

FRIENDS of the San Juans

Autumn 2004

The FRIENDS of the San Juans is working to...

GOAL 1 Retain Rural Character

Many of us are here because of the rolling landscapes, small towns and hamlets, active farms and farmers' markets, uncrowded roads, and the independent quality of the people who live and work here. We want this to continue.



GOAL 2 Foster a Stewardship Ethic

Our county in the sea is a unique, diverse archipelago. Preserving it requires a team effort. FRIENDS conducts educational programs and projects, from data collection to beach cleanups, which rely on our members and volunteers.

GOAL 3 Promote Livable Communities

Managing growth is a long-term task. FRIENDS publications and seminars on green construction, clustering techniques, septic systems, county-wide shared values, and sustainability provide ideas for both residents and businesses.



GOAL 4 Protect our Marine Resources

Good land-use and marine management practices are based on solid data and scientific research. FRIENDS is leading the way by sponsoring Nearshore Research, Salmon Restoration, Water Resource Studies, and Orca Protection.

GOAL 5 Hold Government Accountable

Our county government is the gatekeeper to the future of the San Juans. It is a deciding factor in what these islands will be 10, 20...50 years from now. Since 1979 FRIENDS has been urging and ensuring compliance with our local, state, and federal laws.



GOAL 6 Encourage Economic Diversity

The county's natural environment is increasingly the basis for the local economy. FRIENDS seeks thoughtful business development that supports year-round, family-wage jobs and a population mix of young people, professionals, retired people, artists, and craftspeople.

Join with us today. Every member counts.

FRIENDS

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FRIENDS Newsletter is published four times per year.

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Cover Photos by Steve Brandt
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Printing by Harbor Press
Cartoon: Courtesy Gary Larson

Executive Directors Report

With the help of over 400 members, FRIENDS celebrated 25 years of protecting the land, sea and livability of the San Juan Islands this spring and summer. The vision of founding board members like Michael Krieger, Gene Knapp, Linda Campbell, Robbie Lawson and others has served as an inspiration for new and longtime members alike. Over the past 25 years our unique and successful combination of science, policy, strategic litigation, and coalition building have created environmental solutions that are lasting, efficient, and fair for the natural heritage here in the San Juans.



This summer we completed an ambitious Forage Fish Assessment that identified spawning sites for surf smelt, sandlance and herring in the 412 miles of shoreline within our county. Our completion of the San Juan County Eelgrass Survey this summer was also a landmark in conservation and habitat mapping. In this issue, Forage Fish and Eelgrass (Part II)— from Science to Stewardship, explores the linkages between our local beaches, whales, salmon, lingcod, crab, birds, and forage fish. Our assessments are serving as statewide models for

community-based research and land use planning. Also featured in this newsletter are articles on water resources, a home rule charter, economic development, and the inter-tribal Canoe Journey.

As always, FRIENDS is being called on to assist in a variety of issues. To ensure that we have the resources in place to continue to answer these calls, we depend on the generous support from members like you. One way that you can help is by making a special donation to the 25th Anniversary Legacy Fund. The first \$25,000 contributed during our 25th Anniversary Legacy Fund Drive will be matched dollar for dollar by the Russell Family Foundation.

Through the tireless efforts of many volunteers and our members who love these islands, FRIENDS of the San Juans has become the local leader in preserving them. We couldn't have accomplished so much in 25 years without your enthusiastic and enduring support.

Thank you,
Stephanie Buffum Field

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News

Partners in Wetland Conservation

FRIENDS of the San Juans is working with Ducks Unlimited, The San Juan Preservation Trust, and the San Juan County Land Bank on a multi-million dollar funding proposal that will be used to restore the natural hydrology to a selection of sites in the San Juans. Doing so will benefit a diverse assemblage of wetland-associated migratory birds and other wildlife that call San Juan County home during the year.

Feds Consider Protection for Imperiled Cherry Point Herring

Scientists initiate status review in response to citizen petition.

National Marine Fisheries Service announced August 5, it will conduct a status review to determine if Cherry Point herring deserve federal protection under the Endangered Species Act. The announcement comes after an 8-month review initiated when FRIENDS and a coalition of conservation groups filed a petition requesting federal protection for the herring that spawn along the open shoreline north of Bellingham.

Federal protection and restoration of Cherry Point herring will benefit everything from salmon and orcas which pass through our waters to eelgrass upon which herring spawn. These herring are distinct from other Pacific herring in many respects. Their unique spawning location and timing have reproductively isolated Cherry Point herring from other Puget Sound herring, and recent studies indicate that Cherry Point herring are the most genetically divergent herring population in Washington.

“This is a first step toward recovery of Cherry Point herring,” says Dave Werntz, Science Director with the Northwest Ecosystem Alliance. “Federal fisheries biologists agree that Cherry Point herring may be heading toward extinction and deserve help.”

The Cherry Point herring were once Washington State’s largest herring population. Over the last three decades, the population has plummeted by 90 percent and they are not

rebounding. Cherry Point herring face numerous threats from industrial development along their spawning grounds. Already, two major oil refineries and an aluminum smelter near Cherry Point have directly impacted herring spawning grounds through dock construction and operation, outfall discharge, vessel traffic, and disease and foreign species introduced from ship ballast water. Accidental spills of oil and other poisons also pose a considerable threat to the unique herring.

Groups and individuals submitting the petition were: Friends of the San Juans, Northwest Ecosystem Alliance, Center for Biological Diversity, Ocean Advocates, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, People For Puget Sound, and Sam Wright.

Educators Day ~ Nearshore Workshop

On Saturday Oct. 23, 2004, K-12 educators from throughout San Juan County will have an opportunity to receive free nearshore education materials for use in and out of the classroom. Contact FRIENDS of the San Juans Environmental Programs Manager, Tina Whitman, to RSVP for this training in Friday Harbor. 360-378-2319.

Negotiations Continue on New Detached Guesthouse Construction

At press time FRIENDS and the Board of County Commissioners are still exploring possible settlement. In a meeting in late July in Friday Harbor, FRIENDS testified to the State Legislative Committee on Housing that FRIENDS supports the construction of new, detached guest houses that meet specific rules and restrictions. FRIENDS believes that new guest houses should be included in overall density calculations to ensure that emergency medical, water, roads, and other infrastructure is adequately planned.

Please encourage Commissioners Nielsen, Miller, and Evans, and Prosecuting Attorney, Randy Gaylord, to seek a reasonable, local solution to the guest house controversy. Such a solution should not compromise our unique shorelines, rural areas, or general quality of life.

—More News on Page 10

“Home Rule” for SJ County?

Opportunity Knocks for 3rd Time

On June 15 the SJ County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution calling for a special election to choose freeholders to draft a home rule charter for San Juan County. Freeholder is an ancient, British word found in the state constitution. In practice, it means citizen. On November 2 this year voters will elect 21 citizens to draft a charter that will be presented to voters, probably in mid-2005. If voters accept the charter, San Juan will become the sixth county (of 39) in the state to adopt home rule.

Voters here considered home rule twice before, in 1973 and in 1983. Both efforts failed, for different reasons. The present effort to shift to home rule is both historic and timely. The basic organization of county government has not changed in over a hundred years. Most other things have changed, however. Population: We are one of the fastest growing counties in Washington, and we have been for 20 years. Jobs: We once thrived on fishing, timber, agriculture. Now our economy is based on our environment, which attracts tourists, retirees, housing construction, adult education, and scientists who study our amazing waters and the wildlife. Government: The main job of the county was originally road construction and maintenance, plus a little record keeping for the state. Today government is the largest single employer (200) in the county and a primary force in many vital subjects—from land use and taxes to law enforcement, planning, and economic development.

AT PRESENT...

We have a “commission” form of government. It features three full-time commissioners and six other elected officials (Assessor, Auditor, Clerk, Prosecuting Attorney, Sheriff, Treasurer) who operate semi-independently from the commissioners. The commissioners have wide, over-lapping, and often conflicting responsibilities. There is little separation of powers as the commissioners make laws, make judicial decisions on their own laws and regulations, and try to manage the complicated, day-to-day operations of the county across many islands. The problem isn’t with the nine officials; it is with the inherited system and structure with which they must live. This commission form was established by the state in its Constitution in 1889 to suit conditions then. Society has changed; government has not.

WHAT CAN WE HAVE?

In 1948 the state constitution was amended to allow any county’s voters to adopt a “home rule” form of government. To do so, the citizens of a county must develop their own “charter” to replace the state’s commission form. Five counties have adopted home rule charters, including King County (Seattle area) and nearby Whatcom County (Bellingham area). Voters in these five counties developed and approved local charters as an exercise in self-government, in the tradition of the drafters and 39 signers of the U.S. Constitution.

CHARTER CONTENTS

The experiences of counties elsewhere indicate that voter-friendly charters tend to be short and simple. Many cover some—but often not all—of these subjects:

- Number of people (3, 4, 5, 6, 7) on the governing body and how they are elected; whether they are full-time or part-time; their compensation; and whether the positions are partisan or non-partisan.
 - How day-to-day operations are managed. Some charter counties have an elected county executive; others have a county executive hired by the governing body to oversee normal, operating tasks.
 - If, how, and when voters may create initiatives and referendums.
 - Whether functional specialists such as assessor, auditor, clerk, etc. are elected or hired. The Prosecuting attorney and judges must be elected according to state law.
 - How much money elected officials can borrow without voter approval.
 - How and when the charter itself must be reviewed so government is kept up to date with voter’s wishes.
 - Steps for the transition from the existing form to the a charter form of county government, if approved.
- Because charters usually include voter initiatives, referendums, and reviews, changes to charters can be made any time. This is a major change from our existing situation in which county voters

have zero ability to change the state-dictated, commission form in place. As Joe Elenbaas of Whatcom County put it when he spoke to the San Juan Commissioners in April: “Home rule is about freedom. Under home rule, you can shape your county government to fit your needs.”

UPCOMING VOTE

In November voters will elect twenty-one islanders from the list of those who filed (self-nominated) for the office between August 23 and 27. State law requires that the 21 be proportional to the population of the county. Therefore, there will be:

- Ten elected in Commissioner District #1 (6,802 pop.). San Juan, Brown, Henry, Johns, Pearl, Stuart;
- Seven from District #2 (4,575). Orcas, Waldron, Crane; and
- Four from District #3 (2,581). Lopez, Shaw, Decatur, Blakely, Center.

The candidates in each district who receive the most votes in that district will become the freeholders from that district. Candidates must have been residents for at least five years and be qualified to vote in SJC. Freeholders are not paid; and they are out of office once the draft is submitted to voters. Starting in December, the freeholders will hold open meetings across the county to seek public input. They will prepare a draft reflecting that input.

WHY SELF-GOVERNMENT?

Observers of our local government believe the structure of our county is simply not up to the stress, strains, and pace of the times. The current form, inherited from the state, is the same form used even today in Spokane, Walla Walla, Kitsap—in 34 of the state’s counties. But no other county has the characteristics, popularity, population mix, and economic opportunities of San Juan.

THE FAR SIDE® By GARY LARSON



“Wait! Wait! Listen to me! ... We don't have to be just sheep!”

address this tangle.

3. The county does not, today, rigorously follow the law of the land, namely, one person—one vote. Effectively, District 3, with 2,581 people, elects the same number of commissioners (one) as does District 1, which has 6,802 people. This questionable arrangement has languished quietly under the table for years by requiring commissioners to be nominated by district but then elected at large. “At large” means people across the county vote on candidates. But this is largely a charade that results in candidates spending enormous amounts of money and time running around from island to island in hopes of establishing enough name recognition outside their home districts to last until the election. It favors candidates with money or airplanes, or who are incumbents. Major candidates are spending \$40,000 or more this year to try to get elected. The county would be better served by honest, proportional, district-only elections to a board large enough to overcome the limitations of the quaint three-person set up we now have. As more than one person has observed: A balanced, governing body of six could end the three-commissioner gag rule, allow us to have purely district elections based on population (1 person from Lopez, 2 from Orcas, 3 from San Juan), and possibly open the door to a uniting of the county in the face of a common threat: Being overrun.

Most all islanders—from Lopez, Orcas, San Juan, etc.—are alike in one major way: We chose to move and live here. Looking ahead, the benefits of unity and cooperation far outweigh the costs. Each island can retain its special character, but we are all islanders in the first instance. As Ben Franklin put it at the signing of the Declaration of Independence (July 4, 1776): “We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall hang separately.” We won’t solve everything with a home rule charter. But we can take a huge step forward.

More specifically, there are at least three problems in local government that can only be addressed by converting to home rule.

1. It is illegal for the current three commissioners to speak to one another on policy matters except in the sterile atmosphere of the hearing room—complete with microphones and TV camera. It’s state law: A majority of a public board (2 people, in our case) cannot discuss matters. Our commissioners have adjoining offices, but cannot talk. This produces difficulties in communication, cooperation, and understanding. A governing body of five or more would resolve this crippling dilemma.

2. The state has assigned our commissioners overlapping and conflicting roles. They serve as legislators—make laws and regulations. They serve as judges—interpret their own laws and pass judgments on SJ citizens’ issues. They serve as executives—oversee all the day-to-day operations of the county. This problem is compounded by the fact that six departments (auditor, assessor, etc.) are headed by elected officials, which means they can and do operate independently from the commissioners. Home rule is the only way available to

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Water, Water, Everywhere... *but Not Enough to Drink*

By FRIENDS' Staff Writers

We islanders live in a rain shadow created by the Olympic Mountains and Vancouver Island. In addition, we live on a foundation of steep, fractured bedrock characterized by small watershed catchment areas and a variety of shallow glacial deposits that store some water. These special conditions—part of our uniqueness—result in low rainfall, limited groundwater storage, and extensive runoff and discharge into the sea. We had some problems when there were 4,000 islanders; we now have 14,000 year-round residents, and serious, fresh water issues are evident. All of us are involved, whether we wish to be or not. Fresh water is a shared resource.

Over the last four years, the SJC Water Resource Management Committee has been working to complete a Water Resource Management Plan. The committee's key findings, released in DRAFT form in June 2004, are these:

- We have very low recharge rates to our underground storage areas (“aquifers”).
- We are experiencing seawater intrusion into our aquifers. Seawater, which is heavier than fresh water, replaces the fresh water as it is used. Seawater contaminates fresh water.
- Existing Water Right allocations by the state exceed the water available in SJ County. (Note: The people of the state “own” ALL water—including rainfall. It is a shared, public resource, like air.)
- People in parts of SJC already use more water than is available naturally.
- All water for new construction/development across the county is coming from unregulated wells, not from regulated sources. Hundreds of wells are

drilled each year with no oversight or resource management.

- Many individual and community wells fail during the summer months. Desalinization and water hauling are used to supplement the failed supply. At present there are six desalinization plants in operation. In addition, over 2 million gallons of water was purchased and hauled in the county in 2003.
- There is a lack of water and service capacity to serve the areas designated as “growth area” in the county's Comprehensive Plan, e.g., Lopez Village, Eastsound, Deer Harbor, & Orcas Landing.
- There is a large gap in water responsibility and authority between state and county agencies.
- We lack county-wide monitoring and a coordinated, cooperative resource management plan and program.

Almost 40% of the county's population depends on surface water. This includes Trout Lake for the Town of Friday Harbor; Briggs Lake for Roche Harbor; Cascade and Mountain Lakes which supply Rosario, Doe Bay, and Olga; and Purdue Lake, which serves Eastsound. The other 60%, including all those who live in rural and shoreline areas, depend on wells. There are over 350 public water systems in the county. Only a limited number have and use even the simplest water management device—a water meter! Yet all water experts agree that “Meters are the single most important tool for managing and conserving water resources, anywhere.”

There are on-going, local attempts to face up to the fresh water issue.

Lopez, where the population grew 47% between 1990 and 2000, has a Lopez Village Water Supply Planning Committee formed in 2001. After a stormy start, with water war posters displayed across the island, the committee has completed two years of volunteer monitoring and planning. Since 2003 there has also been a local planning sub-committee for Eastsound, Rosario, Doe Bay, and Olga.

OUTLOOK

Several parts of SJ County are already struggling with growth demands that exceed supply, and struggling with planning for projected build-out requirements that will exceed both supply and water rights. Desalinization and hauling are high-cost solutions of the last resort. For example, desalinization costs 3 to 4 cents more per gallon than the less-than-1-cent per gallon paid by customers of Friday Harbor or Eastsound. Hauling is even more expensive.

The most important element in addressing our shortage is scientific analysis, to determine the actual capacity of our surface and ground water resources. This can provide the base for informed, realistic decisions about growth, managing resources, and supplementary supplies. Meanwhile, revisions in the county's Comprehensive Plan are necessary to address known problems.

The water committee's eight specific recommendations are in its 2004 Draft Plan. See www.co.san-juan.wa.us/health/ehs.html or call 378-4474 regarding monthly meetings.

—*FRIENDS thanks Vicki Heater, EHS, SJC Health & Community Services, for her technical assistance with this article.*

Canoe Journey

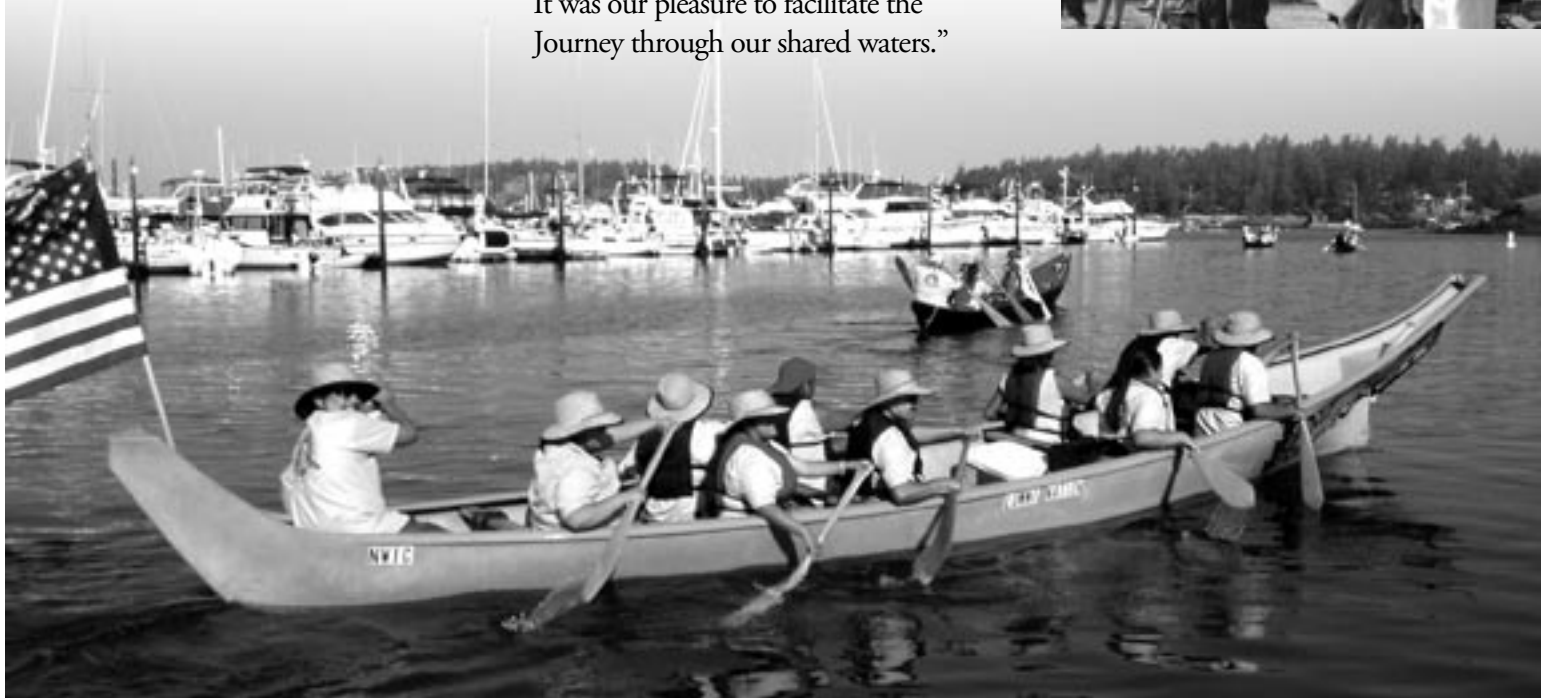
Summer is a gathering time for northwest Tribal people. They seek healing on their northwest tribal canoe trip. From July 27-29 many islanders and organizations joined FRIENDS in hosting the Annual Tribal Canoe Journey. Over 50 Native canoe families passed through our waters to rest, drum and sing together, and to partake in other cultural sharing on Lopez and San Juan Islands.

Families travel by water in traditional- style cedar canoes. Travel usually takes one to two weeks, stopping at villages along the way. The Tribal Journeys were developed in 1989 in part to heal from such issues as suicide and drug & alcohol abuse in and around American Indian and Canadian First Nations people.

All ages take part—as pullers (paddlers), support boat crew, and ground crew. Young people get a special chance to learn from their Elders, who often speak their native dialects to share wisdom and stories.

The success of the Journey is dependant on the participation of many helping hands. Through a lead gift from the Hugh and Jane Ferguson Foundation, in-kind donations of food, space (Odlin County Park and Roche Harbor Resort) and financial contributions from islanders, San Juan County was able to host three days of the Canoe Journey. Members of the Lopez and San Juan Island communities presented gifts to Canoe Captains. A seven sided native American style hand drum, made by David Hoopes of the San Juan County Marine Resource Committee, was presented to Swinomish Tribal Elder and Senate Member Chester Cayou. Commissioner Rhea Miller presented a County Proclamation in support of the event to each canoe captain.

The County event coordinator was FRIENDS Executive Director, Stephanie Buffum. Her view is that “The canoe journey represents the best of what people can accomplish when we work together. It was our pleasure to facilitate the Journey through our shared waters.”



Destination Education

New Economic Base for SJ County?

By FRIENDS' Staff Writers

Still interested in education? A growing number of adults are. "There is a whole generational shift in travel experience going on," according to Colleen Clancy, San Juan Center Director—Skagit Valley College. "Last year we had over 1,400 adults attend programs here in our county," she continued, "and most of our programs were in the off season. We are proud to be both helpful to the local economy and light on the environment."

NEW LAYER OF JOBS

This may be the beginning of something big. In March the Economic Development Council (EDC) sponsored a conference on marine technology. It was held at the UW Labs in Friday Harbor. The purpose was to explore economic possibilities—how to generate a new layer of year-round, family-wage jobs in the San Juans. One unexpected finding emerged at the conference, namely, that there was a lot more going on in education here than anyone knew.

Last year, for example, Elderhostel programs brought in roughly \$1,000,000 in revenue. Most of it went to instructors, overnight lodging, restaurants, and transportation. This means that most of it stayed in the county. Skagit Valley College conducted 36 programs in 2003. This made it the most popular Elderhostel site in Washington state and the second most popular in the Northwest, after Ashland, OR. Cathy Cavanaugh, President of the EDC, put it this way: "It is a perfect use of our tourism infrastructure that, in the past, has

tended to be used heavily for only a few months per year."

Each program has up to 42 students, age 55 or more. And each program is designed with a theme such as sea life, natural history, or cultural history. "Basically, we design our programs around some aspect of our unique archipelago," says Clancy. "Baby boomers have been around the world more than their parents," she continued, "and many want to do more than just go look. They want to learn."

BOOMERS COMING

The boomers—adults born between 1946 and 64—are moving into the over-55 age bracket in astonishing numbers. The first wave of boomers hit 55 in 2001, and today there are about 81 million of them, about a quarter of the U.S. population, according to Economy.com, a economic-research firm. More importantly, perhaps, is the cultural and physical profile of many boomers: They are in robust health, financially independent, geared for active, independent living, and prefer to associate with other like-minded adults. Increasingly they are setting the pace. There is a surge of books on boomers with titles such as: *Prime Time: How Baby Boomers will Revolutionize Retirement and Transform America*, and *100 Predictions for the Baby Boom: The Next 50 Years*. What does the surge of boomers mean to the San Juans?

"It means continuing pressure on the islands, of course," says Richard Cville, Executive Director of the EDC,

"but it also means opportunity, if we approach the trend properly." In June, the EDC held a second conference, this time at Rosario Resort on Orcas. The possibilities in education once again surfaced in the discussions. Elderhostel, a 27-year old nonprofit, marketed over 10,000 programs worldwide in 2003—and enrolled 200,000 participants. As mentioned earlier, our San Juan archipelago is already a major location in the worldwide network.

How are programs developed? "We do it ourselves," says Clancy. She and Randy Martin, Elderhostel Coordinator, collaborate on the design. He is also the program administrator. Some titles in the current Elderhostel catalog include: *Island Interlude: A Life in Balance*; *Autumn Revelry on Orcas Island*; *Farm to Feast: Island Style!*; *Ferry Tales in the San Juan Islands*.

ECONOMIC PLANNING

The stated goal of the SJ County Economic Development Plan is:

"To support a broad-based, diversified, stable, year-round economy that provides a range of goods, services, and employment opportunities serving the needs of county residents, while safeguarding the rural, residential, agricultural, and marine nature of the county." Destination education, a term used by David Bayley, past president of the San Juan Community Theater board, seems to fit the goal well.

—*FRIENDS is an active member of the EDC and a FRIENDS director is on the EDC board of directors.*

Celebrating 25 years

*of protecting the land, water, sea,
and livability of the San Juans.*



FRIENDS Anniversary Picnics were a tremendous success. Over 400 people came and celebrated FRIENDS past accomplishments and learned about our future goals. The picnics were held at the Lopez Island Vineyards, Pelindaba Lavender Farm, Plum Tree Farm and the Ellis Biological Preserve. Fantastic local food, musicians and locations made each event unique and inspirational. FRIENDS is grateful to all who joined us, donated to and



assisted with these events. Many thanks to all those who assisted in our spring and summer 25th Anniversary celebrations: Betsy and Les Gunther, Duck Soup Inn, Maple Rock Farms, Lopez Island Vineyards, Vita's, Pelindaba Lavender Farm, The Living Room, Market Chef, The Kitchen, Bruce Harvie, Chinmayo, David Pope, Steve and Judy Brandt, Lynn Bahrych, Ken Burtness, Jon and Joan Christoffersen, Roger Collier and Mary Blackstone, Fred Ellis, Doris Oliver, Al and Lotte Wilding, to name just a few.

Board Members over the past 25 years.

*Winnie Adams • Marilyn Anderson • Chuck Armstrong • Jeff Brash • John Brookbank • Miki Brostrom
Evelyn Burke • Fran Carlson • Paul Carlson • Pat Cunningham • John Dallas • Megan Dethier • Ralph Finnerty
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Lynn Waller • Bob Weaver • Kate Wisniewski*

Make an Investment

Matching Gift will Double Your Impact

Membership support is an essential component of our annual budget. FRIENDS of the San Juans exists to protect and preserve our islands' beauty and our quality of life. We're working to find ways to preserve what's precious about the San Juans – our rocky coastline, our beaches and natural harbors, our farms and forests, our eagles and great blue herons, our turquoise waters and their salmon and orca whales, and the rural character of this one-of-a-kind archipelago .

There are many way to support FRIENDS of the San Juans and because FRIENDS is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, your gifts are fully tax-deductible. Below are some ways you can help FRIENDS and yourself.

25th Anniversary Challenge Grant

The Russell Family Foundation will match dollar for dollar the first \$25,000 raised during our 25th Anniversary Fund drive. Double your money with a gift to the 25th Anniversary Legacy Fund.

Bequest Gifts and Real Property

FRIENDS of the San Juans intends to continue to protect these Islands for many generations to come. By including FRIENDS as a beneficiary in your will,

you can support our vital conservation programs in the future.

Retirement Plans

You can name FRIENDS of the San Juans as a beneficiary of your IRA, 401(k), 403(b), or other qualified pension plan, for all or part of the value of the plan. The proceeds of these plans are distributed outside probate and may



be structured to help reduce federal or state estate taxes.

Gifts of Stock

If you own securities that have increased in value since they were purchased (at least 12 months ago), you may be able to avoid capital gains tax this year by contributing the securities instead of cash. You'll receive a charitable income tax deduction for the full market value of the asset, and avoid capital gains tax on

the appreciation of the securities. Or, if you want to dump some losers, you'll still receive the charitable deduction, along with the capital loss.

Gifts of Vehicles

Cars, Boats in good working order are always welcome.

Donors may need to consult their tax advisor for details of deductibility of non-cash gifts, or specifics of how tax deduction rules apply to their individual circumstances. Feel free to call our office if you have any questions (360) 378-2319.

Merit Telecom

Merit Telecom is a nonprofit long-distance company that provides its services to business & residential customers. Launched in January of 2003 and based on Orcas Island, Merit Telecom donates 100% of its profits to the nonprofit of the customer's choice. For example, as a dedicated supporter of FRIENDS, you could tell Merit to donate proceeds from your long distance calls to the FRIENDS of the San Juans. Their rates are competitive and there are no monthly fees. Questions? Visit www.merittelecom.com, or call (360) 376-2985.

—*FRIENDS Membership and Development Manager is Shannon Davis. You can reach her at 360-378-2319.*

News

Eelgrass Data in Action

Using seagrass data collected by FRIENDS research team of James Norris and Dr. Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria, the U.S. Geological Survey, Pacific Science Center based out of Santa Cruz, CA, is conducting a study of the influence of seagrass on attenuating waves and currents in Indian Cove on Shaw Island. Dr. Jessie Lacy, Research Oceanographer with USGS, is leading the study on seagrass-flow interactions.

University of Washington's Friday Harbor Labs graduate student Jessica Hayden-Spear is exploring nearshore habitat associations of juvenile rockfish in the San Juan Channel. One of her thesis goals is to create a comprehensive nearshore habitat map of the Channel. Jessica's juvenile rockfish research incorporates data from the FRIENDS eelgrass assessment.

Seattle Yacht Club

The Seattle Yacht Club hosted FRIENDS Executive Director Stephanie Buffum Field and Dr. Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria of the University of Washington at the club's August membership meeting. FRIENDS presented an overview of its recently completed San Juan County Eelgrass Assessment and a restoration strategy for Westcott Bay's diminished seagrass beds. SYC board member elect, Ed Joneschild, organized this educational lecture. Ed is a member of the FRIENDS.

Two Restoration Projects for San Juan County

The San Juan County Salmon Recovery Funding Board Citizen Advisory Committee recently completed project ranking for the 5th Round of the State's competitive funding program. Two FRIENDS projects were selected: 1) Mud Bay Shoreline Softening Project, a restoration project located on Lopez and proposed jointly with the SJ County Public Works Dept.; and 2) A Feasibility Assessment of Seagrass Restoration in Westcott Bay, San Juan Island, proposed by FRIENDS and its partners: University of Washington, United States Geological Survey, Washington Dept. of Fish Wildlife and Washington Dept. Natural Resources. The two projects were selected as the top two funding priorities for San Juan County. The State will be making its final funding selections this winter.

Shoreline Stewards Needed

Stewards are needed to help monitor and maintain marine riparian plantings designed to provide shade along the shoreline for summer spawning surf smelt. To volunteer, contact Tina Whitman at 360-378-2319.

Russell Family Foundation Generously Awards FRIENDS a \$25,000 Shoreline Stewardship General Support Grant

FRIENDS will work with these funds to...

- Enhance the public's awareness of issues involving protection of the Puget Sound and the San Juan Islands;
- Expand citizen support and involvement in activities that directly benefit marine and nearshore habitats;
- Provide shoreline stewardship and low impact development education materials to new property owners; and
- Ensure that San Juan County's Critical Areas and Shoreline Master Plans adequately protect the region's natural environments, including water quality, at-risk species and priority forage fish habitats.

FRIENDS Move Office Sept. 1

To accommodate the staff, interns, and stream of members and officials visiting FRIENDS, the organization is moving to larger quarters in Friday Harbor. The Board feels the move is required if FRIENDS is to vigorously pursue its six goals (see inside of front cover). After much searching and negotiating, Executive Director, Stephanie Buffum Field, in coordination with the Executive Committee, executed a lease at the Technology Center, 650 Mullis Street, Building A, Suite 201. Members and friends are welcome to visit the quarters after the middle of September.

Deputy Director Sought

The board of the FRIENDS has authorized the search for a new staff position: Deputy Director of the FRIENDS. Requirements include successful experience in working with both people and conservation matters, as well being admitted to the Washington Bar Association.

Forage Fish and Eelgrass, Part II

From Science to Stewardship

by Tina Whitman, Environmental Programs Manager

In the last issue I reported on the linkages between our local beaches, whales, salmon, lingcod, crab, birds, and forage fish. This report is an update on what FRIENDS is doing today to ensure that these critical linkages are protected.

FORAGE FISH

Salmon populations in the sea around our islands are declining. This has drawn attention to the importance of preserving nearshore marine habitats—beaches and eelgrass prairies—for juvenile salmon and critical salmon-prey species including surf smelt, Pacific sand lance and Pacific herring. These are known as forage fish. While many islanders understand the dependence of orca whales on salmon as a food source, the general public is just starting to recognize the importance of forage fish. As one person shared after reading the last newsletter, “I never thought about the fact that salmon have to eat, too!” Salmon prey (forage fish) lay their eggs up on beaches and on eelgrass and other marine algae in nearshore waters. Disturbances from shoreline development and upland activities threaten the vital nearshore marine habitats in many places around the county.

With the completion this year of three major research projects (Forage Fish Spawning Habitat Assessment, Herring Spawn Assessment, and Eelgrass Assessment), FRIENDS has the most up-to-date and comprehensive nearshore habitat database in the NW region. Armed with this data FRIENDS is moving from research to action that,

in partnership with the county and state, will protect local shorelines. Documented forage fish spawning habitats and mapped eelgrass communities are now protected under Washington State “No Net Loss” regulations.

400 SHORELINE MILES

One of our first action steps is education. Many people don't know that we have the longest shoreline of any county in the contiguous United States—over 400 miles to protect and preserve. Last winter FRIENDS and state agency staff members conducted a training session with county personnel and other land managers to share research findings and explain current protections and regulations. Over the next year FRIENDS will continue to apply scientific findings to affect positive stewardship practices through workshops for teachers, realtors, and shoreline landowners; information sharing with land managers; and pilot restoration and protection projects.

The FRIENDS' From Science to Stewardship Campaign is made possible by the generous support of the Puget Sound Action Team, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation—Community Salmon Fund, the Bullitt Foundation, and the Russell Family Foundation.

RIPARIAN RESTORATION

The term riparian refers to the habitat along natural water courses, including rivers, lakes and marine shorelines. Four coastal restoration projects have been implemented in the past year to improve

survival rates for incubating surf smelt eggs. FRIENDS, in partnership with local landowners, has replanted native trees at degraded shoreline sites on:

- Lopez—San Juan County Land Bank property next to the Ferry Landing,
- Orcas—YMCA, Camp Orkila,
- San Juan—Snug Harbor Resort,
- Shaw—a private residential property on Blind Bay.

RIBBONS OF LIFE

Coastal vegetation shades incubating surf smelt eggs, keeping them cooler during the hot summer months when low tides generally occur during the day. Riparian areas are often referred to as ribbons of life along our waterways because of the large numbers of species they benefit. Recent University of Washington research on the stomach contents of salmon in shallow-water habitats indicates that coastal forests also provide an important food source for juvenile salmon. Specifically, many terrestrial insects that live in riparian plants end up in the water, where they are likely to become part of a young salmon's next meal.

Volunteers from OASIS (Orcas Home School Group), the Lopez Project WET Team, and Shaw 4-H assisted with the implementation and monitoring of the marine riparian restoration projects to date. The projects were funded by the Northwest Straits Commission, the FishAmerica Foundation, the NOAA Restoration Center, and the National

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Workshops You Can Attend

Multiple public workshops on nearshore habitats will be hosted by FRIENDS in the coming months. Local and regional experts will provide the latest techniques for better understanding and protecting our shorelines. Results from the forage fish and eelgrass mapping projects will also be presented.

Living on the Shoreline

Workshops & Field Trip

Protect your property while preserving beach habitat and function for fish and wildlife! Find out about alternatives to traditional, habitat-degrading bulkheads. Jim Johannessen, a coastal geologist with extensive on-the-ground project experience, will conduct the workshops and field trips.

Tuesday September 7, 2004.

7-8:30 p.m. Library—Lopez

Wednesday September 8, 2004.

7-8:30 p.m. Mullis Sr. Center—San Juan

Thursday September 9, 2004.

7-8:30 p.m. Westsound Community Hall—Orcas

Friday September 10, 2004.

Afternoon. 1:30-3:30.

Community Center—Shaw

Saturday September 11, 2004.

Field Trip to shoreline softening restoration sites.

Time TBA. Meet at the Orcas ferry landing.

Educators Day

Educators will have the chance to gain the skills and materials they need to incorporate nearshore marine environments into their science curriculum. The full-day workshop for teachers will

include classroom, field, lab and curriculum components. Stipends are available for local educators.

Saturday October 23, 2004

Time TBA. Friday Harbor

With a Water View

Continuing Ed. for Realtors

Realtor education on nearshore processes, low impact development techniques, green construction and storm water management. Realtors will gain continuing education credits for attending this workshop.

Winter dates to be announced.

Upland Impacts Seminar

Private shoreline landowners and residents of village communities on each ferry-serviced island will have the opportunity to learn how to assess and address the impacts from storm water runoff.

Winter dates to be announced.

All workshops are free and open to the public. Please contact the FRIENDS of the San Juans at (360) 378-2319 or visit our website at www.sanjuans.org for more information on the workshop locations and times.

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Fish and Wildlife Foundation—Community Salmon Fund. These initial projects would have been impossible without participation of local, shoreline landowner, students, community volunteers, and funds providers.

PROTECTING LOCAL SHORELINES

By sharing data and acting as a watchdog for decisions affecting local shorelines, FRIENDS is working to make sure critical nearshore habitats are recognized and protected throughout the county. FRIENDS has provided nearshore information and management plan guidance to the San Juan County Land Bank and the San Juan Preservation Trust to assist these organizations with their conservation planning process. Information from the forage fish and eelgrass projects will also play a key role in San Juan County's required 2005 Critical Areas Updates for the county's Comprehensive Plan.

FORAGE FISH LIFE CYCLE

The descriptive picture on the opposite page is a condensed version of the poster used by FRIENDS at various events, and is on permanent display at Camp Orkila on Orcas Island.

WORKSHOP DATES

Sept 7 Living on Shoreline-Lopez

Sept 8 Living on Shoreline-SJI

Sept 9 Living on Shoreline-Orcas

Sept 10 Living on Shoreline-Shaw

Sept 11 Field Trip. Orcas Ferry Ldg.

Oct 23 Educators Forum-F.H.

Winter. Realtors Seminar

Winter. Storm Water Seminar

Fish & People depend on *Healthy Coastal Forests*

Benefits of Marine Riparian Areas:

- 📌 Provide shade for incubating forage fish (surf smelt) eggs
- 📌 Stabilize banks and reduce erosion
- 📌 Provide nutrients (leaf litter, invertebrates) to the marine food web
- 📌 Improve water quality
- 📌 Meet habitat needs for wildlife
- 📌 Protect scenic qualities and viewsheds

Forage Fish: A Critical Link in Marine Food Webs



Surf smelt, a major food source for salmon, rockfish, seabirds and marine mammals, lay their eggs on over 50 local beaches, including the beach here at Camp Orkila.



Good shade in the summer months help incubating smelt eggs remain cool and moist, boosting survival of this important forage fish.

Protecting the Ribbon of Life

Marine riparian areas are the interface between the land and the sea. Salmon and salmon prey (forage fish) depend on the shoreline for food and shelter. Their health here reflects the overall health of the ecosystem.

Terrestrial insects from near-shore riparian areas are an important component of a salmon's diet in its first year.

Project Partners
FRIENDS of the San Juans
and YMCA Camp Orkila have planted native trees and shrubs at this site to improve near-shore conditions for salmon and forage fish.



Funding for this project has been provided by the generous support of:



Preserve, protect, and enjoy the beauty of
the San Juan Islands. Join the FRIENDS.



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