



Georgia Strait Alliance

IMPACT REPORT

2023-2024

We acknowledge that the lands where we do our work is the traditional and unceded territories of many Nations, and now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.



A message from the *board chair*

As many of you know, GSA is embarking on an exciting new chapter with the implementation of our strategic plan that integrates and prioritizes environmental justice into our work. This plan involves a strategic realignment of our capacity, focusing our efforts where they are most needed. We have redefined some roles within our organization and welcomed new talent to our team. These changes are designed to enhance our ability to mobilize and support collective action to protect the Salish Sea region and communities.

A notable transition involves our longtime Executive Director, Christianne Wilhelmson, who has moved into a new phase of her career after more than 22 years of dedicated service to our organization. Christianne's leadership has been instrumental in guiding GSA to where it is today, and we extend our deepest gratitude for her unwavering commitment and visionary stewardship.

As we move forward, we are also excited to welcome several new directors to our Board. Each one brings a wealth of experience and fresh perspectives. Their contributions will be vital as we navigate this transformative period and continue to drive our mission forward.

Looking ahead, our focus remains steadfast on protecting the Salish Sea watershed. **We invite you to join us in continuing to support GSA's crucial work as we:**

- **Take action against unjust and harmful industrial projects** that threaten the health of the Salish Sea, the Fraser River and the endangered orca population, leveraging laws like the Species at Risk Act to hold the government accountable.
- **Play an integral role in the development of governmental commitments to the marine ecosystem**, like the recently published 20-year Coastal Marine Strategy and the emerging Ocean Noise Strategy.
- **Develop a new Marine Planning program** to enhance community involvement in conservation.
- **Push for robust legislation to address derelict vessels** and their harmful impacts.
- **Connect more people to the Salish Sea**, knowing that we are always stronger together.

Your continued support is vital as we work together to protect and preserve the Salish Sea and its invaluable ecosystems. Our collective efforts make a difference – and together we'll rise to the challenges ahead.

Thank you for your ongoing trust and commitment,

~Krisitin Street



Our Mission

Grounded in environmental justice, we mobilize and support collective action to protect the Salish Sea region.

At GSA, we focus on three interconnected pillars to achieve our mission:

COMMUNITY POWER

We build and activate community power through relationship development and capacity building.

SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION

We foster systems transformation by advocating for community-led initiatives.

PEOPLE & PLACE

We connect people with place through engagement and awareness.

Our Vision

A Salish Sea teeming with life where thriving and just communities live in balance with the environment.

Our Values

Collaboration
Caring
Courage
Accountability
Interconnectedness



Activating COMMUNITY POWER

Clean Marine BC

We're proud to have [44 certified facilities](#) that are committed to reducing marine pollution from their operations and to helping recreational boaters do the same. As part of this program, we're advocating for more mobile pump-outs, particularly for seasonal high-traffic areas, such as Desolation Sound.

We overhauled our online and search-friendly inventory of [sewage pump-outs](#) across the region, giving all recreational boaters a resource that supports them keeping sewage from entering local waterways. Included are whether the facilities are public, self-serve or by appointment, the hours of operation, the dock location, the cost, and other tips for using the service at each location.

At the national level, we mobilized support for [Bill C-344](#) to strengthen the **Wrecked, Abandoned, or Hazardous Vessels Act** into a cross-jurisdictional solution that prioritizes local and Indigenous knowledge and labour in the removal and safe dismantling of derelict vessels.



Spill Training

For the first time since the pandemic, participants in this year's spill training were able to experience hands-on scenarios, including a mock spill clean up and boom deployment on the docks!

44

CMBC eco-certified facilities

1166

People supported Bill C-344

23

People participated in our CMBC Spill Training



996

People signed our petition for emergency action on extreme heat

Extreme Heat Project

Through this initiative, we did **deep canvassing in neighbourhoods impacted by extreme heat in Metro Vancouver**. We focused on engaging authentically with people, many of whom were low-income, about the impact of extreme heat on their lives, recognizing that details like these are scarce.

A commonality that emerged in speaking with hundreds of people was the desire to connect and share their personal experiences with climate change. People frequently cited an increasing awareness of environmental health and climate policy, drawing on the reality that climate change can have dramatic impacts on daily life.

This initiative was part of our emerging focus on environmental justice, and helped to solidify our commitment to intersectional climate justice. We have integrated the data and our learnings from this project into our ongoing work, continuing to push for an ever deepening understanding of the complexities of a healthy and thriving Salish Sea.

Supporting Indigenous & Community-Led Goals

We continued to work alongside Cowichan Tribes' Lulumexun Department, the branch of government dedicated to lands and self-governance, on a youth-focussed initiative that will contribute to how the Nation governs their marine territory.

We joined a special **Movie Night for a screening of Keepers of the Land**, in company with Lulumexun's S-hwuhwa'us Thi'lut Kw'atl'kwa (Thunderbird Protecting the Ocean) and Kitasoo Xai'xais Stewardship Team. This short film took viewers into the heart of B.C.'s Great Bear Rainforest, where the Kitasoo Xai'xais Nation is reclaiming the power they have held since time immemorial.



Fostering SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION



ROBERTS BANK Terminal 2 Project

We upped the ante of our opposition to this harmful project by initiating legal action against the federal government. Through our legal representation Ecojustice, and alongside three other organizations, we prepared to argue that the approval is unlawful because a project cannot be deemed “justified” under environmental assessment legislation when it is contrary to the Species at Risk Act.

We also made new alliances with Birds Canada and Wilderness Committee, as well as more than 10 other organizations, and also with the International Longshore and Warehouse Union of Canada (ILWU) and the BC General Employees’ Union (BCGEU). Collectively, we agree that the loss of family-supporting jobs to complete automation in the new terminal and the toll on species-at-risk, including southern resident orcas and wild Pacific salmon, are too great.

Situated on the largest estuary on North America’s Pacific coast, this project represents the intentional acceleration of biodiversity loss through land- and sea-use changes, and it will mean the impacts of climate change and extreme weather are going to be increasingly felt by communities around the Salish Sea.

2,659

People mobilized to take our action to oppose the approval of the RBT2 expansion project

“The devastating approval of the RBT2 expansion project makes the fear many of us have of seeing the Southern Resident orcas and wild Pacific salmon go functionally extinct during our lifetimes so much more real.”

~ Lucero González Ruiz | Press conference: [Roberts Bank Terminal 2 opposition demands answers from governments on expansion](#)





FISH FARMS

Represented by Ecojustice, we were intervenors in federal court in support of cleaner and healthier waters for wild Pacific salmon. **We were intervenors three times in the same case**, which resulted in a major victory: a permanent end to the 15 harmful open-net pen fish farms in Discovery Islands, a migration route for juvenile salmon.

At GSA, we're savouring these moments after such a long journey, while we continue to work in solidarity with hundreds of First Nations and organizations calling for all open-net fish farms to be removed from B.C. waters, and we're advocating for a plan that supports the affected communities with new economic opportunities, including closed containment aquaculture jobs and a strong wild salmon economy.

“We are eager to see the federal government meaningfully support coastal and Indigenous communities as they navigate this transition away from open-net salmon farming in the area, and manage the uncertainty about this industry’s future in the rest of the waters off the B.C. coast.”

~ Lucero González Ruiz | Media statement: [GSA responds to removal of Discovery Islands fish farms](#)

In the News

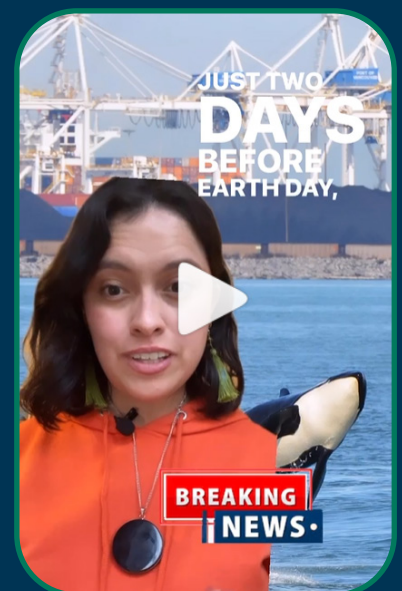
GSA appeared 35 times in the national and B.C. news media during this fiscal year. Spokespeople commented on issues that ranged from whales and marine toxins due to wildfires (from the production and burning of fossil fuels) to abandoned vessels.



On Socials

Engagement on some of our best-performing social media posts was 10 times higher than the industry average! Our most engaging content this year reached more than 12,400 people, with whom we shared the news that the federal government approved the Roberts Bank Terminal 2 project and that we were taking action to fight it.

We're on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) & [Twitter](#) @GeorgiaStraitBC



Connecting PEOPLE WITH PLACE



Year of the Salish Sea

We partnered with a group of youths dedicated to decreasing jurisdictional silos for real institutional and cultural change to protect the Salish Sea in a “Year of the Salish Sea” event at the Vancouver Public Library.

Parks Canada Online Collaboration

We collaborated on the [Superpod Blog](#), where we socialized information on the regulations to protect southern resident orcas and on the importance of keeping toxic chemicals out of waterways.

Vancouver International Boat Show

We presented a seminar that provided attendees with insights and tips for safe and clean boating, equipped 150 boaters with Clean Boating Kits and shared another 200 of our Guides to Green Boating – and it was with the support of dedicated volunteers that we were able to accomplish all this!



Dock Walking

We refocused on this people-powered initiative that was on hold over the pandemic. We had hundreds of conversations with recreational boaters about the prevention of small fuel spills, whale watching rules, preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species, and pump out locations, all while connecting with communities over a shared love of being on the water.

308 Clean Boater Survey participants

519 Clean Boater Kits shared with recreational boaters



Fundraising HIGHLIGHTS

Funding support comes in many forms. Every year, we look to diversify and strengthen how we do our fundraising. A few successful initiatives during the fiscal year included:

End-of-Year Matching Campaign

With the generous support of a long-term donor - who matched 288 donations - we raised \$34,956 to protect these local waters.

WILL POWER

In our second year of partnering on the Will Power campaign, GSA supporters who considered us in their estate planning helped us grow to become stronger advocates for the Salish Sea.

Find out about the ways you can give



Explore the Salish Sea Prize Raffle

Thanks to the generosity of donors and local businesses, we raised nearly \$24,000 to support GSA's work to protect marine habitat and endangered species like Southern Resident orcas and wild salmon.

Grand Prize Winner

At 85-years-young, Betty is grateful to enjoy being on the water in her sea kayak, donated by Valhalla Pure Outfitters. She still can't quite believe she won such a fabulous prize!



454

Individual supporters
donated \$216,170

337

Monthly supporters
donated \$85,333

33

Businesses, organizations
& family foundations
donated \$129,943

Thank You

Your decision to support our collective efforts to protect the Salish Sea and South Coast communities – as funders, donors, volunteers, allies or partners – guides us every day. Thank you for believing in our vision and being an important part of our success.

Funders

Andrews Planet and People Fund - held at Vancouver Foundation, BC Provincial Employees Community Services Fund, Behringer Family Foundation - held at the Vancouver Foundation, Bullitt Foundation, Canada Helps, Clif Family Foundation, Felicity Fund - held at Vancouver Foundation, French Rowe Charitable Gift Fund, Gift Funds Canada - Virginia Smith, Glasswaters Foundation, Hummingbird Foundation, Jac and Jon Legacy Fund - held at the Vancouver Foundation, McLean Foundation, Pew Charitable Trusts, Richard and Winnifred Bocking Family Fund - held at Victoria Foundation, Stewart Fund - held at Vancouver Foundation, Vancouver Foundation, Victoria Foundation.

Government

Community Gaming Grants Branch - Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Cowichan Tribes, Canada Summer Jobs - Service Canada.

Corporations

Nature's Path Organic Foods & Tru Earth

Local Organizations & Businesses

Baker & Grigg, Boldt Communications Inc (monthly supporter), Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, C-Tow Marine Assistance, Conservation Visuals Inc, Deep Cove Kayak, Denman Island Chocolate Ltd, Dolphin Insurance Services Inc, Dr. Gordon Horner Inc. (monthly supporter), Dr. Shannon L. Lockhart Inc, Earnest Ice Cream (monthly supporter), Electronic Arts, Iona Systems Ltd.

In-kind

Art By DI, BC Ferry Corporation, Cardero's, Deep Cove Kayak, Earnest Ice Cream, Ecologist, Fanny Bay Oyster Bar & Shellfish Market, Natasha Aruliah, New/Mode, Patagonia Vancouver, Salish Sea Botanicals, Scandinave Spa Whistler, Sustainable Elements, The Westin Bayshore Vancouver, Tigh-Na-Mara Resort, Tofino Towel, Tru Earth, Valhalla Pure Outfitters.

21

volunteers gave 244 hours of time

Volunteers

Terry Banting, Agathe Bernard, Sophia Blanchard, David Corman, Loraine Corman, Jamie Culpo, Angharad Davies, Mariana De Zubiria, Christopher Di Marco, Sheldon Fernandes, Krystle Goddard, Sara Goncalves, Juan Gonzalez, Genevieve Hurd, Kevin Lindsay, Brian Robertson, Gabrielle Savage, Mairin Shields Brown, Laurel C.B., Stranaghan, Clive Strange, Kristin Street.



Donors

Thank you to our community of donors, who are committed to a future where the Salish Sea and all those who live here are healthy and thriving.

[OUR COMPLETE DONOR LIST](#) 

OUR TEAM

Staff & Contractors

Rebecca Adams, Graphics & Web Development

Gil Aguilar, Community Organizer (until November 30, 2023)

Jacob Banting (from April 11, 2023)

Cathy Booler, Data & Digital Systems Manager

Lucero González Ruiz, Biodiversity Campaigner

Ananda Korchynski, Social Media Coordinator

Allison Murray, Communications Associate

Cheryl Onciul, Director of Development (until July 6, 2023)

David Palmer (from October 23, 2023)

Andrew Radzik, Energy Campaigner (until October 5, 2023)

Alaya Seoudy, Data & Donor Services Assistant

Dana Taylor, Community Organizer (until November 30, 2023)

Christianne Wilhelmson, Executive Director (until April 30, 2024)

Michelle Young, Director of Finance/Clean Marine BC Coordinator

Seasonal Staff

We hired summer youth with the support of Canada Summer Jobs funding:

Yasser Sanobar, June 12 – August 6, 2023

Megan Raitt, June 12 – August 6, 2023

Shubhdeep Gill, June 12 – August 6, 2023

Byron Lee, June 12 – August 6, 2023

Zoe Taylor, June 19 – August 13, 2023

Board of Directors

Kristin Street, Chair

Sheldon Fernandes, Treasurer

Angharad Davies

Ilesha Maharaj (from March 19, 2024)

Siobhan Powlowski (from September 20, 2023)

Nadine Ryan (from March 19, 2024)

Gabrielle Savage (from September 20, 2023)

Mairin Shields-Brown (from September 20, 2023)

Jennifer Thornton (from March 19, 2024)

Duncan Wlodarczak

Advisory Council

John Cashore

Dr. Larry Dill (until March 1, 2024)

Dr. Robert Elner

(Dr.) Chief Robert Joseph

Dr. Donald McQueen

Suzanne Siemens

Mike Waites (until Oct 30, 2023)

Douglas White III Kwalasultan

MEET OUR TEAM 

The offices of Georgia Strait Alliance are located on the unceded territories of the x̱w̱məθḵw̱əy̱əm, Sḵwx̱ wú7mesh and seḻíḻw̱iḻh Nations, also known as Vancouver, and of the Snuneymuxw Nation, also known as Nanaimo.

Our staff and volunteers also work on the unceded territories of many other Coast Salish Nations.

2023-2024

Financial HIGHLIGHTS

Year ended March 31, 2024

Financial Position as of March 31, 2024

Current Assets

\$839,548

Capital Assets

6,805

Payables & Accruals

(60,901)

Deferred Contributions

(584,937)

NET ASSETS

\$200,515

In-Kind Contributions

In addition to the revenue above, GSA received an estimated value of \$45,772 in donated goods and services and \$9,682 in volunteer time during the year ended March 31, 2024 for a total of \$55,454.

REVENUES: **\$958,470**

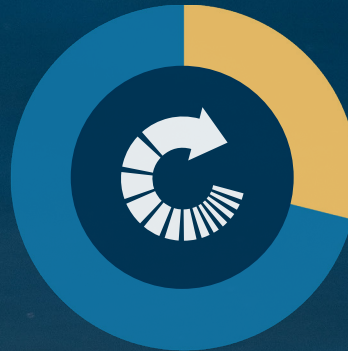


60% Grants
\$581,376

32% Donations
\$302,077

8% Events, investment earnings & other
\$75,017

EXPENSES: **\$989,083**



71% Programs
\$700,400

29% Administration & fundraising
\$285,033

0% Amortization
\$3,650

Excess of expenses over revenues for the year \$(30,613)

This report is a summary only and not intended to reflect the complete financial status of Georgia Strait Alliance. Members who wish to receive the full financial statements should contact our office at 250-753-3459.



Impact Report © Georgia Strait Alliance 2024

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