

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



A message from the Executive Director

This year marks 35 years since a group of passionate citizens in Nanaimo founded Georgia Strait

Alliance. It's a powerful legacy to inherit—and one I carry with pride and humility, following in the footsteps of an inspiring leader, Christianne Wilhelmson, who helped build a strong and impactful organization.

Today, the spirit of GSA's early leaders lives on in a time of renewal—where we honour our legacy while rising to meet the urgent challenges facing the Salish Sea. We're building on the strength of our core programs, such as expanding the reach of Clean Marine BC to help more boaters and marinas reduce their environmental impact. We remain steadfast in our commitment to the iconic Southern Resident killer whales, using their powerful story to connect people, drive conservation, and spark lasting change.

Through our advocacy for protecting 30% of lands and waters by 2030, we champion effective marine planning.

In deep partnership with Indigenous communities, we advocate for the protection of marine ecosystem health, uphold access to traditional foods, and amplify Indigenous knowledge systems. At the same time, we are growing our work to support Resilient Coastal Communities—raising awareness and readiness for sea level rise, extreme weather, and ecosystem change.

Rooted in our past, our vision reaches boldly toward the future. Thank you for being part of this journey and for making it all possible! Every step we've taken at GSA has been powered by people like you—whether you're just joining us or have stood with us from the start. Through your care and commitment, you are helping to write the next chapter of GSA and of the Salish Sea. The road ahead may be challenging, but together, grounded in shared purpose, we can protect what matters most.

A message from the Board Chair

This year has been one of transition and momentum. We were fortunate to have Janet Moore step in as interim Executive Director, skillfully guiding us forward after Christianne Wilhelmson's departure following many wonderful years of leadership. We were also thrilled to welcome Beatrice Frank as our new Executive Director. Her passion and experience in environmental conservation is already a strong match for our mission. While we've faced both growth and challenges during a time of uncertainty, we're confident in our direction. The board continues to grow and deepen its focus on supporting the organization's development. I'm deeply grateful to everyone who contributes to GSA—we truly couldn't do this without you.



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

SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION

We foster systems transformation by advocating for communityled initiatives. We connect people with place through engagement and awareness.



SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS & COMMUNITY-LED GOALS

Cowichan Tribes youth-led Marine Forum

GSA is honoured to continue building a meaningful partnership with Cowichan Tribes. We worked closely with the Lulumexun Department to co-host an intergenerational Marine Governance Forum in the fall of 2024. The Forum, which included a welcome feast, hatchery tour, canoe pulling, clam garden workshop, Indigenous market, and movie night, created accessible, culturally grounded spaces for dialogue and celebration on marine stewardship.

The Forum emphasized:

- Hwial'asmut tu Tumuhw (taking care of the Earth)
- food sovereignty
- marine stewardship
- intergenerational learning

The Forum was envisioned through a youth-centered planning process,

including a visioning session with Quw'utsun youth and the hiring of four local youth as Marine Forum Designers. Their leadership shaped every aspect of the event.

Youth voiced priorities such as:

- restoring traditional language (Hul'q'umi'num)
- participating in marine guardian programs
- addressing pollution threats to shellfish harvesting areas—linking marine health to housing and food security

This journey marks only the beginning of a partnership, and GSA is deeply grateful to Cowichan Tribes for the opportunity to learn and work alongside them. We look forward to continuing this relationship in friendship, solidarity, and respect in 2025 and beyond.



MARINE PLANNING

One of the very first things we were involved in was leading an in-person gathering in Sidney with CPAWS-BC. We engaged local conservation groups around the Gulf Islands in discussions about the proposed Southern Strait of Georgia National Marine Conservation Area Reserve, specifically where it's at in the process of government to government engagement with Indigenous Nations, and what role we play in this important process.

Coastal Marine Strategy

We remained engaged in the implementation of British Columbia's first-ever *Coastal Marine Strategy*, co-developed with many First Nations. While the Strategy outlines a strong 20-year vision, it lacks legislative enforcement—something we continue to advocate for.

To strengthen public participation, we led and partnered on these community events:

- Alongside CPAWS-BC, we held an education and listening session on Galiano Island to discuss marine conservation and community-focused priorities.
- In Victoria, we hosted an event featuring a screening of Shared Waters, Shared Crisis, followed by a panel with David Dick (WSÁNEĆ Marine Guardian program Senior Manager) and Kyle Armstrong (Peninsula Streams Society's Executive Director).
- Together with West Coast Environmental Law and CPAWS-BC, we met with local officials in Langford and Saanich to advocate for municipal support of the Coastal Marine Strategy—unanimously endorsed in both communities. These endorsements will now move forward to the Union of BC Municipalities to help advance the Strategy's initiatives.

GSA is committed to building a quieter, healthier, and more resilient Salish Sea—one that is protected by strong policy, guided by science, and shaped by the voices of coastal communities.



Our engagement focuses on meaningful dialogue marine protection, Indigenous leadership, and community-based action.



Ocean Noise Strategy We welcomed the federal government's long-awaited Ocean Noise Strategy, designed to guide a Federal Action Plan post-2025. To explore its implications, we hosted a public webinar featuring marine experts Dr. Kieran Cox, Katherine Fedoroff, and whale educator Fred DeNisco (i.e. "Orca Man").

CLEAN MARINE BC

The eco-certification program has gone paperless!

We launched our digital platform for certified facilities, which provides member log-ins to update profiles, submit self assessment for the audit process, and—looking ahead—will provide access to shared resources and a member forum to connect.

We will be able to use this platform to track key metrics over time, such as reductions in waste, toxic chemicals, and energy use as well as other important environmental measures, including initiatives like eelgrass meadow restoration.

Clean Marine BC is an innovative, voluntary eco-certification program

that recognizes marinas, boatyards, and other boating facilities for their environmental best practices. There is a lot of good work going on in the boating world, and we want to ensure that we can celebrate it. We keep an updated map of all certified marinas, as well as pump out stations.







MAKING WAVES FOR THE SOUTHERN RESIDENTS

With over 5,000 voices we stood strong for an iconic species facing extinction.

This year marked a difficult chapter in our ongoing fight to protect the endangered SRKWs. With our legal counsel at Ecojustice and our allies, we made a compelling case to the federal Cabinet: they must give Southern Resident killer whales a lifeline by issuing an Emergency Order—a legal tool that allows the government to enact immediate protections for this endangered population of just 73 individuals.

Cabinet once again refused to issue the Emergency Order under the Species at Risk Act, opting instead for incremental measures that fall far short of the urgent action needed.

To push efforts further, we partnered in convening an independent panel of 31 scientists from Canada, the U.S., and Europe, to assess the status of SRKWs. The multi-day session resulted in a detailed recovery roadmap based on current threats and the effectiveness of recent measures.

While this is a setback and the measures proposed are not enough, it's no reason to give up—on the contrary, it strengthens our resolve. **GSA will continue to stand fiercely for the survival and recovery of SRKW** and continue to advance the government commitment towards the protection of this endangered species.

The government's proposed measures—which remain subject to consultation and change—include:

- increasing approach distances to 1,000 metres
- setting interim noise objectives
- adjusting salmon fishing closures
- phasing out washwater in critical habitat

"It is 'now or never' for these orcas, an apex predator that maintains the health of marine ecosystems, and from which a myriad of other living beings, including Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, are tied to and greatly rely on. Ottawa must immediately implement new protections – a much-needed lifeline to Southern Resident orcas' survival."

~ Beatrice Frank | Press statement: Federal Government admits Southern Residents Killer Whales face imminent threat to survival



5,000+

People mobilized to take our action for an Emergancey Order for Southern Resident killer whales

Throughout it all, our community stood strong. This was the biggest call to action in our last five years, with over 5000 letters sent to the government, as well as many phone calls and handwritten letters, all emphasizing how important this was to get right.

Our advocacy continues—and thanks to your ongoing support, so does our unwavering commitment to protecting this species that so powerfully defines our identity as British Columbians.

ROBERTS BANK TERMINAL 2 PROJECT

We took the federal government to court to challenge its approval of the \$3.5-billion Roberts Bank Terminal 2 expansion in Delta.

Represented by Ecojustice, we argued that this project cannot be deemed "justified" under environmental assessment legislation when it contradicts another statute—namely, the Species at Risk Act.

This massive port expansion significantly increases risks to the orcas, heightening the likelihood of vessel strikes, raising underwater noise levels that interfere with their communication and feeding, and permanently altering their critical habitat. These changes will also dramatically threaten Chinook salmon, the whales' primary food source.

Large-scale industrial projects like this are major contributors to biodiversity loss, especially in sensitive marine and estuarine environments.



By going to court, we aimed to uphold legal protections for species at risk and push back against short-sighted development that sacrifices ecological health for economic expansion.

Unfortunately, while the judge agreed that the project will have significant detrimental impacts on Southern Residents, our arguments grounded in the *Species At Risk Act* did not allow us to overturn the decision.

Currently, RBT2 is still in the permit approval phase and we're working alongside our allies behind the scenes to ensure all necessary safeguards are adhered to.



FISH FARMS

We continued our longstanding advocacy for the removal of open-net pen salmon farms from BC waters, with a major focus on the Discovery Islands.

Despite multiple federal decisions to permanently close fish farms in this critical wild salmon migratory route, industry giant Mowi launched yet another legal challenge. This ongoing resistance from industry undermines hard-won progress and delays the necessary shift to land-based, closed-containment aquaculture.

In response, we once again engaged our legal partners at Ecojustice and joined forces with our allies as

intervenors to defend the closures in court for the third time.

Meanwhile, the federal government's long-awaited Draft Transition Plan—released in September 2024—raises serious concerns. The plan lacks a clear definition of closed containment, includes loopholes for in-water and hybrid systems, and extends the phase-out of open-net pens to 2029. It also neglects support for affected workers.

Yet hope remains. **GSA** is pushing hard to ensure this commitment is fulfilled using a just transition by June 2029—and that it results in a complete, enforceable ban on all in-water salmon farms.

DERELICT VESSELS

On the policy front, Bill C-344, which proposes a national strategy to remove abandoned vessels, awaited debate in Parliament. Our Clean Marine BC

Coordinator, Jacob Banting, participated in a Parliamentary study as an expert witness before the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans.

Jacob highlighted the serious impacts of derelict vessels on marine biodiversity, food security, and Indigenous food sovereignty. He stressed the need for collaborative, community-driven solutions that address jurisdictional gaps, such as vessel registration and licensing challenges.





WONDERS OF THE SALISH SEA

We proudly became the official partner of the Wonders of the Salish Sea Speaker Series—an engaging, multiweek online event exploring the biodiversity, geology, and ecosystems of the Salish Sea. Through a series of online talks, this incredible event covered everything from plankton and sharks to estuaries and Indigenous stewardship. GSA helped with planning, support, and promotion, and will take a more active role in 2025 and beyond.

In addition to the virtual sessions, GSA co-hosted these two in-person field trips:

- guided birding walk at šx^w+iəm/Brunswick Point during the Western Sandpiper migration
- shoreline restoration walk at New Brighton Park in Vancouver

These events brought the wonders of the Salish Sea to life and deepened public awareness of coastal restoration and marine conservation.

Grief, love, & joy webinar

We hosted a powerful webinar with Dr. Barbara J. King. She shared compelling research and stories highlighting how animals experience grief, joy, love, and connection. This timely event followed emotional sightings of the Southern Residents, including L-pod's return to Penn Cove after almost half a century and Tahlequah's renewed journey of grief and loss. Attendees explored the ethics of recognizing animal emotions and how deepening our understanding of more-than-human sentience can reshape conservation and our relationship with the natural world.





GSA IN COMMUNITY

We deepened our presence in communities across the region through events that celebrated marine conservation, resiliency, and climate action by:

- Co-hosting an environment-themed provincial election town hall in Sidney with CPAWS-BC
- Leading nature-based activities, including guided bird walks with Special Bird Service and Vancouver Queer Birders—groups dedicated to making nature more inclusive and accessible—to highlight the threat that industrial projects will have on Western Sandpiper and other shorebirds
- Participating in the Vancouver Climate Strike
- Joining celebrations for the launch of BC's Coastal Marine Strategy
- Leading land-based whale watching at Whytecliff
 Park during Orca Action Month
- Co-hosting salmon-focused walks in SELEK TEL (Goldstream Park) and Terra Nova Rural Park, highlighting the ecological and cultural significance of salmon and estuarine health

We also met supporters and built new relationships at events like the Cowichan Tribes Indigenous Market, Blackberry Festival in qathet Region, and Hoy Creek Hatchery's Salmon Come Home in the lower mainland.



2,498

New supporters

Joined GSA through our various actions, events and outreach!

BOATER OUTREACH & DOCK WALKING

GSA's Dock Walker, Megan Raitt, engaged with hundreds of recreational boaters across the Lower Mainland as part of our Clean Marine BC program.

Through outreach at marinas and waterfront events, Megan promoted pollution prevention and cleaner boating practices. She shared key information with boaters—particularly those new to the water—on how to avoid over-fuelling, choosing non-toxic cleaning products, and accessing mobile pump-out services. Megan also provided Clean Boater Kits to five volunteer dockwalkers, helping to expand distribution across Southern Vancouver Island. Bowser, and Vancouver.

As part of this work, we surveyed 200 boaters to better understand boating behaviors and attitudes toward clean boating.

Encouragingly, 92% of respondents said they care deeply about minimizing their environmental impact, and most were eager to learn more.

These insights, among many others, are helping shape future outreach and strengthen Clean Marine BC's impact.



"Change begins with small, consistent actions and every conversation, every kit handed out, and every survey contributes to a larger goal of preserving our natural environment." ~Megan Raitt

Clean Boater Survey participants

Clean Boater Kits shared with recreational boaters



We also participated in the Vancouver International Boat Show, where we engaged with hundreds of boaters and promoted our programs through a full week of tabling and two speaker series presentations.

In addition, we co-hosted a Transboundary Clean Boating webinar with Friends of the San Juans, which brought together over 20 engaged participants and created an opportunity to share cross-border strategies for sustainable boating.



Fundraising isn't easy for grassroots environmental non-profits like GSA. That's why we feel so fortunate that over 1,000 individuals, including over 300 monthly donors, are ready to rally behind our mission to protect the health of the Salish Sea.

While many of you have supported our work for years, or even decades, we were also honoured to welcome over 300 new donors to the Alliance!

It's clear there's a lot of people out there who care about this incredible region, and we thank you for sticking with us as we seek to address the growing challenges facing the Salish Sea.

It was especially heartwarming to receive so much support for **our end-of-year campaign in December—raising \$78,455 from 390 supporters**, including our generous matching donor who doubled your donations up to \$35,000.

EXPLORE THE SALISH SEA PRIZE RAFFLE

Our 2024 Explore the Salish Sea Raffle raised almost \$14,000 to protect marine habitat and endangered species, including SRKW and wild salmon. Thanks to the generosity of local businesses, who gifted so many incredible prizes, and everyone who purchased a ticket!

FROM OYSTERS TO ORCAS

In February, our biggest 'From Oysters to Orcas' fundraiser to date brought together an incredible community of supporters.

With over 70 guests in attendance, plus staff and volunteers, we raised \$7,300.

Thanks to the generous team at Fanny Bay Oysters, attendees enjoyed a mouthwatering selection of canapés made from the freshest local seafood while mingling with other individuals who share a passion for thriving and just coastal waters.

A highlight of the evening was the thoughtprovoking talk by special guests from the Tsleil-Waututh Nation. Michelle George, a Tsleil-Waututh Nation Cultural and Technical Specialist, and Anuradha Rao, a Senior Environmental Specialist focusing on marine ecosystems, shared their ongoing efforts to restore the ecological integrity of səlilwət (Burrard Inlet).





Climate change is leading to more extreme weather events and the Salish Sea is increasingly becoming the last port of call for harmful fossil fuel pipelines, exponentially increasing tanker traffic and putting marine wildlife and coastal communities at risk.

It's clear that, more than ever, we need to work together to protect the Salish Sea from further degradation.

In the coming years, and in line with our three main strategic plan pillars, we will be focusing on these five areas of work.

As we look ahead to our next 35 years, GSA remains rooted in its legacy while moving boldly forward—leading impactful initiatives to protect the Salish Sea through collective action, advocacy, education, and a steadfast presence in the communities we serve - thank you for being part of this community with us!



Marine Contaminants & Governance

braids together our broader work on government strategies and legislation for marine protection with on the ground work reducing pollution from boaters, marinas, and marine shipping. Included in this is addressing derelict vessels and ocean noise pollution.



Resilient Coastal Communities supports coastal communities to adapt, withstand, and recover from environmental, economic, and social challenges related to climate change, sea level rise, extreme weather, and ecosystem degradation. The goal is to build climate-ready communities rooted in environmental justice.



Indigenous Food Sovereignty connects habitat conservation and Indigenous-led conservation, and the importance of healthy waters for food security. It centers Indigenous knowledge, justice, access to food, and the interconnectedness of this with conservation.



Orca Action ties together our legacy work on habitat, biodiversity, and species protection. It seeks new and meaningful ways to engage the public with this iconic keystone species, inspiring strong conservation action and legislative support to protect the Salish Sea ecosystem.



30 X 30 aims to hold governments accountable to the goal of protecting 30% of land and water by 2030. It connects all our education, engagement, and advocacy work together, promoting Indigenous-led conservation, biodiversity protection, and nature-based climate solutions.



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, Charlie and Theresa Walters Charitable Fund at Schwab Charitable, Dennis and Kathy Meakin Family Foundation, Dr. Ann Worth Charitable Foundation, Endswell Foundation, Felicity Fund - held at Vancouver Foundation, Georgia Strait Alliance Endowment Fund - held at Vancouver Foundation, Glasswaters Foundation, Global Greengrants Fund, Hummingbird Foundation, Jac and Jon Legacy Fund - held at the Vancouver Foundation, Joan Nyblad Fund - held at Vancouver Foundation, Lillian and Ross Davidson Fund - held at Vancouver Foundation, Marion Pearson and Jim Orr Fund - held at Vancouver Foundation, Nature Canada, Pacific Coast Congress of Harbormasters and Port Managers Inc., Pew Charitable Trusts, Richard and Winnifred Bocking Family Fund - held at Victoria Foundation, Ruby Fund - held at Vancouver Foundation, Sitka Foundation, Small Potatoes Fund held at Vancouver Foundation, Stewart Fund - held at Vancouver Foundation, The Frank and Sandra Low-Beer Memorial Fund.

Government

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

Corporations

TELUS Communications Inc.

Local Organizations & Businesses

Big Sun Beach Shop, Boldt Communications Inc. (monthly supporter), Clariti Cloud Inc., Conservation Visuals Inc., C-Tow Marine Assistance, Daystar Market, Deep Cove Kayak and Deep Cove Outdoors, Denman Island Chocolate Ltd, Dolphin Insurance Services Inc, Dr. Gordon Horner Inc. (monthly supporter), Earnest Ice Cream (monthly supporter), Electronic Arts, Greenspace Designs (monthly supporter), Implosion Press, Intact Insurance, Protection Island Neighbourhood Assoc., Seaflora Skincare (monthly supporter), The Nature of Real Estate, West Sechelt Elementary School, Working Culture Bread.

In-kind

BC Ferries, Comox Valley Harbour Authority, Earnest Ice Cream, Google Workspace for Non-Profits, Hullo, Microsoft, Natasha Aruliah, New/Mode, Patagonia Vancouver, Salesforce Inc., Salt Legacy, Salt Spring Coffee Company, Seaflora Skincare, Simply Sailing, Slack Technologies, Sustainable Elements, Tandem Innovation Group, The Gathering Place, The Westin Bayshore Vancouver, The Wild Tribe, Tigh-Na-Mara Resort, Vancouver Water Adventures, Western Canoeing & Kayaking Inc, WildPlay.

Volunteers

Emily Baker, Andrew Beers, Katrina Bennett Scott, Christopher Di Marco, Sheldon Fernandes, Daniel Goncalves, Fawn Knight, Ilesha Maharaj, Keimi Nakashima-Ochoa, Siobhan Powlowski, Brian Robertson, Nadine Ryan, Gabrielle Savage, Mairin Shields Brown, Kristin Street, Jennifer Thornton.

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 [2]





The office of Georgia Strait Alliance is located on the unceded territories of the x^wməθk^wəyʻəm, Skwx wú7mesh and selílwitulh Nations, also known as Vancouver.

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

Staff & Contractors

Rebecca Adams, Creative & Digital Engagement Lead

Jacob Banting, Clean Marine BC Coordinator

Cathy Booler, Data & Digital Systems Manager

Khalid Boudreau, Community Organizer (from April 2, 2024)

Maithili Devadas, Biodiversity Campaigner (from August 19, 2024)

russell elliott, Campaigns Manager (from April 8, 2024)

Beatrice Frank, Executive Director (from September 16, 2024)

Lucero Gonzalez Ruiz, Biodiversity Campaigner (until April 4, 2024)

Ananda Korchynski, Social Media Coordinator

Janet Moore, Interim Executive Director (April 23 - September 27, 2024)

Allison Murray, Communications Associate

David Palmer, Development Manager

Megan Raitt, Dock Walker (June 12 - August 6, 2024)

Kellie Rana, Marine Planning Coordinator

Alaya Seoudy, Data & Donor Services Assistant

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

Michelle Young, Director of Finance & Operations

Board of Directors

Kristin Street, Chair

Sheldon Fernandes, Treasurer

Andrew Beers (from April 15, 2024)

Katrina Bennett Scott (from February 18, 2025)

Angharad Davies (until September 24, 2024)

Ilesha Maharaj (until February 21, 2025)

Max Mollineaux (from March 18, 2025)

Siobhan Powlowski

Nadine Ryan

Gabrielle Savage

Mairin Shields-Brown

Jennifer Thornton

Duncan Wlodarczak (until September 24, 2024)

Penny Wong (from February 18, 2025)

Advisory Council

John Cashore

Dr. Robert Elner

Dr. Robert Joseph

Dr. Donald McQueen

Suzanne Siemens

Douglas White III Kwalasultan





2024-2025

Financial HIGHLIGHTS

Year ended March 31, 2025

Financial Position as of March 31, 2025

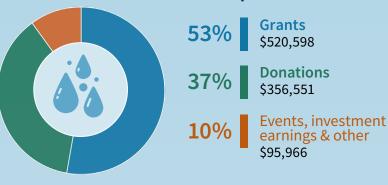
Current Assets \$418,721 Capital Assets \$9,466 Payables & Accruals (44,427) Deferred Contributions (270,630)

NET ASSETS \$113,130

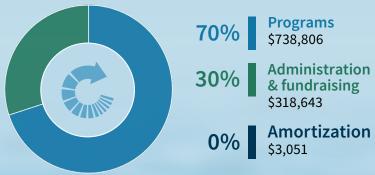
In-Kind Contributions

In addition to the revenue above, GSA received an estimated value of \$48,716 in donated goods and services and \$8,115 in volunteer time during the year ended March 31, 2025 for a total of \$56,831.

REVENUES | \$973,115



EXPENSES | \$1,060,500



Excess of expenses over revenues for the year \$(87,385)

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.



