

County: San Juan
Grant No: SEANWS-2023-SJCoPW0002

PROJECT TITLE: Plastic Free Salish Sea

DELIVERABLES FOR TASK NO: 3.5 Final Report

PROGRESS REPORT: ☐ FINAL REPORT ☒

PERIOD COVERED: July - September 2023

DATE SUBMITTED: October 2023

3.5 Year Two Outreach and Stewardship Summary



This project has been funded wholly or in part by the United States Environmental Protection Agency under Assistance Agreement PC-00J90301. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Environmental Protection Agency, nor does mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.



Northwest Straits Progress Report

This report must accompany all requests for payment, along with any other deliverables per the scope of work.

Task 3: Summary of accomplishments for this reporting period.

The Plastic Free Salish Sea (PFSS) subcommittee maintained their monthly standing meetings on the last Tuesday of each month throughout the reporting period July 25, August 29, and September 26.

The key accomplishments during this reporting period included community engagement at the San Juan County Fair over four days August 16-20, the launch of the Adopt-a Road Program, and preparing for the Fall Great Islands Cleanup happening on September 30. With the launch of Adopt-a-Road, we are holding a contest to incentivize stewards to report their cleanup efforts. Between August 1 and December 31, 2023, whichever steward spends the most time picking up litter will win \$100 gift certificate to a local restaurant. So far, we have seen an increase in reporting and hope that this will continue to inspire people to report their clean ups on a more regular basis and help us add to growing collection of data.

For any work related to GIS, designate data standard utilized and associated data documentation:

No

Status of project schedule (Include percent complete and note any delays):

100 %

Status of financial and funds disbursement (include percent spent and explain any delays in spending):

100%

Personnel changes:

No changes

Any difficulties encountered during the reporting period:

No major difficulties at this time.

Anticipated (environmental, recreational, etc.) benefits of the project:

Continued removal of single-use plastics and other debris from the marine environment.



PLASTIC FREE SALISH SEA

Plastic Free Salish Sea: final report for 2022-2023

Plastic Free Salish Sea is a partnership created and led by the San Juan County MRC. The initiative seeks to raise awareness and change citizen behavior and the culture of plastic use in San Juan County and the surrounding Salish Sea region. Through 2022 and 2023, the MRC continued to expand the efforts initiated in 2018 and expanded in 2021-22 with the development and launch of the PFSS website as a means of broadening the reach of its efforts throughout the county and around the Salish Sea with the following core goals:

- Growing the Adopt-a-Beach and Adopt-a-Road programs in San Juan County
- Engaging the community through regular beach clean-up events, such as the Great Islands Clean-up in April and September
- Increasing community engagement and reporting cleanup efforts by beach and road stewards
- Assisting with plastic film recycling pilot with SC Johnson

The report highlights the core accomplishments of the MRC over the course of the 2022-2023 grant year. Additionally, the report also provides an outline of expected efforts for the 2023-2024 grant year.

Adopt-a-Beach Program

The PFSS Adopt-a-Beach program continued through the 2022-2023 grant year. At the end of the reporting period, a total 62 active beach stewards, including 22 new stewards this year, are covering 28 of the 32 locations listed on the website.



Adopt-a-Road Program

In 2023, momentum from the Adopt-a-Beach program sparked the idea of a sister program, Adopt-a-Road. Currently, there are 6 road stewards. Being a county made up of hundreds of distinct islands, trash on any roadway could easily get into local waterways and find its way into the Salish Sea.

Reporting Efforts

Increased efforts have been made this year to have beach and road stewards record their cleanups. The MRC knows there are people collecting trash but having data to back up efforts can help with funding, changing policy, and promoting a plastic free future. In partnership with the Friday Harbor House, we are offering a contest to beach and road stewards.

Between July 1 and December 31, whichever steward spends the most time gathering trash and debris will win a \$100 gift card. Hopefully, this incentive can inspire stewards to record their cleanup efforts.

Beach clean-up events

The MRC and its PFSS subcommittee and partners led the effort on two significant community clean-up events, the biannual Great Islands Clean-up. The spring event, held in April and traditionally the busier of the two saw 301 volunteers remove 4,754lbs of debris, the heaviest haul to date! The more recent Fall 2023 Great Islands Clean-up happened on September 30, 2023. We are still calculating final numbers but from San Juan Island alone we had 52 volunteers who helped collect 500lbs of debris. This Fall's event included more than just picking up trash and debris from local beaches and roadways. The celebration included hands on training in



Fall Great Islands Clean-up volunteers at Jackson's Beach.



Escaped Trash Protocol with Heather Trim from Zero Waste Washington, the great nurdle hunt with Friends of the San Juans and recycle t-shirt printing with Alchemy Arts Collective. Overall, it was a great success removing plastic from local beaches and roadways and sharing the message of the Plastic Free Salish Sea initiative.

Community Engagement

In addition to the Great Islands Clean-up, PFSS also engaged with the community during this reporting period by:

- Hosting a booth at the San Juan County Fair showcasing the MRC and highlighting PFSS and GICU and making eco-bricks with the public (Aug 17-20, 2023)
- Signing up new stewards at the Great Islands Clean-up event in Spring. MRC members helped to sign up 28 new Adopt-a-Beach and Adopt-a-Road stewards.
- Launching the Adopt-a-Road program engaging people in collecting litter and debris from more than just beaches.



2023 Accomplishments

- Continued stewarding of beaches and roadways across San Juan Island
- The addition of 28 Beach and Road Stewards
- Over 300lbs of plastic film recycling diverted from the landfill through the plastic film recycling pilot program
- Successful community engagement during San Juan County Fair
- Fall 2023 Great Islands Clean-up

Plastic Free Salish Sea Partners

In order to reduce and eliminate single use plastic in San Juan County, we need to engage and coordinate with strong partners in the region. PFSS is proud to partner with:

- San Juan County Solid Waste Program
- Lopez Solid Waste Disposal District
- San Juan Islands Conservation District
- Friends of the San Juans
- Port of Friday Harbor



Leverage/ Match

The grant funding available for the MRC's PFSS efforts in 2022-2023 was \$11,081.00. These efforts were also supported through the in-kind donations of time of the initiative partners. San Juan County also provided \$5,000 to support efforts related to Plastic Free Salish Sea.

Looking ahead to 2024

In 2024, the MRC will:

- Continue to grow Adopt-a-Beach and Adopt-a-Road programs, especially reporting of cleanup efforts.
- Coordinate Great Islands Clean-up events in spring and fall (Spring '24 scheduled for April 20)
- Engage the community at public event opportunities such as the San Juan County Fair

Attachments

Great Islands Clean-up Promotions

Beach Stewarding/GICU Photos