

CELEBRATING
40
YEARS

Protecting and restoring
the San Juan Islands and
the Salish Sea for today
and for future generations.



Friends *of the*
San Juans

2019



Celebrating forty years of protecting what you love

In the face of both new and familiar challenges, our commitment to the San Juan Islands remains constant.

For 40 years, Friends of the San Juans has worked to protect the San Juan Islands for people and nature. Friends was founded in 1979 by a group of islanders who were frustrated by unregulated development. To protect our most special places and guide growth, Friends spearheaded the County's first Comprehensive Land-use Plan.

Our courageous founders shared a vision for a healthy economy and environment, renewable energy, abundant resource lands, culture, recreation, and good governance. These issues remain touchstones for us today.

Thanks to the dedication of our members, we have come a long way from our roots in growth management and expanded our actions to include research on marine shorelines and sea level rise; restoration actions for forage fish and juvenile salmon; and advocacy for oil spill prevention and the recovery of Southern Resident orcas.

In 1979 we didn't anticipate many of the challenges that the islands are currently facing like fire, drought, and sea level rise from a changing climate; the endangered species listings of Chinook salmon, Southern Resident orcas, and rockfish; vast growth in commercial vessel traffic increasing oil spill risks and underwater noise; nor that internet-based vacation rentals would alter our residential rental housing stock. We are able to take these challenges head on with the generous support from our members and the strength of our partnerships.

In this 40th Anniversary newsletter, we celebrate four

decades of bold action and our gratitude for our partners and especially our members. Thank you to all who have helped Friends accomplish so much! Together we are creating a legacy for future generations.

Stephanie Buffum
Executive Director



Stephanie joined Friends in 2001. Her background in public administration and planning inform her leadership on sustainable practices, cultural restoration, energy, and economic development. She fell in love with the islands as a teen while sailing, and resides on Shaw Island with her husband, son, and foster daughter.

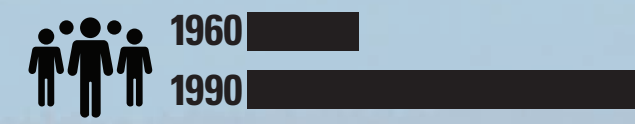


CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

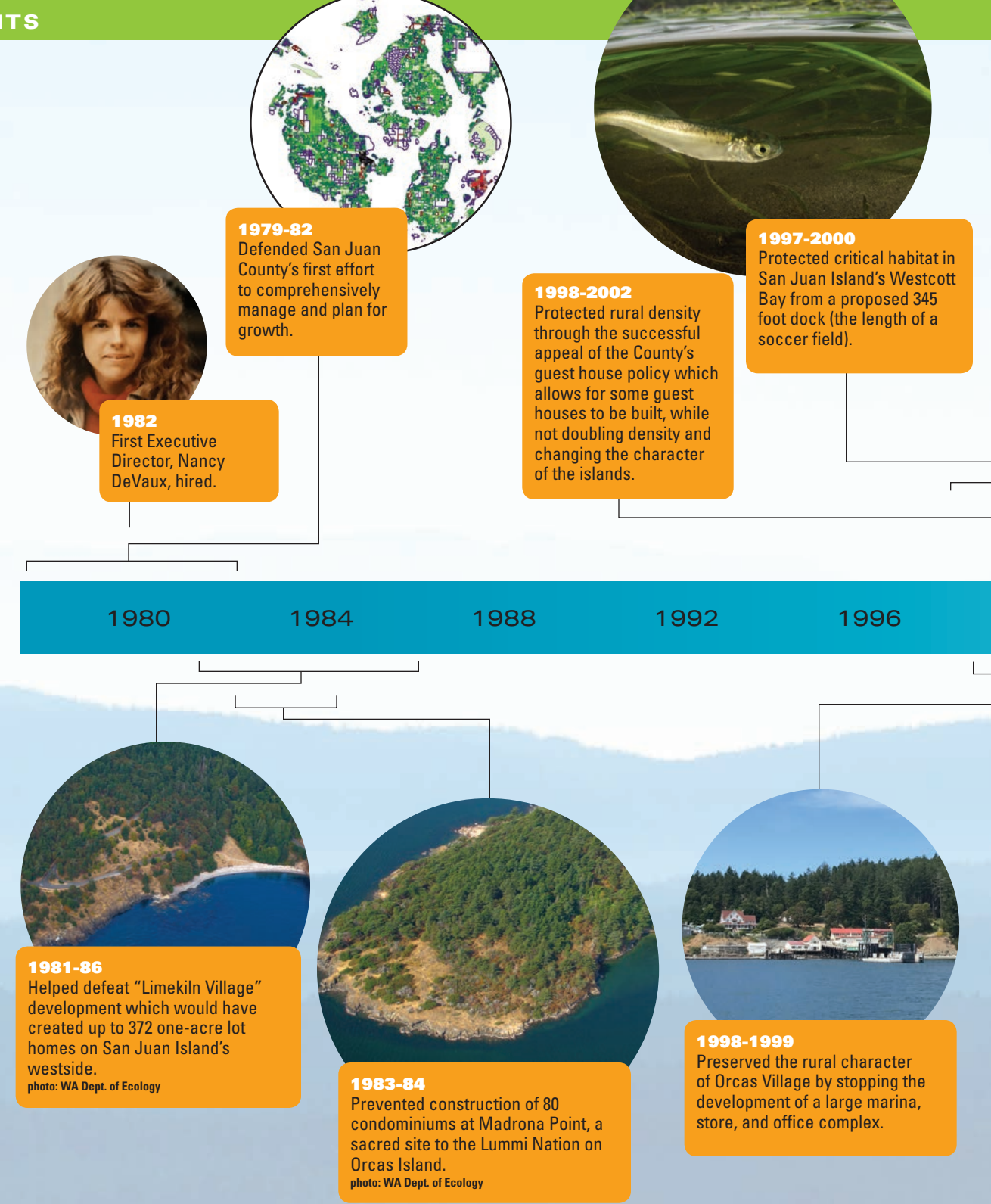
In the 1950s, the San Juan Islands began to experience rapid growth. From 1960 to 1990, the county's population rose a staggering 350%. This growth fragmented the landscape, and threatened natural resources and local communities. In 1979, to help preserve the county's beauty, rural character, and natural habitats, a group of citizens formed Friends of the San Juans.

Initially, Friends helped to shepherd San Juan County's first Comprehensive Land Use Plan to adoption. We were soon called upon to prevent the subdivision of 372 one-acre lots near San Juan Island's Lime Kiln State Park and help protect the sacred site of Orcas Island's Madrona Point from an 80-condominium project.

Friends current goals are to foster wild and healthy shorelines, promote thriving and sustainable communities, and ensure the health of the marine ecosystem. Our work is achieved through innovative public-private partnerships, applied science, legal advocacy, community-based initiatives, and the dedication of our membership.



Population in San Juan County rose 350% in three decades.



360.378.2319 | sanjuans.org



Natural beaches support salmon and Southern Resident orcas

Decades in the making, Friends’ Natural Shorelines action program combines research, education, and science to protect habitats.

In 1999, after decades of decline, Puget Sound chinook salmon were listed under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. Along with this threatened status, came the recognition that information on the habitats and species essential to salmon recovery was sorely lacking.

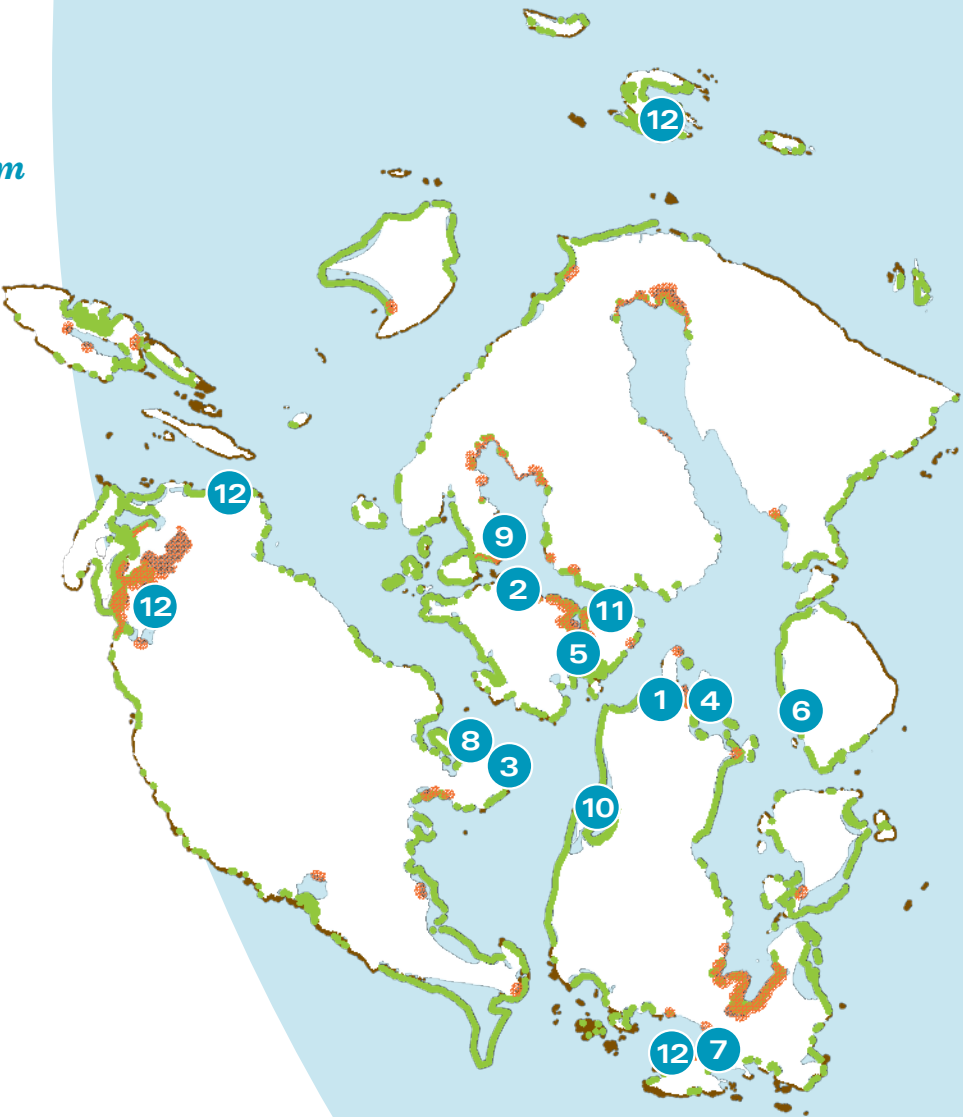
Friends plays a key role in filling some of these data gaps and, most importantly, in applying research results to policy and on the ground actions. Through our research we now know that:

- less than 3% of local shorelines support the beach spawning forage fish that salmon, seabirds, and marine mammals eat;
- forage fish eggs can be found incubating on beaches as high up as the bank toe;
- eelgrass communities and herring spawn are declining in many locations; and
- more than 5,000 modifications, like bulkheads and docks, dot our shorelines.

Research completed by tribal and agency scientists also confirmed that San Juan County shorelines are an important rearing and feeding area for juvenile Chinook from across Puget Sound and southern British Columbia.

Using this science, Friends’ Natural Shorelines program educates, prioritizes, restores, and protects critical habitats throughout the islands to help recover salmon and, in turn, our Southern Resident orcas.

None of these accomplishments would have been possible without funding support from our members and grant funders, the participation of landowners and volunteers, and the teamwork of our many partners.



- Forage Fish Spawning Habitat
- Eelgrass
- Bull Kelp

EDUCATION BY THE NUMBERS

Forage fish research and restoration – 285 students, 30 youth conservation corps, and 75 community volunteers provide thousands of hours of assistance.

Workshops on shoreline habitat, vegetation, erosion, and sea level rise – 40 teachers, 120 contractors, 85 realtors, 60 land managers, and 200 community members participated.

Waterfront property owner education – 5,000 receive stewardship guides, 215 attend workshops, and 75 receive site visits with technical experts.

COUNTYWIDE RESEARCH AND MAPPING GUIDES PROTECTION AND RESTORATION EFFORTS



photo: Andrew Reding

Forage Fish Spawning Habitat (ongoing). Forage fish rely on beaches and eelgrass for spawning and are essential food for fish, seabirds, and marine mammals.



Eelgrass Habitat (2003). Eelgrass provides food and shelter for fish, crabs and shellfish of cultural, commercial, and recreational importance.



Feeder Bluffs (2006). Sediment supply, or feeder bluffs, provide the sand and gravel that maintains beaches and critical habitats.



photo: The Whale Museum

Bull Kelp (2007). Bull kelp provides protected feeding areas for fish, birds, and marine mammals.



Shoreline Modifications (2009 & 2019). Structures such as docks, bulkheads, and groins disrupt natural processes and reduce habitat quantity and quality.

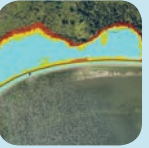


Pocket Beaches (2012). Typically small, sand and gravel beaches located between rocky headlands are priority rearing habitat for forage fish and salmon.



photo: Jess Newley

Salmon Recovery Planning (2012 and 2017). Research and maps are compiled and analyzed to guide restoration and protection actions.



Sea Level Rise Vulnerability (2013). Each shoreline will respond differently to erosion and flood hazards associated with sea level rise.

HABITAT RESTORATION ACTIONS IMPROVE MARINE FOOD WEBS

1

100 waterfront feet of forage fish beach spawning habitat restored by removing creosote and concrete (2008).

2



Two-acre wetland reconnected to marine waters through channel restoration and removal of fill (2008).

3



200 waterfront feet of beach and salt marsh habitat restored by removing an unnecessary rock bulkhead (2009).

4



Five-acre coastal lagoon and tide channel fish passage improved by removing concrete and fill (2009).

5



400 waterfront feet of forage fish spawning habitat enhanced road by nourishing the beach with sand and small gravel (2010).

6

200 waterfront feet of forage fish spawning habitat restored by removing outdated log handling facility (2013).

7



Eelgrass habitat restored by removing creosote piles, pier, and dock (2013).

8



250 waterfront feet of bluff and beach restored by removing an unnecessary rock bulkhead (2015).

9



140 waterfront feet of pocket beach restored by removing rock and creosote bulkhead (2015).

10



400 waterfront feet of salt marsh and tidal channel restored through removal of rock and wood armoring (2017).

11



600 waterfront feet of forage fish spawning habitat enhanced by rock removal and beach nourishment (2017); 340 additional adjacent feet (2019).

12

Multiple projects in progress.

Southern Resident orcas

The 73 critically endangered Southern Resident orcas face daily threats to their survival: they do not get enough salmon to eat, vessel noise and disturbance affect their ability to socialize and successfully hunt for scarce prey, and toxins from our polluted marine waters endanger their health.

If all of the proposed new and expanded terminal and refinery projects are constructed, there would be at least a 35% increase in vessel traffic in the Salish Sea adding more underwater noise and increasing the risk of a major oil spill that could cause the extinction of the Southern Resident orcas.

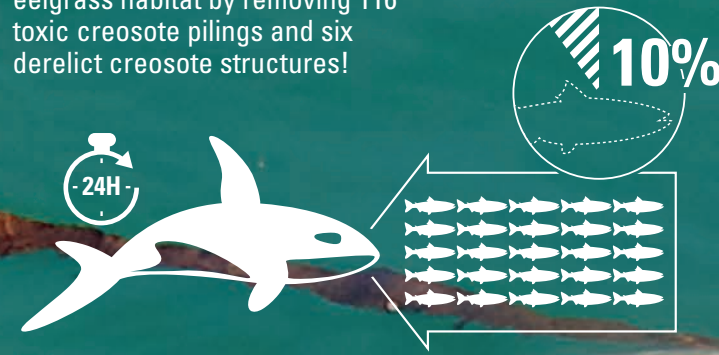
Friends' Safe Shipping program helps protect our marine waters, communities, and orcas from these risks. Because of our efforts and those of our partners and members, several fossil fuel export projects have been stopped in recent years.



Need Salmon

Endangered Chinook salmon are the primary food source for Southern Resident orcas, making up nearly 80% of their diet. The average Southern Resident orca needs to eat 18-25 adult salmon *each day* to meet its energy requirements. Unfortunately, Chinook populations in the Salish Sea are at 10% of their historic numbers.

Young Chinook salmon from British Columbia and Washington State eat, rest, and grow in the San Juan Islands on their way to the Pacific Ocean. To support salmon recovery, Friends has restored more than 3,000 feet of priority shoreline habitat at nine sites, reconnected four coastal wetlands to the marine environment, and enhanced eelgrass habitat by removing 116 toxic creosote pilings and six derelict creosote structures!



Need Forage Fish

Forage fish are small schooling fish that are dietary staples for salmon, lingcod, seabirds, and Minke whales. Beach spawning forage fish lay their eggs on sand and gravel making their survival especially vulnerable to changes on the shoreline like bulkheads, roads, and removal of vegetation.

To protect and restore forage fish spawning beaches it is imperative to know where these fish spawn their eggs. During the past 18 years Friends has conducted 1,900 surveys of 570 beaches on 24 islands in the San Juans and identified 50 new forage fish spawning beaches.



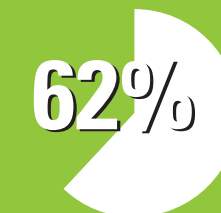
Need Healthy Shorelines

Healthy shorelines—those with native vegetation, eelgrass or kelp, and appropriately sized sand and gravel for forage fish to lay their eggs on—help young salmon feed, grow, and avoid predators as they migrate to the open ocean. Natural shorelines also reduce erosion, improve water quality, and provide wildlife habitat.

Friends provides free technical assistance for public and private landowners and also hosts trainings for shoreline contractors and land managers in order to improve shoreline stewardship. These education efforts have also directly led to restoration of natural shorelines. Friends has partnered with land owners to remove over 500 dump truck loads of rock, concrete, and fill material from beaches and wetland channels, improving habitat for forage fish and juvenile salmon.



We need you!



In 2018, members provided 62% of our income.

Friends depends your voice and financial support to help us protect what we all love about the San Juan Islands. Your support ensures we have the technical expertise to inform policy, protect and restore vital habitats, and educate our community.

We are so grateful!

Focusing on Southern Resident orcas

Friends of the San Juans has been working to protect and recover Southern Resident orcas since we co-petitioned for their listing under the Endangered Species Act in 2001. That petition eventually led to their 2005 listing as an endangered species. This work continues to be a priority.

Increasing prey availability is critical. We are engaging with fishery management councils on behalf of the Southern Residents in addition to our safe shipping and shoreline habitat protection and restoration programs. We also support, as a precautionary measure, efforts to provide more distance from recreational, fishing, and small commercial boats so that Southern Residents can successfully hunt for scarce prey.

While we celebrate the successes of the Southern Resident Orca Task Force and the recent State legislative session, there is more work and vigilance needed. Learn more about how you can help:

SAFE SHIPPING

Addressing the impacts from increases in shipping traffic

Friends of the San Juans’ Safe Shipping program helps protect the San Juan Islands and the Salish Sea from vessel traffic noise, accidents, and oil spills.

The Salish Sea, in both Washington State and British Columbia, is home to over 8 million people and is one of the world’s largest and most biologically rich inland seas. These beautiful marine waters also include major commercial shipping lanes.

In 2012, in response to an onslaught of proposals that would increase shipping traffic, Friends established the Safe Shipping program to focus our efforts on both preventing new projects from being constructed, like the coal terminal at Cherry Point, and reducing oil spill risks and vessel traffic impacts from existing shipping traffic.

It is challenging to keep track of the many new and expanding terminal and refinery project proposals in our transboundary waterways as they are always changing. Our recently updated Salish Sea vessel traffic projections infographic identifies 25 newly constructed, permitted, or proposed terminal and refinery projects. These would cumulatively add 4,232 annual vessel transits to and from ports in British Columbia and Washington State, with 91

percent bound for British Columbia, though vessel transit numbers for several Washington State projects have yet to be determined. The overall 35 percent possible increase in ocean-going commercial vessel traffic would greatly increase oil spill risks and vessel noise and disturbance impacts.

Friends’ Safe Shipping program is essential to advocate for the health and safety of our region’s human residents and for the marine ecosystem that is home to 119 threatened and endangered species. Public opinion can also make a big impact. Join our email list and we will keep you informed about opportunities to oppose proposed projects and support mitigation of shipping impacts like vessel traffic disturbance, greenhouse gas emissions, and oil spill risks. Email katie@sanjuans.org to receive these alerts.



photo by Chris Teren



New, approved & proposed increases in vessel traffic: 35%+TBD
Percentage of new vessel traffic destined for Canada: 91%
Percentage of new vessel traffic destined for the US: 9%+TBD

PROJECTED NEW ANNUAL VESSEL TRANSITS

1	Discovery LNG	732 *
2	Woodfibre LNG	80
3	Nanaimo Port Authority	222 *
4	Fibreco Export	18
5	Neptune Terminals	104
6	G3 Terminal	224
7	Centerm Container	130
8	Canada’s TMX Pipeline	696
9	Pacific Coast Terminals	88
10	Fraser Surrey Docks	160
10	Fraser Surrey Docks	364
11	WesPac LNG	136
12	Vancouver Airport Fuel	96
13	Roberts Bank Terminal 2	520
14	Westshore Terminals	62
15	GCT Deltaport	222 *
15	GCT Deltaport	222 *
16	Phillips 66 & REG	144
16	Phillips 66	TBD
17	Marathon (formerly Tesoro)	120
18	Cruise Seattle	TBD
19	Seaport Alliance	TBD
20	US Oil & Refining Co	72*+ TBD
21	Puget Sound Energy LNG	TBD
22	Grays Harbor	42 *

TOTAL PROJECTED NEW TRANSITS	4,232 + TBD
2018 TRANSITS	12,120
TOTAL 2018 + NEW TRANSITS	16,352 + TBD

* = Estimate



above: Classes spent hours digging through sand, finding plastic nurdles, and observing microplastics under the microscope.

right: Nurdles are small pellets of plastic which serve as a raw material in the manufacturing of plastic products or as inserts for pillows and cushions.

Science! Art! Action!

Spotlight on Friends of the San Juans plastic pollution education project

Friends recently completed a short marine plastic pollution education project with schools on Shaw, Orcas, and San Juan Islands. Friends' staff led students through a multi-day curriculum that included field surveys for microplastics, beach cleanups, and marine debris art with Orcas Island artist Brook Meinhardt.

One focus was on plastic nurdles. At the beach the classes spent over an hour digging through layers of sand and finding piles of nurdles. The kids were shocked and motivated to learn about where they came from and how to reduce them. The students also learned about how they could act to reduce plastic pollution. This resulted in students contacting legislators, presenting at a community waste reduction workshop, helping organize litter clean-ups, and identifying



Oystercatcher bird art created out of beach debris by a student at Orcas Island Middle School.

changes in their own habits.

"I had no idea how much plastic is harming the environment in a place as small as the San Juan Islands!"

Elena, 6th grade, Shaw School

"I enjoyed learning about how we can improve our environment by limiting our use of plastic."

Bella, 7th grade, Orcas Middle

"I learned a lot that I will incorporate in my home life."

Eve, 7th Grade, Orcas Middle



Fostering local leadership

Young people from the San Juans connect with decision makers to create awareness about a host of critical environmental challenges.

Young people around the world are using their voices to advocate for climate action and a livable future. Examples of inspiring youth-led efforts that are making a difference include: The Sunrise Movement, Our Children's Trust, Fridays for the Future, and Zero Hour.

San Juan County youth are stepping up to the challenge too!

Friends has been honored to join with students from Friday Harbor High School, Spring Street International School, Vermont Law School, Western Washington University, and Redfish School of Change (a partnership between the School of Environmental Studies at the University of Victoria, Huxley College of the Environment and the Center for Canadian-American Studies at Western Washington University, and GreenLearning Canada). We've helped mentor these students on projects that will have an impact locally and globally, including: promoting solar energy at schools, reducing plastics in the ocean, advocating for electric-hybrid ferries, reducing landfill waste, and protecting shoreline vegetation.

One highlight from this past year was when Friends staff took six students from Friday Harbor High and Spring Street International Schools to Olympia to join 500 Washington State

citizens for environmental lobby day. "Going to Olympia to see our government in action was informative and inspiring," said Ayla Ridwan, sophomore at Friday Harbor High School.

During lobby day, we met with our 40th District Representatives Debra Lekanoff and Jeff Morris to discuss our support for electrifying state ferries, addressing climate change, protecting Southern Resident orcas, and reducing plastic pollution in the Salish Sea. "We wanted to see policies passed this year that restore shoreline habitats, ban single-use plastic bags state-wide, and implement a clean energy plan in our state," said Raylee Miniken, sophomore at Friday Harbor High School.

We are incredibly proud of these student leaders and are grateful to our members for helping support this important work. With a little guidance our youth made an impact and helped move some important environmental legislation forward in 2019; they will continue to do so in 2020 and beyond.



Student mentees in Olympia for environmental lobby day with Friends Executive Director, Stephanie Buffum and Marine Protection Program Director, Lovel Pratt.

Meet the 2019 Friends of the San Juans Legal Interns

Andrew Hursh studies at Vermont Law School, focusing on environmental law, public lands, and international climate change agreements. His motivation for a public interest legal career developed out of his science background and graduate research modeling climate change effects on soils. Andrew is a backcountry enthusiast and reveres special, wild places, which need dedicated public stewards.



Lancee Whetman is from Salt Lake City, where she grew up exploring Utah's landscapes. She obtained her B.S. in Economics from Westminster College where she studied the impacts of sustainability reporting on firm profitability. She previously interned at Salt Lake City's Department of Sustainability and also at Utah's economic development agency for science and technology. Now, she is pursuing her J.D. at Vermont Law School, focusing on environmental law. Lancee enjoys playing basketball and volunteers on an organic farm on San Juan Island.





photo by Mark Gardner

Where and how does our county grow?

Friends was formed in 1979 to shepherd San Juan County’s first Comp Plan to adoption. Although we have much to be proud of, this is work that never ends.

The 1979 Comprehensive Land Use Plan (Comp Plan) and its 1999 update, did not contemplate the needs of electric cars and ferries, or drought and increased fire threats from climate change. Nor did they foresee that web-based vacation rental companies would redefine the way people travel and rent out their homes. Currently, the plan does not address how these changes are impacting our community and your input is needed to ensure it does.

This update will help shape the next 20 years here in the Islands, guiding where and how we grow. The plan needs to be tailored to meet new challenges and accommodate new opportunities for our community and ecosystem.

There are three primary purposes of the Comp Plan update:

- 1) Review the plan and its regulations and if necessary bring them up to date with relevant changes to state law and the Growth Management Act;
- 2) Respond to changes in land use and population; and
- 3) Address any local preferences or needs.

With support from our members, Friends is taking a leadership role in San Juan County’s current Comp Plan update to ensure that it preserves the islands’ cultural, ecological, and economic integrity while also managing the social and environmental impacts of our changing world. Citizen engagement is key to successfully achieving these goals.

Get Involved!

You can help shape the future of our Islands by engaging in the process and communicating with your Planning Commission and County Council Members. Go to sanjuanco.com/1079/Comprehensive-Plan-Update for details.

Thank you members, funders, and partners

Together we are protecting what we all love.

Funders

Members of Friends of the San Juans
The Bullitt Foundation
The Burning Foundation
The Campbell Foundation
San Juan Islands Conservation District
ESRI
The Horizons Foundation
Keta Legacy Foundation
LUSH Fresh Handmade Cosmetics
Northwest Fund for the Environment
Orcas Island Community Foundation
Puget Sound Partnership
Stand Up to Oil
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
WA State Salmon Recovery Funding Board
WA State Dept. of Ecology
The Wheeler Foundation

Partners

350 Seattle
First Nations: Tsawout, Tsarslip, Musqueum, and Tsleil-Waututh
US Tribes: Lummi Nation, Suquamish Tribe, Samish Indian Nation
Cherry Point Implementation Committee
Citizens for a Healthy Bay
City Cantabile Choir of Seattle
Climate Solutions
Coastal Geologic Services
Columbia River Keeper
Crag Law Center

Dogwood Initiative
Earthjustice
Evergreen Islands
Friday Harbor High School
Friends of the Columbia Gorge
Friends of the Earth
Friends of Lime Kiln Society
Futurewise
Georgia Strait Alliance
Islands Energy
Islands Trust
Lopez Huddle
Madrona Institute
Mayne Island Conservancy
Northwest Straits Foundation
OPALCO
Orca Network
Orca Relief Citizens’ Alliance
Orca Salmon Alliance
Orcas Cooperative
Orcas Island School District
Orcas Resistance
Orcas Women’s Coalition
Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility
PipeUp
Private landowners
Pulling Together Raven Foundation
Puget Sound Harbor Safety Committee
Puget Soundkeeper Alliance
Puget Sound Partnership
Raincoast Conservation Foundation
Rainshadow Solar
Redfish School of Change
Resource Media
RE Sources for Sustainable Communities

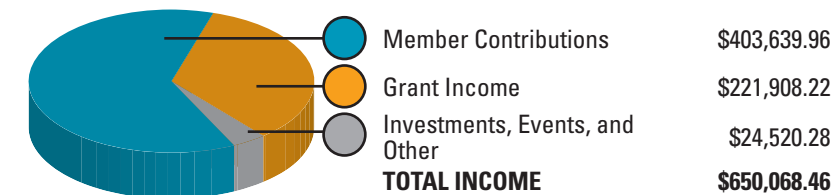
San Juans Alliance
San Juan County Land Bank
San Juan County Marine Resources Committee
San Juan County Public Works
San Juan Preservation Trust
San Juan Island National Historical Park
San Juan Island Stewardship Network
San Juan Islands Conservation District
San Juan Islands National Monument
San Juan Island Youth Conservation Corp
Save Snake River
Shaw School
Sierra Club
Skagit River System Cooperative
South Sound Sailing Society
Sound Action
Southern Resident Protection
Spring Street International School
STAND.earth
Tahoma Audubon Society
The Lands Council
The Whale Museum
U.S. Tribes: Lummi Nation, Tulalip Tribes, Samish Indian Nation, and the Makah Tribe
WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
Washington Environmental Council
WA State Parks
Wild Orca
Wilderness Committee

2018 Fiscal Year Summary

Friends of the San Juans is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization. Federal Tax ID No. 91-1087153.

Friends receives income from member donations, events, public and private grants. Expenditures pay for scientific research, education programs, legal defense, habitat restoration, publications, and administrative support.

Income:



Expenses:



Current and Fixed Assets as of December 31, 2018:



Current Liabilities and Accumulated Surplus:



LAND USE

The Land Use Element defines the land use designations on the official Comp Plan land use maps. It guides the regulatory framework of the County’s development regulations.



WATER RESOURCES

The Water Resources Element provides the goals and policies related to freshwater resources, including drinking water supply.



HOUSING

The Housing Element provides the goals and policies related to housing, including affordable housing. Housing availability and affordability are major issues facing county residents.



TRANSPORTATION

The Transportation Element establishes the goals and policies that will guide the development of air, marine, and land transportation facilities and services in a manner consistent with the Comp Plan’s overall goals.



CAPITAL FACILITIES

The Capital Facilities Element works to ensure that the County’s essential public facilities have enough capacity to serve the needs of our projected population over the next two decades.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Economic Development Element outlines goals and policies for realizing a healthy economy which is critical as there are concerns regarding the types of jobs available and associated impacts from housing and land use.

JOIN US!

Celebrate the power of people coming together to make change and protect what you love at one of our Special 40th Anniversary Celebrations:

- **September 22, Orcas Island**, Odd Fellows Hall, 112 Haven Rd., 4 – 6 pm
- **October 5, Lopez Island**, Lopez Center for Community and the Arts, 4 – 6 pm
- **October 12, San Juan Island**, San Juan Island Yacht Club, 273 Front St., 4 – 6 pm
- **November 8, Seattle**, Washington Athletic Club, 1325 6th Ave., 5:30-7:30 pm

Enjoy seasonally-inspired appetizers and local beverages, hear program updates, and learn about how you can support Friends for years to come.

Questions? 360-378-3991 or email
michel@sanjuans.org.

REGISTER!
sanjuans.org/40th

LEAVE A LEGACY

photo: Satya Curcio | satyaphotography.com

Friends protects and restores the San Juan Islands and the Salish Sea for people and nature.

Your values. Your vision. Your legacy.

Join the San Juan Islands Legacy Circle to protect what you love for future generations.
Call Michel to pledge a legacy gift
(360) 378-3991.



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we have donated 128 dollars
to your organisation for it is a
very worthy cause, we have saved
it all up in our sudoco box!
yay sea life! (tzedakah)
love,
the schneiders and nagels.
Calliope Tallulah
Sonya Stuart

Calliope and Tallulah are pictured on the front cover.

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