

FRIENDS 2012... A Year in Review

by Stephanie Buffum Field - Executive Director

From coal ships to critical areas, FRIENDS spent 2012 addressing threats to marine species and risks to people, property and our economy from oil spills, sea level rise, and cumulative development.

We strengthened our relationships and built new partnerships to help preserve the San Juans, and these collaborations paid off! This fall, over 450 islanders expressed their concerns about coal shipping through the islands. And many of you filled hearing rooms to voice your views on protecting fish, wildlife, wetlands & shorelines.

In 2012, we completed an extensive analysis of nearshore science to identify the habitats and processes most essential for salmon recovery. Our valuable contributions to salmon recovery were honored by a Puget Sound Champion Award.

We're doing all we can to protect and restore local shorelines. But as long as decision-makers weaken critical area protections, permit bulkheads on documented feeder bluffs and forage fish spawning beaches, allow docks over eelgrass, and fail to enforce our laws fairly, our gains will not outpace the losses. Next year, we'll be busy addressing critical areas protections, sea level rise, the Shoreline Master Program update, threats from navy sonar, the proposed coal terminal, and oil spills. We will continue to provide and advocate for use of local research in planning, policy and permitting to ensure science, not politics, informs our decisions. In all of this, we depended on your support.

My deepest thanks.

FRIENDS of the San Juans

MISSION: To protect the land, water, sea, and livability of the San Juan Islands through science, education and advocacy.

P.O. Box 1344, Friday Harbor, WA 98250, 360-378-2319 www.sanjuans.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Oreas: Janet Alderton, Marta Nielson & Charlie Carver. San Juan: Mike Kaill & Bill Watson. Lopez: San Olson, George Lawson & Dixie Budke

STAFF: Executive Director: Stephanie Buffum Field, Science Director: Tina Whitman, Staff Attorney: Kyle Loring, Office Manager: Jana Marks, Grants Manager: Shannon Davis, Community Engagement Director: Katie Fleming

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Thank you for being a "FRIEND"

Your support of FRIENDS shows that you agree "You have to be more careful with an island." And that people of goodwill who love and embrace the San Juans and their precious and unrepeatable ecology, life-giving health, and ineffable and breathless beauty will not be deterred by forces seeking to divide our islands through delay, confusion, science-denial, outside money and just plain greed.

I have never felt as proud of serving on the board of FRIENDS as I do right now. The FRIENDS' openness and desire to communicate and negotiate are real and admirable. I believe truth is eventually triumphant over exaggeration and deception, and that the bright light of facts and accurate information, when illuminated over conflict, will remove fear and prejudice.

At times, achieving the mission of the FRIENDS is difficult, but everyone knows that there simply is no island protection gained without some individual pain.

We thank YOU for your past support, and ask that you consider: volunteering; serving on the board; commenting about the proposed Gateway Pacific coal terminal, the Critical Areas Ordinance and the Shoreline Master Program; writing letters and attending County Council meetings; and supporting FRIENDS in any way you can.

You have to be more careful with an island!

Thank you.

George Lawson, President FRIENDS of the San Juans

Mobilizing the Community Against Coal Export in the San Juans



Mining companies plan to strip mine coal in Montana and Wyoming and transport it by train to Washington and Oregon, where it would be loaded onto massive cargo ships bound for Asia. The Gateway Pacific Terminal (GPT) has been proposed for Cherry Point, near Bellingham, to export 48 million tons of coal a year. Approximately 487 cargo ships of coal would add nearly 1000 vessel trips through our waters each year.

FRIENDS has been mobilizing opposition to GPT since last spring. FRIENDS sponsored lectures on the topic with Dr. Claudia Oakes from Montana State University, Fred Felleman, Northwest Consultant of Friends of the Earth/Wave Consulting, Val Viers of the Sea

Sound Remote Sensing Network and Adam Gaya and Aaron Sanger of ForestEthics. To prepare for the Friday Harbor scoping hearing on November 3, FRIENDS collaborated with local and regional partners including Protect Whatcom and Orcas and Lopez NO COALitions to host comment writing workshops that drew 150 people.

After much ground work, 450 community members came together in the largest gathering in recent San Juan County history for an environmental action. Over 130 people gave oral testimony at the hearing, and many more submitted written comments that will help inform GPT's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Tribal

representatives, San Juan County Council, FRIENDS, Lopez and Orcas No COALitions, San Juan Island Visitors Bureau, San Juan National Historical Park, as well as commercial fishermen, crabbers, scientists, ship captains, teachers, parents, students, other non-profit organizations, and faith leaders voiced concerns about the proposed coal terminal at Cherry Point.

We have begun the important process of letting decision-makers know that islanders are concerned about boater safety; the health of our orca, fish, birds and other wildlife; the increased risk of a large oil spill; the introduction of invasive species in ballast water; and increases in ocean acidification associated with the carbon dioxide emissions from burning fuel and coal. These issues need to be included in the EIS.

We would like to give a special thank you to the Orcas and Lopez NO COALitions. This has been a true inter-island effort.

The scoping period for GPT is open through January 21, 2013. Please visit FRIENDS' website (www. sanjuans.org) or contact our office for information about how to draft and submit comments.







In 2012, FRIENDS' science programs continued to focus on restoring priority shoreline habitats, protecting species and preserving natural geologic processes. Our work included habitat enhancement, voluntary protection and stewardship, and research with public and private partners.

Habitat Protection

Neighborhood Salmon Easements

FRIENDS has partnered with the San Juan Preservation Trust to develop a voluntary neighborhood conservation easement program to protect high quality shoreline habitat and habitat forming processes that are important to salmon and salmon prey (forage fish and insects). This effort recognizes that important natural habitats and processes, like pocket beaches, feeder bluffs or erosion zones, can extend across several shoreline parcels and thus seeks to protect them at a neighborhood scale.

The neighborhood salmon easement program is focusing efforts in three priority regions of the county including Waldron Island, NW Orcas Island and S. Lopez Island. We are researching and developing shoreline habitat and process-

specific conservation language and mechanisms that facilitate multilandowner participation as well as reaching out to communities, neighborhoods and individuals with site visits. For more information on this project, contact Tina Whitman at FRIENDS or Debby Clausen with the San Juan Preservation Trust.

Eelgrass Habitat Protection

FRIENDS recently completed an innovative pilot project that provided technical and cost-share support to mooring buoy owners who wanted to reduce the impacts of their buoy on eelgrass habitat. Actions included relocation of buoys outside of eelgrass growing zones, upgrading of existing systems, and, in a few cases, removal of unwanted buoys and floats. Thank you to all the public and private buoy owners who participated, as well as to our commercial buoy installer partners, R & R Moorings on Lopez, and Baja Boat Works on Orcas.

Habitat Restoration

Project Design and Implementation

FRIENDS continues to identify, cultivate and implement shoreline habitat restoration projects with interested public and private landowners and has multiple projects in varying stages of development. On Blakely Island, FRIENDS is working to remove fill associated with an unnecessary log handling derelict structure and restore a surf smelt spawning beach. On Brown Island, two private landowners are having preliminary designs completed to remove unnecessary shoreline armoring and restore a small feeder bluff. On Lopez and Shaw Islands, FRIENDS and partner Coastal Geologic Services are studying nearshore wetlands and coastal lagoons to determine the best options for restoring their

health. Countywide, FRIENDS is partnering with WA Dept. of Natural Resources to remove toxic creosote pilings.

Technical Site Visits

FRIENDS partnered with the San Juan Islands Conservation District and licensed engineering geologist Jim Johannessen of Coastal Geologic Services to conduct site visits with shoreline property owners and homeowners associations. The program provided landowners with maps and information about the natural resources around their property, along with onsite technical support to address their questions and concerns. Attendees asked about erosion control, vegetation management, and water quality/ quantity while exploring potential restoration or long-term protection opportunities.



Shoreline Research

Strategic Salmon Recovery

FRIENDS received a 2012 Puget Sound Champion Award from the Puget Sound Partnership for our lead role in the recently completed "Pulling It All Together" Strategic Salmon Recovery Planning Project for San Juan County. The project compiled and analyzed over ten years of nearshore habitat data to identify top restoration and protection actions. Partners included Coastal Geologic Services, Anchor QEA, the Lead Entity for Salmon Recovery and over 25 local and regional technical experts. Project results will guide local salmon recovery efforts and inform planning processes including the Puget Sound Chinook Salmon Recovery Plan and the Shoreline Master Program Update.

Sea Level Rise and Cumulative Effects Shoreline modifications,

Shoreline modifications, including bulkheads, threaten the long-term health of our marine ecosystems by impacting priority habitats and interfering with coastal processes. In San Juan County, more than 20 miles of local beaches are already armored, representing over 22% of the county's sand and gravel beaches, and this distance grows every year. Beach alterations reduce areas for forage fish to reproduce, and these food web impacts mean less food for Southern Resident Orcas, Marbled Murrelet seabirds, Steller sea lions, and Chinook salmon. Armored shores also "squeeze" shore habitats between the armoring and rising sea levels.

This year, FRIENDS received a competitive grant through the National Estuary Program to expand our research on threatened beach

habitats and to improve the effectiveness of protection efforts. Project elements include new erosion rate and sea level rise models and maps,



From L to R: Stephanie Buffum Field, Tina Whitman, Sally Hawkins from FRIENDS and Tony Wright, Director of the Puget Sound Partnership.



forage fish spawn studies, and an assessment of the cumulative impacts of shoreline modifications on local beaches. Preliminary findings of the tidal elevation of spawn study indicate that the majority of surf smelt eggs are incubating above mean higher high water and are thus even more vulnerable to the impacts of armoring than previously believed.

FRIENDS' beach protection work also includes a review of existing policies and the identification of management recommendations that reduce risks to shoreline habitat, private property and public infrastructure from the threats of incremental development and sea level rise. A technical team of local, regional and tribal experts are guiding this project and will aid in the application of results at the local and regional scale.

Forage Fish Spawning Habitat Research

A decade ago, FRIENDS completed county-wide surveys of the sand and gravel beaches used for egg incubation and spawning by two forage fish species--surf smelt and Pacific sand lance. Many of you supported that work by providing access to your beach or as a trained volunteer who helped us identify spawning at 50 sites; 39 of which were newly documented!

While the surveys completed over 10 years ago are invaluable, and results have been applied to multiple protection and restoration projects, there are still many potential spawning beaches that have not been fully surveyed. FRIENDS will be conducting additional forage fish spawn surveys starting in early 2013. Please give us a call to get involved!

In San Juan County, protecting the 410 miles of shoreline is everyone's responsibility. FRIENDS' outreach seeks to inform our community's 16,000 residents and 700,000 annual visitors about the economic and environmental importance of our living shorelines and our islands' natural areas.



At the Water's Edge Talks

In 2012, FRIENDS worked with the Stewardship Network to bring regional experts to Orcas, San Juan, and Lopez islands for free lectures to expand our community's knowledge about our shorelines. The first lecture provided a glimpse into the world of underwater photography, highlighting what lies beneath the surface of the Salish Sea. The next talk focused on local oceanographic conditions and the probability for arrival of Japanese tsunami debris. In

Sept., a panel of experts spoke about the marine impacts of coal and tar sands ships in our waters. The most recent talk identified where and how salmon use our nearshore waters. Stay tuned for more talks in 2013.

Wetlands & You Workshops

FRIENDS led informative Wetlands Workshops throughout the county to help inform the Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) process. Our panel of experts included a builder, a farmer, a wetlands biologist, and a land use lawyer. Local citizens learned about the role of wetlands and wetland species, building setbacks, farming and application of the CAO to the built environment.

Community Involvement

FRIENDS' staff serve on the Northwest Straits Commission, the San Juan County (SJC) Marine Resources Committee, SJC Water Resources Management Committee, San Juan Islands Scenic Byway Committee, Safe Shipping Alliance of the Salish Sea, San Juan Initiative, and the SJC Action Agenda Oversight Group.

Regional Conferences and Local Enrichment

FRIENDS' staff presented our work at the National Fisheries
Society Annual Conference, the
Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference,
the Dept. of Ecology Shoreline
Manager's Training, and the Marine
Manager's Workshop. Locally,
FRIENDS shared our environmental
knowledge with Spring Street
International School students,
students participating in the Friday
Harbor Labs Beach Seine, and with
Leadership San Juans.

Canoe Journey

FRIENDS coordinated island stop-overs on San Juan and Lopez for tribal canoes traveling from the Heiltsuk Nation in Bella Bella to Squaxin Island near Olympia, WA. Since 2003, FRIENDS has coordinated stop-overs in the San Juans to support tribes traveling through their traditional territory.

Thank you to the many volunteers who provided their time and resources to make this event a success: Liz Illg, Jeanetta Accosta, David Hoopes, Nancy DeVaux, Steve and Joann Ashlock, Lee Brooks, Karrie Cooper, Michelle Lyons, Barbara Marrett, Bill Watson, Marty and Paul Ahart, Robin Jacobson, Tom and Sally Reeves, Kevin Carlton, Brett Snow, Angel Michaels, San Juan Pasta Company, Soroptimists, San Juan Visitors Bureau, San Juan County Parks and Fairgrounds, Roche Harbor and the Port of Friday Harbor.



In 2012, FRIENDS advocated for island-scale development consistent with our rural neighborhoods and natural inhabitants. While much of FRIENDS' work is designed to improve local ecosystem health, FRIENDS' advocacy seeks to ensure that county-wide environmental policies and site-specific projects protect the San Juans' remaining natural abundance. For this work, FRIENDS advocates on the land, by the sea, and everywhere in-between.

On the LAND:

Urging Review of impacts from 100-Site Campground

During the summer of 2012, legal intern Juan Bacigalupi led FRIENDS' request that the County fully evaluate a 100-site lakefront campground on San Juan Island before issuing a Conditional Use Permit. The campground would be the largest on San Juan Island and only 17 spaces smaller than the combined Cascade Lake

campgrounds at Moran State Park. FRIENDS asked the County to analyze the potential impact of 200-300 daily visitors on the surrounding water quality and habitat, potable water for both campers and neighbors, and air quality and noise levels. FRIENDS strongly supports recreational opportunities at an island-scale, including increased camping opportunities, but was disappointed to learn that the County approved the Conditional Use Permit without first evaluating all of its natural and neighborhood impacts.



Safeguarding a Neighborhood from a Salvage Yard

Last winter, FRIENDS and neighbors of a proposed salvage and wrecking facility convinced the San Juan County hearing examiner to deny the application for industrial activity in a residential neighborhood on San Juan Island. The application sought an after-the-fact conditional use permit for activities on rural farm forest land that included active salvage of metals from such items as automobiles, trailers, bicycles, appliances, machinery, and boat & small equipment engines. The hearing examiner denied the permit because it proposed salvage activities that are prohibited on rural farm forest lands and because the loud noise and aesthetic impacts were incompatible with the residential surroundings.

Promoting Sustainable Aquifer Use

In the fall of 2012, FRIENDS joined organizations across the state in an amicus brief that asks the state Supreme Court to direct the WA Dep't of Ecology to assure communities that proposals for increased groundwater use are sustainable. While the case focuses on withdrawal of groundwater for an expanded golf course in Pullman, the legal doctrine could apply statewide.

Battling Plastic

In spring 2012, FRIENDS led efforts to coordinate public support from grocers and citizens to eliminate single-use plastic bags (excluding produce bags) in San Juan County. We look forward to continuing this effort in 2013.



By the SEA:

FRIENDS Asks Navy to Avoid Harm to Whales

In January 2012, FRIENDS joined other conservation and Tribal groups to challenge the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) unconditional approval of increased U.S. Navy warfare activities in endangered orca habitat. The training activities include anti-submarine warfare exercises using tracking aircraft and sonar, surface-to-air gunnery missile exercises, air-to-surface bombing exercises, sink exercises, and extensive testing for new weapons systems.

The lawsuit asks for NMFS to establish some common sense protections for marine species in the California-sized northwest training range, including limiting activities in the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary and avoiding other areas when likely to cause the most harm.

Instead of time and location limitations, NMFS allowed the expansion in reliance upon the Navy's visual detection methods, which can miss anywhere from 25-95% of the marine mammals in an area.

Addressing Oil Spills

In October 2012, FRIENDS submitted comments on the State Oil Spill Contingency Plan, requesting stronger protections for San Juan County as a staging area. FRIENDS also partnered with island leaders and regional and national organizations to coordinate countywide opposition against the Gateway Pacific Terminal Coal Port in Bellingham, WA, which could increase the risk of oil spills by adding up to nearly 1,000 new vessels to our waters.

Supporting Small Fish

In July 2012, Board President George Lawson testified to the Pacific Fisheries Management Council to increase efforts to preserve forage fish by including them in ecosystem management plans and to ensure no new fisheries are allowed for forage species without adequate scientific review. FRIENDS continues to track and provide comment on this important regional process with the goal of improving the overall health of marine food webs.



Everywhere IN-BETWEEN:

Protecting Critical Areas for People and Nature

2012 saw substantial progress on the Critical Areas Ordinance ("CAO") Update as San Juan County completed draft final provisions for geologically hazardous areas, frequently flooded areas, wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat, and general provisions that guide all development in all critical areas. During this process, FRIENDS analyzed thousands of pages of scientific literature and offered nearly 100 pages of comments in an effort to ensure that the CAO update protects our most fragile and productive flora and fauna.

As the CAO process has crept forward, however, local officials have rejected the courts' direction that "the land speaks first," and have drafted an ordinance that will not adequately protect people or critical species and habitats. For example, the County has more than doubled the number of exemptions for activities in wetlands and fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, including such proposals as new farming in wetlands and septic tanks in streams. While some exemptions from CAO protections may be reasonable, significantly expanding the number of exemptions without any oversight of those activities or evaluation of future impacts is not.

Like the San Juan County Marine Resources Committee, FRIENDS is concerned that the entire approach relies much too heavily on mitigation, which is expensive, a serious challenge for implementation, and often extremely limited in its effectiveness.

As the County adopts its final CAO, FRIENDS continues to encourage its revision to preserve the San Juans' natural beauty and richness for all in our community and for future generations. If the final ordinance significantly increases complexity and cost, while at the same time reducing protections for critical areas, FRIENDS will consider an appeal to the Growth Management Hearings Board.



Shoreline Master Program

This year, FRIENDS played a critical role to ensure that San Juan County's Shoreline Master Program (SMP) Update incorporated local data about species and processes, such as salmon and sediment supply, and that it evaluated impacts to those ecosystem elements. FRIENDS also encouraged the County to address sea level rise impacts when locating new development, such as roads, houses, or emergency facilities. FRIENDS provided data, reviewed reports like the Inventory and Characterization that documented current conditions, and continues to participate in this important process that will set the stage for how shorelines are developed into the future. The Shoreline Management Act directive is to protect and restore shoreline ecosystems and FRIENDS is working for an SMP that does that.

So far, the County has proposed to continue to allow new impacts including docks in critical eelgrass habitat and bulkheads on surf smelt spawning beaches, even for new development. FRIENDS will

continue to demand a technically credible approach for the Inventory and Characterization report and the development of new regulations, and will advocate for the fish that have no voice in the process, as well as those of us who believe in vibrant, healthy shorelines. If you share our concerns about the long term direction of shoreline development in our county, we encourage you to learn more and to get involved in the SMP update in early 2013.

Preserving Special Lands

FRIENDS supported local efforts to designate San Juan County's Bureau of Land Management lands as a National Conservation Area. We testified to the County Council and to Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar about the benefits of permanent protections for the 1,000 acres of lighthouses, habitat, and recreational lands enjoyed by islanders and visitors alike. FRIENDS also kept our membership informed of opportunities to provide input in the process and shared information on salmon recovery priorities in the San Juans with national land managers and decision makers.





Two Staff Celebrate 10 Years

Please join us in celebrating the 10 year anniversaries of our Office Manager, Jana Marks and Science Director, Tina Whitman! In an era when the average employee moves to a new job every 4.4 years, we are grateful for the long-term passion and leadership they contribute to FRIENDS and our community.

Jana Marks joined FRIENDS in 2002 and quickly set about excelling in her job responsibilities. In addition to serving as the first voice you hear when calling or visiting us, Jana manages our membership, works actively with the Stewardship Network, facilitates beach cleanups, and organizes our events and lectures. Since landing in the islands in 1976, Jana has watched the islands' population grow and change. She raised two daughters on Stuart and San Juan Islands and loves to garden and share its bounty with us. Jana's historical perspective and generosity help serve FRIENDS' efforts to protect the land, water, sea and livability of the islands.

Tina Whitman was hired in 2002 to lead a countywide survey of beaches for forage fish eggs. Tina's vast background and skills quickly made her invaluable to the success of all of FRIENDS' programs. Tina manages habitat restoration projects, conducts shoreline research, assists with policy and permit review, and leads science education programs. She is known regionally as an expert on nearshore habitat and is a long-time member of the SJC Marine Resources Committee. She lives with her husband and son in the home she designed on Orcas Island. Tina is an active volunteer at Orcas Montessori School and the salmon hatchery, which her husband Mike manages.

Funders and Partners for 2012

FRIENDS is grateful for the support our partners and grant funders provide. Thank you!

Partners

Coastal Geologic Services, City Cantabile Choir, Coal Train Facts, Dana Lyons, Fred Felleman, Earthjustice, Environment Washington, ForestEthics, Futurewise, Lead Entity for Salmon Recovery, Lummi Nation, Marine Resources Committee, Members of the Lopez, Orcas, and San Juan CAO Study Groups, Northwest Straits Commission, Orcas and Lopez NO COALitions, People for Puget Sound, Pew Charitable Trusts, Puget Sound Partnership, Power Past Coal, Salish Sea Biological, RE Sources for Sustainable Communities, Safe Shipping Alliance of the Salish Sea, San Juan County Public Works Dept., San Juan County Land Bank, San Juan County Action Agenda Oversight Group, San Juan Islands Conservation District, San Juan Islands Scenic Byways Committee,

San Juan Preservation Trust, Skagit River System Cooperative, Stewardship Network of the San Juans, Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, the Tulalip Tribes, the WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, and the WA Dept. of Natural Resources.

Funders

The Bullitt Foundation, The Burning Foundation, ESRI, The Horizons Foundation, The Kongsgaard-Goldman Foundation, Northwest Fund for the Environment, The San Juan Action Agenda Oversight Group, The WA Dept. of Ecology Coastal Protection Fund, The WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, The WA Salmon Recovery Funding Board, The US Fish & Wildlife Service, The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency through the Puget Sound Partnership and the WA. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife.





2012 Financial Highlights

FRIENDS of the San Juans is a 501(C)(3) non profit organization. FRIENDS receives its income primarily from membership contributions and grants. Expenditures pay for science and education programs costs, publications, legal and policy expenses, publications and administrative support. This is a summary of our 2011 Fiscal Year (October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012).

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Current and Fixed Assets

Cash and Other				
Unrestricted				
Endowment				
Other Assets0				
Total Assets377,928				
Liabilities and				
Accumulated Surplus				
Current Liabilities6,627				
Accumulated Surplus 371,301				
Total Liabilities &				
Accumulated Surplus377,928				

Statement of Activities

Income

Membership

Contributions (47.2%) 247,376
Grants (52.4%)274,407
Investments, Events
and Other Income (0.4%) 1,876
Total Income523,660
Expenses
Programs (86.5%)
Fundraising (4.9%)25,998
Administration (8.7%) 46,304
Total Expenses533,672
Net10,012

Leave a legacy...

A planned gift is a meaningful way for you to help ensure that FRIENDS will be the leading voice for protecting the San Juans far into the future.

There are many attractive options for leaving a legacy.

The most common is naming FRIENDS as a beneficiary in your will, life insurance, retirement account or similar trusts or annuities. Contact Stephanie Buffum at (360) 378-2319 for more information about planned giving.

Our Federal tax identification
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