose for the first **Waterfront Citizens’ Forum**, reflecting the vision and goals of Georgia Strait Alliance’s Waterfront Initiative.

Held in January 2015, the event drew almost 50 Vancouver residents to Creekside Community Centre, to discuss what Vancouver’s waterfront could look like if we all worked collaboratively to shape the future of our shoreline together.

When asked to imagine the shoreline 20 years from now, participants envisioned a public place, easily accessible to Vancouver residents, where people could connect, recreate and interact with nature. They also acknowledged the importance of reserving industrial space with a direct link to water, as well as quiet, natural areas undisturbed by human activity.

The waterfront they imagined had a strong connection between its history and its present, and linked foreshore use to upland areas. It was also a place where community members felt a strong sense of ownership and played an active role in shoreline restoration activities.

A few months later, in April, GSA hosted the third **Waterfront Stakeholders Forum**. This event followed up on two successful Stakeholder Forums held in 2014, in which representatives from a broad spectrum of sectors sketched out what a sustainable, prosperous future for Vancouver’s shoreline could look like and how we can get there.

This spring’s event continued that conversation and further refined priority areas for action. Among the participants were organizations with an interest in building a thriving, diverse, integrated, sustainable and resilient shoreline, including:

- *City of Vancouver*
- *BC Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations*
- *Musqueam First Nation*
- *Port Metro Vancouver*
- *Real Estate Foundation BC*
- *International Longshore and Warehouse Union*
- *Lighthouse Sustainable Building Centre*
- *Vancouver Maritime Museum*
- *Stanley Park Ecology Society*



Willard Sparrow of Musqueam First Nation with other participants at the Waterfront Stakeholders’ Forum in April.

Photo Michelle Gaudry

Following a warm welcome from Musqueam First Nation, participants began a lengthy discussion about what we know, what we don’t know and what we need to know about the shoreline, in order to develop measurable objectives towards which we can work. We asked attendees to identify potential indicators and data sources to help measure progress on five themes:

- *Flourishing Ecosystems*
- *Living on the Waterfront*
- *Working on the Waterfront*
- *Access to Nature*
- *Transportation*

The forum proved to be a fruitful and engaging information-sharing session, one that will help kick-start our work this summer to determine knowledge gaps and consider potential indicators that will inform an eventual report on the state of our waterfront. Stay tuned for updates on the initiative.

Our next major public event will take place in early fall when we come together once again to celebrate Vancouver’s waterfront, at the **2nd Annual Water’s Edge Day**. Date and details will be announced on our website: www.GeorgiaStrait.org/waterfront.



Vancouver’s West End waterfront.

Photo © Beth Buglione.

Preparing and responding at the local level

by Alexandra Woodsworth

The Vancouver oil spill in April showed that local governments have vital roles to play in spill response. But that incident was a relatively small spill—so in light of increasing tanker traffic in our waters, are coastal communities doing enough to prepare for a worst case spill?

GSA is an official intervenor in the National Energy Board review of Kinder Morgan's proposed pipeline expansion, and as part of our research, we have been investigating the state of oil spill preparedness and response in coastal municipalities around Georgia Strait. In our discussions with emergency management staff, Councillors, and local government officials who have responded to marine oil spills in the past (both locally and further afield), we have become increasingly concerned about two troubling facts:

- *local governments have not been sufficiently included in oil spill planning and risk assessment; and*
- *in the event of an accident, local governments will likely have to take part in the response effort without adequate resources, training or planning.*

Technically, the federal government leads marine oil spill response, but the Vancouver oil spill revealed that in the real world, municipalities get involved. Emergency teams needed to be called out. Members of the public wanted to know how they could help. Health warnings had to be posted on local beaches.

All of this was after the fact of the spill, of course. Now imagine the contributions that communities could make, if they are given the time and resources to take part in advance planning processes for spills—for example, local knowledge of sensitive areas that should be the first ones protected, or additional resources that could be made available.

GSA is working with a team of experts to assess the adequacy of local government spill response capability, identify additional training and resources that could be put in place to help

Photo by Alexandra Woodsworth



Vancouver City Council supports stronger local spill preparedness.

municipalities be better prepared, and find way for communities to have a stronger voice in planning for and responding to a spill.

In late May we presented our report to the National Energy Board's review of Kinder Morgan's application to expand its Trans Mountain pipeline. We will also be taking these lessons to communities around the region, to get this critical information into the hands of local governments and the people they serve, so we can help them stand up more effectively for the health of their communities.

An early victory in this campaign came in March, when we worked with City of Vancouver staff to put forward a motion to Council calling for additional resources and capacity-building for local governments, to strengthen their oil spill preparedness. Council passed the motion unanimously, and took the motion forward to a regional gathering of municipal leaders where it passed unanimously as well. In Sept, it will go forward to a provincial gathering of municipal leaders for approval.

Getting this motion passed, and getting the issue onto the agenda of the provincial and federal governments, will require a great deal of people power. If you'd like to help, there are many ways to get involved, from writing to your Mayor and Councillors to hosting a GSA speaker at a local event. Find out more at www.GeorgiaStrait.org/LocalSpillResponse. Together, we can ensure that local governments are in the best possible position to protect their communities and environment in the face of a major oil spill.

FROM PAGE 1

Wake-up call

We also know for certain that we are absolutely not prepared for an oil spill—not a comparatively small spill like this one, and certainly not a catastrophic spill of toxic tar sands oil.

Despite the spill taking place in the most well-resourced urban area on our coast, in calm seas and good weather—in other words, the best possible conditions for spill response—the oil slick spread for 12 hours before booms were in place. It also took 12 hours to notify the City of Vancouver so they could activate their emergency protocols, and 17 hours to inform local First Nations. A day and a half passed before shoreline clean-up began and public health warnings were posted.

Incredibly, federal authorities claimed that this operation was effective, timely, and even “very impressive”—which is particularly hard to swallow given that the federal government recently closed the Kitsilano Coast Guard station, which could have provided a much faster response.

If this accident had happened in a more remote part of Georgia

Strait, how long would it have taken for response crews to arrive? How would local authorities have coped in the meantime?

This incident illustrates what GSA has been telling decision-makers for years: communities need much more capacity to deal with the oil spill threats that we already face, and we need to avoid further increases in tanker traffic in our waters so that the risk of spills doesn't grow even worse in the future.

Two days after the spill, GSA staff and volunteers spent the day in English Bay, bearing witness to the spill and its aftermath, and gathering signatures on a petition asking Premier Clark to take back the Province's power to say 'no' to risky projects like the Kinder Morgan pipeline expansion, which will vastly increase tanker traffic in the Strait of Georgia. It was inspiring to stand together with so many people who simply turned up, wanting to help in some way, and to work together to protect this place we all love.

Vancouver had the wake-up call we needed—let's make sure this can never happen again.

Hitting the streets to Save the Salish Sea

This spring we were out and about at some of Vancouver's busiest spots—from transit stations to coffee shops to university campuses to the beach—talking about our pledge to stop new fossil fuel exports on the Salish Sea. If you spotted some enthusiastic folks sporting bright blue T-shirts and clipboards, that was probably Wiley Wilkins (GSA) and Kristin Henry (Wilderness Committee)—our intrepid *Save the Salish Sea* outreach team.

Thanks to this team and many other pledge champions throughout the region, the cross-border community dedicated to taking action to stop the Salish Sea from becoming one of the largest fossil fuel exporting regions on the planet is growing quickly. In March, people power blocked Shell's plans to ship trainloads of crude oil to their export facility in Anacortes, Washington—and with your help, we are going to keep up the pressure, since there are a dozen other dangerous projects proposed for the shores of the Salish Sea!

KEY DATES:

National Energy Board

May 27: Deadline for intervenors to file written evidence. Expect a wide array of compelling expert reports (including GSA's) highlighting the many risks associated with Kinder Morgan's proposal.

July 23: Deadline for commenters to file letters of comment. The NEB will hold workshops for commenters earlier in July, and GSA will circulate advice as well. Keep an eye on our website to find out more: www.GeorgiaStrait.org/KinderMorganHearings

September: Oral hearings, where GSA will be speaking up on behalf of Georgia Strait communities—dates and locations not yet announced by the NEB. Watch our website for updates.

Photo by Teddy Courtaux



Photos by Alexandra Woodsworth



Squamish fire—more proof of unpreparedness

by Michelle Gaudry

On Thursday, April 16 my husband and I had just finished preparing dinner when we smelled burning chemicals. Minutes later, plumes of grey smoke clouded over our picturesque mountain view. Sensing trouble, we quickly closed our windows and doors and checked our community Facebook page, where we learned there was a fire at nearby Squamish Terminals.

As the mountains completely disappeared behind the smoke we became more and more worried. Within a couple of hours the source of the fire was known—wood pilings soaked in toxic creosote—and as cars began streaming out of our cul-de-sac, we decided to evacuate as well.

On the way out of our beloved town, we were horrified to see the bright orange flames eating up the terminal dock. We drove on with fear, unsure when we would be able to return. We landed in a pet-friendly motel in North Vancouver and stayed there, awaiting further news.

Information was random and inconsistent. A “Shelter-in-Place” alert was issued Thursday evening by the District of Squamish (shut down ventilation systems, seal windows and doors, stay inside or cover nose and mouth with a wet towel if venturing outdoors). On Friday morning it was lifted and schools were announced open, but parents were reassured that air intake vents and windows were sealed and that children would be kept indoors all day. We wondered why school officials would feel the need to do this if the Shelter-in-Place alert had been cancelled.

The newly elected Mayor of Squamish advised that minimal health impacts were reported, but community social media told another story: resident upon resident complained of headaches,



The Squamish Terminals fire sent toxic clouds over the town.

Photo courtesy Les Hulickso, Wandering Sole Images, <https://www.youtube.com/user/Hulio7271>

nausea, dizziness, sore throats and respiratory issues. On Friday morning, a marine expert warned that officials weren't taking the situation seriously enough and that whole buildings could become contaminated by the toxic soot.

An Air Quality Advisory was issued late Friday afternoon, warning vulnerable populations to sustain the Shelter-in-Place alert. Residents were advised to avoid eating any food grown in Squamish soil. Passing the days feeling trapped in the city, racking up hotel and food bills, we found information to be scarce and worried about the future of our cherished home and yard.

We returned home late Sunday night after the Air Quality Advisory was lifted, but learned crews were hosing down children's playgrounds “as a precautionary measure”. It took another five days (and a whole lot of prodding via social media) for preliminary results from the soot analyses to be released, stating

risks appeared negligible. However, confirmed ecological damage and health impacts from acute smoke inhalation are yet to be determined.

The District of Squamish does not have its own fire boat, and emergency response crews had to wait for hours before the City of Vancouver employed theirs. Once officials realized that local resources weren't enough, it took several days for Fraser River Pile and Dredge to send equipment up Howe Sound to help dismantle part of the dock (necessary to allow better access to the fire). This meant the fire was burning for three entire days, when it might have been extinguished within one day had the proper equipment been on-site.

The Squamish fire came hard on the heels of the Vancouver oil spill (see p. 1) and Port Metro Vancouver chemical fire in February. Together, these accidents have highlighted both the risks associated with increasing shipping traffic in our region and the inadequacy of our emergency response resources. With the threat of the proposed Woodfibre LNG terminal on the horizon (which would mean an additional 40 tankers carrying hazardous materials through Howe Sound each year), we should take this experience as a stark warning of the risks to residents and the local environment if a major accident should occur in our region.

Strait Talk

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EDITING & LAYOUT

Laurie MacBride and Alan Wilson

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Partnership is the key

In our line of work, we succeed because of partnerships.

Whether it's the people we work with on campaigns or those who generously give their time and money to support our efforts, we simply cannot do this work alone.

We value all our supporters, but every once in a while, there's a partner we feel deserves a little extra special attention because they have been there for us when we needed them the most—and they are in this for the long haul. We've been around for 25 years and for a big part of that time we've had a partner who's been right by our side: *Mountain Equipment Co-op*.

If you think about any of the work we've done since the mid-1990s, you can find MEC supported us in some way. They supported our early work on open net cage salmon aquaculture, as our recognition of that threat was emerging. Later, a grant allowed us to work on marine planning on the Central coast, ensuring communities were involved and engaged. By 1999 they saw the wisdom of working with the recreational boating community and became a key funder of our initial *Guide to Green Boating*, which has now been in print for 15 years.

In 2001 their support of our Orca Pass International Stewardship Initiative meant we could promote a new way of thinking about protecting our cross-border waters, now called the Salish Sea.

Other program-related support followed, including grants for our energy and shipping work, *Clean Marine BC* eco-certification, advocacy in support of sewage treatment and our early work on urban sustainability, which has now grown into our Waterfront Initiative.

And they've not only been there to support our work, but MEC also believes in investing in organizations so that we are strong and more effective, and can then be more successful in meeting our mission and achieving our strategic goals.

In 2006, MEC invested in a new website for us, one that enabled staff to more easily create content for you to read, as well as a new database, so we could better serve our members. Five years later, they helped us take the next step in how we support and engage with our members with an even more effective database. Like getting your tax receipts via email? You can thank MEC for that!

As we matured as an organization and wanted to evaluate how effective we were in communicating our work and efforts to the public, MEC supported us in conducting a communications audit and developing a professional communications plan, one that is still guiding us and making our work more effective and impactful than ever.

MEC supported our work to get Victoria to treat its sewage.



MEC supported the publication of our Guide to Green Boating, distributed at marinas around Georgia Strait.



If you have visited our website in the past month, you will have seen the results of MEC's most recent investment in our capacity—a new, more intuitive website which is serving as the cornerstone of a revitalized digital media strategy for GSA, enabling us to increase engagement and further expand our communications effectiveness.

We haven't even mentioned the support we've received from their three stores in the region with product donations.

And, of course, their sponsorship of the *Vancouver Festival of Ocean Films*.

Do you see a trend? MEC has always been willing to step up, to invest in new ideas that help us get on the ground, to protect our local waters and make our organization stronger so we can serve you and the region better.

For over 20 years, MEC has been our partner in protecting the Strait, investing over \$200,000 in our success! We thank their staff for caring about our coastal waters as much as we do. And also, because MEC is a member of *1% for the Planet*, we thank their customers too. Every year their purchases allow MEC to contribute one percent of its sales to Canadian non-profits like us.

Next time you're in one of their stores, stop to thank their staff for supporting GSA—they'll appreciate hearing how much their partnership means to our members. Here's to many more decades of working with such a great partner. Thanks MEC!



MEC supported our early work on open net cage salmon aquaculture, as our recognition of that threat was emerging.



Down at the Dock Riding the groundswell

Story and photos by Michelle Young

Over the spring GSA staff and volunteers attended major boat shows in Vancouver, Victoria and Nanaimo, where we distributed hundreds of copies of our *Guide to Green Boating* and spread the word about *Clean Marine BC* marinas and boating facilities. We also attended the Boating BC Association AGM and Harbour Authority Association of BC conference.

Now, as this year's boating season begins in earnest, what an amazing groundswell we are riding!

Our environmental best practices program, Clean Marine BC, is definitely experiencing a growth spurt. As we went to press, Okeover Harbour Authority in Sechelt Inlet was the latest facility to achieve its Clean Marine BC certification, while Stones Boatyard (Nanaimo) and the West Vancouver Yacht Club were the most recent facilities to enroll in the program.

Clean Marine BC has now surged to an amazing 26 members representing marinas, government wharves, yacht clubs and boatyards! Together they operate 33 facilities, 16 of which are certified, and another 17 on their way to certification.

If you're a boater, we hope you'll visit one of our Clean Marine BC partners' marinas soon, and encourage your own marina or yacht club to get involved. In the meantime, watch for GSA when you're down at the dock this summer, and we hope you will continue to ride this groundswell with us!



GSA Lifetime Member Louis Vallee, with Shelter Island Marina's Wendy Bunnett, at the Vancouver International Boat Show



Ian MacPherson and Sarah Corsie of Stones Boatyard, at the Nanaimo Boat Show.



West Vancouver Yacht Club is a CMBC member.

Industry support is invaluable for our Clean Marine BC program. We received an extremely helpful boost from the Boating BC Association when we were featured in their Spotlight video series, which was launched at their annual conference last fall. Entitled "Spotlight on Environment: Clean Marine BC", this 6 ½ minute video describes the process that marinas undergo when they enroll in the program and work towards certification, the support that GSA provides along the way, and some of the success stories so far. It's well worth watching: <https://GeorgiaStrait.org/marinas>.

At 25, we're needed more than ever

by Ken Coach

Laurie MacBride sighs when asked if she had originally thought the Georgia Strait Alliance would be around for 25 years. She says she had believed the problems they set out to fix in 1990 would all be resolved by now.

“But the truth is,” she says, “the need for the GSA has never been greater.”



Laurie MacBride, co-founder.

Laurie was a founding Board member of GSA (and later, our first Executive Director). She was there at the beginning, when a small group of people in Nanaimo realized there were a number of issues that posed serious threats to the Strait of Georgia and decided it was time to try to do something about it.



Save the Strait tour, 1990

To draw attention to the importance of the Strait, they organized a human powered marathon where people were encouraged to swim, sail or row across the Strait. The event was a huge success and drew attention to the need to protect the waterway, and the *Save Georgia Strait Alliance* was born (the name was shortened a few years later).

The next event was a landmark three-day conference in Nanaimo in February 1991. Called The State of the Strait, the televised event brought together dozens



State of the Strait Conference, 1991.

of groups and hundreds of individuals concerned that the rich and diverse life of the Strait was in danger of being destroyed.

What was remarkable, says Laurie, is that groups that had never worked together found a common cause. Local groups concerned about estuaries, boaters who used the Strait for recreation and workers concerned about long term jobs agreed that a healthy Strait was best for everyone. Unions representing pulp mill workers were concerned about their members' health and fishers were concerned about declining salmon stocks.

In the beginning, she says, the word alliance truly fit because GSA was made up of diverse organizations, with one goal: to protect and preserve Georgia Strait. It was Laurie who coined the phrase which we still use today, “Georgia Strait, where we live, work and play”.

As an alliance that included a broad range of interest groups, GSA earned respect. “Caring, collaborative and credible was our internal motto,” Laurie says, “We made sure what we were saying was factual and that gave us credibility.”

The State of the Strait conference had been a major undertaking but served as the genesis of GSA's programs and priorities over the next decade. It also helped



Cathy Booter teaching quadrate studies.

inspire new efforts such as Reach for Unbleached, which focused on changing the way pulp mills operate. GSA's intertidal quadrate studies grew out of the conference and provided valuable data used in environmental stewardship efforts around the Strait. A teacher's guide on the quadrate studies was also produced



Christianne Wilhelmson speaking out.

(the first of many educational resources) to help schools show kids the diversity of life along the shoreline.

GSA was an early campaigner against Victoria's dumping of raw sewage into the Strait. We also worked hard on the issue of fish farming beginning as early as 1992, and represented the environmental sector in the BC Salmon Aquaculture Review



Mike Richards and son Lindsay promoting our fish farm work.

in 1996-97. Our efforts over the years were critical in holding salmon farming to the levels they are today.

One of GSA's most successful initiatives has been our Green Boating work, including the very popular boater's guide to preventing pollution, and more recently, the *Clean Marine BC* program. Adapted from a similar program in Ontario, *Clean Marine BC* provides guidance and support for marinas on how to make sure they are operating in environmentally sound ways.

Comings and goings

Our thanks to UBC student **Wiley Wilkins**, who joined GSA as an Intern for the spring term, to help promote the Save the Salish Sea pledge and build the cross-border community of pledge-takers. Wiley is a third-year student in the Environmental Sustainable Geography program, and since he's originally from Seattle, he brought a natural cross-border perspective to the project.



We were sad to say goodbye to **Sebastian Merz**, who led our Waterfront Initiative Program up until the end of January, taking the project from just an idea to a lively and growing initiative. Sebastian left to become a Dialogue and Engagement Analyst in the Civic Engage Program at SFU's Centre for Dialogue, but stayed on with GSA to help with transition and to facilitate our April forum.

We are delighted to welcome **Michelle Gaudry** as our new Waterfront Initiative Lead. For six years, Michelle coordinated the environmental management of Burrard Inlet and the Fraser Estuary for the agency partnership, Burrard Inlet Environmental Action Program/ Fraser River Estuary Management Program, until the partnership closed its doors in 2013. Prior to that, she conducted First Nations engagement and stewardship coordination for several environmental non-profits. Michelle holds a BSc and Diploma in Forestry and is based in GSA's Vancouver office.



GSA Board Member, **Jacqueline McGuire**, is on a leave of absence, having just had a baby boy. We congratulate Jacqueline and her family and wish them all the best.

We're excited to welcome three new Board members. **Susan Miller** is a Certified Management Accountant and Manager of Finance and Administration at the University of Victoria, with more than 20 years of experience in corporate and public sector accounting. An avid sailor, she grew up in Vancouver and for the last 16 years has lived in Victoria.



Leslie Hoffman is Program Director for the non-profit learning centre, Hollyhock, and has a diverse professional history in content development, production, project management and marketing in the entertainment industry as well as the non-profit sector. Originally from California, Leslie now lives in Vancouver.



Jennifer Farr is a Chartered Accountant with the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia, where she provides analysis and oversight of costs to identify trends and information for strategic planning. She lives in Vancouver and spends time frequently with family members on Vancouver Island and the Discovery Islands.



You can learn more about these new directors, along with the other members of our Board, at: www.GeorgiaStrait.org/board

FROM PAGE 9

At 25...

Since 2008, GSA has offered eco-certification to BC marinas if they meet certain environmental standards and procedures. (See the latest update on page 8.)

GSA continues to work to protect Georgia Strait in a number of ways, including as an intervenor in the proposal to expand Kinder Morgan's TransMountain Pipeline. The project would threaten the Strait with an additional 400 tankers per year, carrying tar-like bitumen that would cause irreparable damage in the likely event of a spill.

Our latest project, the Waterfront Initiative, harkens back to our roots in drawing together diverse stakeholders—First Nations, municipal government, business, labour, recreational users and environmentalists—to talk about the various stresses on our shoreline and to seek collaborative solutions.

The work of the Georgia Strait Alliance has never been more important and, with your help, we can still be making a difference for the next 25 years.

GSA is proud to announce that over the coming year we will be partnering with Victoria-based brewery Lighthouse Brewing Company. So, keep your eyes open for fundraising promotions by Lighthouse in support of GSA's work and of course, enjoy some of Lighthouse's finest when you're at a GSA sponsored event. We're proud to partner with this local company because we believe in building strong relationships between charities and businesses with like-minded visions for our community and region. We're thrilled to be celebrating our 25th with Lighthouse!



It's party time—and you're invited!

Throughout 2015, Georgia Strait Alliance supporters around the Strait will be celebrating our 25th birthday. We want you to join the festivities! Celebrating GSA's birthday with others is a great way to show you care about the health of our marine environment and sustainability of our coastal communities—and to have fun at the same time. There are 3 easy ways to get involved:

1. Are you already planning an event with friends or family? Consider turning your birthday party, staff barbecue, family picnic, anniversary or block party into a celebration of the waters we all love by giving your party a "Celebrate the Strait" theme. Anything goes! GSA will provide a party toolkit with information and materials to encourage your friends to join in caring for our coastal waters, by becoming members of GSA.



Photo © Will Clayton, www.flickr.com/photos/spool32/5045502202/

2. Host a gathering that is all about Georgia Strait Alliance, our 25 years of success, and your personal commitment to a prosperous and resilient Strait. Again, anything goes in terms of the event—you supply the venue, the guests and the goodies, and GSA will supply the toolkit. If you have 15 or more guests, we will also do our best to provide a speaker or special guest (if you wish) who can share stories of our campaigns and accomplishments over the years and talk about our plans for the year ahead.

with friends, you'll be helping GSA to increase public awareness of ocean issues, build our membership, and raise funds needed to find solutions to the threats facing our marine environment and coastal communities. And you'll be having fun!

Want to learn more or get started? Just call our Nanaimo office at 250-753-3459 or email gsa@GeorgiaStrait.org. Watch our website, e-news and Strait Talk for updates as people Celebrate the Strait all year. Hope to see you there!

3. Do you have a vibrant social media network? Maybe you would like to invite your friends to a virtual birthday party. Peer-to-peer fundraising raises millions of dollars for Canadian charities each year. We can make it easy for you to manage a personalized fundraising campaign in support of GSA through your network. Just ask us how!

By sharing your love of our waters and Celebrating the Strait

Thanks to some of our recent funders and partners...



In business for over 70 years, **G&F Financial Group** is a full-service and progressive Credit Union with roots deep in the West Coast. The Credit Union proudly provides everyday banking services to close to 28,000 members, but its passion lies in educating and empowering others to plan, save, borrow, protect, and dream bigger.



Located in False Creek, **Feathercraft** has been designing and building high quality folding kayaks for decades, helping people to explore and appreciate Canada's west coast. The company works hard to make its practices sustainable and undertakes monitoring and stewardship projects to help preserve and regenerate the natural world.



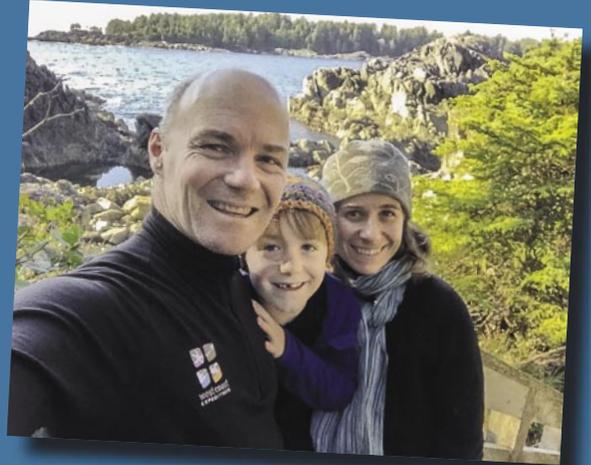
For over 40 years, **the Georgia Straight**—Canada's largest urban weekly—has been an integral part of the active urban West Coast lifestyle, delivering an award-winning editorial package of features, articles, news, reviews and comprehensive listings of entertainment activities and special events.

ALSO... Boating BC Association, Bullitt Foundation, Eden Conservation Trust, Global Greengrants Fund, Patagonia, Province of British Columbia, Real Estate Foundation of BC, RBC Blue Water Project, Schad Foundation, Sitka Foundation

We are so thankful for the support of all our MEMBERS AND DONORS.

Your donations make the work shared in this newsletter possible. Here is how one of long-time donors (*former GSA President and Lifetime Member David Pinel*) explains why he and his family support GSA...

“GSA finds practical, tangible and local solutions informed by a global perspective. They are not everything to everyone—which is a strength—and by being on the ground in communities, they are successful. Their success is important to our family, as our work and lives are connected to a healthy coast. We are raising our son—who in his first 7 years has spent more than 70 weeks camping on the west coast—with the values that we share with GSA. It’s a no-brainer to support GSA as best we can.”



David Pinel and Caroline Fisher (with son Morgan Fisher Pinel) are former GSA Directors, as well as owners of West Coast Expeditions and Faculty at North Island College

If you have a message and photo of your own to share, please get in touch at gsa@GeorgiaStrait.org

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. Become a **Change Maker** and we can achieve real protection for all who call our waters home.

TO DONATE TODAY, call 250-753-3459 or email gsa@GeorgiaStrait.org or donate through our secure online form at www.GeorgiaStrait.org/donate