

IMPACT REPORT

2023



SURFRIDER
FOUNDATION

VANCOUVER, BC

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MESSAGE FROM OUR SURFRIDER CHAPTER

In 2023 Surfrider Vancouver has held seven beach cleanups and launched campaigns to combat poor cigarette waste disposal. Annual impact reports will be a new addition to outreach for us starting this year. With the creations of impact reports we want to highlight all the important campaigns, outreach, and advocacy initiatives that we work on with the help of all our amazing volunteers and supporters.

The 5 main priorities of the Vancouver Surfrider chapter are:

- 1 PLASTIC REDUCTION**
Reducing the impact of plastics in the marine environments that surround us
- 2 CLEAN WATER**
Protecting the health and sustainability of our planet's most precious resource
- 3 OCEAN PROTECTION**
Defending our oceans from challenges threatening the vitality of the ecosystem
- 4 BEACH ACCESS**
Working with decision-makers to ensure full and fair beach access for all to enjoy
- 5 COASTAL PRESERVATION**
Taking on issues that threaten our beaches and natural shorelines

MISSION

Surfrider Foundation Vancouver is an entirely volunteer-run team of everyday people dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of the ocean, beaches, and waves, for all people through a powerful activist network. We host monthly events to educate and engage the Vancouver community in protecting our urban coastline.



WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

Surfrider Vancouver, Canada, is dedicated to addressing the pressing issue of plastic pollution in our oceans. As a coastal city, Vancouver faces the detrimental effects of plastic waste on marine ecosystems. Surfrider Vancouver recognizes that single-use plastics, such as bottles, bags, and straws, are major contributors to this problem. Their primary focus is to reduce the consumption and improper disposal of single-use plastics through advocacy, education, and beach cleanup initiatives. By raising awareness, implementing sustainable practices, and collaborating with local communities, Surfrider Vancouver strives to protect the marine environment and create a cleaner, healthier future for our oceans. One of the main challenges we want to address over the next two quarters is cigarette butt disposal.



POOR CIGARETTE BUTT DISPOSAL

The issue of poor cigarette butt disposal in Vancouver, Canada, poses a significant problem that directly contributes to the pollution of the oceans. Cigarette butts are among the most common forms of litter found in cities, and Vancouver is no exception. Many smokers tend to casually discard their finished cigarettes on the streets, sidewalks, and even beaches, unaware of the environmental harm they cause. These discarded butts often get washed into storm drains during rain showers and eventually find their way into local waterways, eventually making their journey to the ocean. Cigarette filters are made of cellulose acetate, a type of plastic that can take several years to decompose. As a result, the accumulation of cigarette butts in the ocean causes water pollution and endangers marine life. The toxic chemicals and carcinogens present in cigarette filters can leach into the water, harming aquatic organisms and disrupting fragile ecosystems. Addressing this issue requires public awareness campaigns, stricter enforcement of littering laws, and the implementation of convenient and easily accessible receptacles for cigarette butt disposal.

HOW DO WE ADDRESS THE PROBLEM?

BEACH CLEANUPS

Surfrider Vancouver conducts regular beach cleanups at prominent locations throughout the Greater Vancouver area, aiming to mitigate the environmental impact caused by litter. In addition to these cleanup activities, we extend our efforts to encompass other areas such as trails, riversides, and urban shorelines. Our primary focus, however, remains on the following beaches, where annual cleanups and meticulous data collection allow us to monitor ongoing threats and assess their ecological well-being.

Wreck Beach



Renowned as one of Vancouver's most frequented beaches during the summer, Wreck Beach's secluded location makes it a popular gathering spot for recreational activities. However, this popularity also leads to a considerable accumulation of litter, particularly in the form of drink cans and beer bottle caps. Wreck Beach consistently ranks high in our cleanup records for the prevalence of these items, necessitating targeted interventions to mitigate their negative impact.

Spanish Banks/ Jericho Beach



During the peak summer season, Jericho Beach serves as a popular destination for family picnics, barbecues, and leisurely beach activities. Unfortunately, the surge in visitors is accompanied by a corresponding increase in discarded trash. The capacity of waste bins proves inadequate to handle the excessive amount of litter, including food wrappers, beer cans, and gas bottles. The coastal winds exacerbate the situation, dispersing the debris across the beaches and posing a direct threat to the adjacent ocean environment.

Kits Beach



As the number of beach-goers surges in the summer months, Kitsilano Beach witnesses a corresponding rise in the volume of abandoned trash. Among all our cleanup locations, Kits Beach exhibits the highest count of cigarette butts and food wrappers. This concerning trend necessitates focused attention to tackle the improper disposal of these items and prevent their adverse effects on the coastal ecosystem.

English Bay Beach



Situated in downtown Vancouver, English Bay Beach hosts numerous events throughout the year due to its convenient location. One notable event is the fireworks night in mid-July, which attracts a massive crowd of thousands. Unfortunately, this influx of visitors results in substantial amounts of disposable cups, bottles, and cigarette butts being discarded on the beach. This recurring issue demands immediate action to ensure the timely and thorough removal of such waste, preventing it from polluting the coastal environment.

Through our continued efforts at these key locations, Surfrider Vancouver endeavors to preserve the natural beauty of our beaches, protect marine life, and promote responsible waste management practices within the community.

You can become a Beach Clean Volunteer today
(vancouver.surfrider.org/volunteer)
and help protect your backyard!

HOW DO WE ADDRESS THE PROBLEM?

VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT AND FUNDRAISING EVENTS

We're proud to say that our volunteers are at the heart of every Surfrider chapter across Canada. From connecting with new interested volunteers, and encouraging volunteers as they define their passions and skill sets, to routine high fives and quick check-ins, the Volunteer Committee ensures that all volunteers are supported in their roles.

Surfrider hosts socials & public meetups year around. This is a great opportunity to connect with fellow volunteers, members of our Executive Committee, build our community and learn about the awesome projects we have on the go. Stay up to date with Surfrider Vancouver's events by frequently reviewing [our event calendar](https://vancouver.surfrider.org/events) (vancouver.surfrider.org/events).



2023 EVENTS CALENDAR

- JAN 16** Blue Monday Movie Screening: Kentent and Wild Beauty with Mathea Olin at Patagonia Vancouver
- FEB 7** Surfrider Vancouver Happy Hour + Public Meet Up at the Pawn Shop in Vancouver
- FEB 8** Surfrider Vancouver showcased during University of British Columbia's 2023 Climate Emergency Week Fair
- FEB 18** Executive Committee Strategy + Surf Retreat in Cannon Beach, Oregon, USA
- MAR 18** Stanley Park Cleanup at Third Beach
- APR 22** Earth Day Cleanup at Garry Point, Richmond, BC
- MAY 23** Surfrider Vancouver Happy Hour + Public Meet Up at Smitty's Oyster House
- JUN 10** Kitsilano Beach Cleanup during World Ocean's Week
- AUG 12** Spanish Banks Beach Cleanup + Community BBQ
- SEP 9** Wreck Beach Cleanup
- OCT 14** Locarno Beach Cleanup
- DEC 9** English Bay Beach Cleanup

HOLD ON TO YOUR BUTT CAMPAIGN

Across North America, Surfrider Chapters have confirmed the number one item, by number, found on our beaches are cigarette butts.

Surfrider Vancouver and its volunteers have collected over 44,381 butts from Spanish Banks, Jericho, Garry Point, Kitsilano, Second, Third and Wreck Beach since 2017. During each cleanup, within a couple hours, the volunteers collect and audit thousands of cigarettes on our beaches and coastline.

For Ocean Week Canada, on June 10th, 2023, Surfrider Vancouver unveiled “Ciggy Stardust”, a visual representation of ocean cigarette waste in the form of a sculptured youth Southern Resident orca whale covered in over 6,200 sorted and meticulously trimmed cigarette butts found on our local beaches. This culturally and ecologically significant orca population is currently at risk of extinction with only 73 individuals left in the three Southern Resident pods. The exhibit establishes a link between urban cigarette pollution and our deep connection to the Salish Sea and its protection.

Using this visual representation of cigarette waste, Surfrider Vancouver will continue to advocate for the policies and societal shifts in behaviour which addresses cigarette pollution and the protection of our ocean, beaches and waves for future generations.

This project was made with the generous help from Ocean Week Canada, Canadian Ocean Literacy Coalition, modelling and 3D printing from TCG FILM Inc, exhibit printing from Fritzworks Printing and all the volunteers of Surfrider Vancouver.



HOW ARE WE MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN 2023?

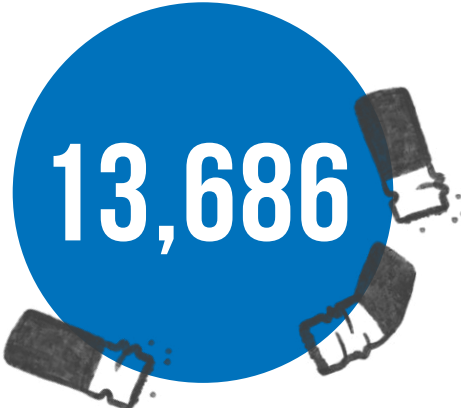


BEACH CLEANUPS

Third Beach, Gary Point, Kits Beach, Spanish Banks, Wreck Beach, Locarno & English Bay



VOLUNTEERS GATHERED



CIGARETTE BUTTS REMOVED



OF TRASH CLEARED



OF TRASH DIVERTED FROM LANDFILL

HOW ARE WE MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN 2023?

CLEANBC PLASTICS ACTION PLAN

After lobbying the provincial government for strict plastic regulations since 2019, Surfrider Vancouver and the broader Surfrider Canada family is celebrating their newest coastal victory: the Province of BC's [Single-Use and Plastic Waste Prevention Regulation \(www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/waste-management/recycling/recycle/cleanbc_plastics_action_plan_consultation_paper_2019.pdf\)](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/waste-management/recycling/recycle/cleanbc_plastics_action_plan_consultation_paper_2019.pdf) announced in August 2023. This new regulation falls under the umbrella of the CleanBC Plastics Action Plan, which is seeking to protect the Province of BC from the continuous storm of plastic pollution that is reigning the streets, parks, landfills and coastline. The items covered by the regulation include shopping bags, disposable food service accessories, oxo-degradable plastics and food service packaging made of polystyrene foam, polyvinyl chloride (PVC), polyvinylidene chloride (PVDC), compostable or biodegradable plastics.

The Province of BC's impending rules will also sync up with the Single-use Plastics Prohibition Regulations that will be enacted in December 2023. This new provincial regulation which will be implemented by February 2024, is significant because it will ban plastic resins as well as plastic items not captured in the federal plastic ban, including bioplastics and beverage cup lids.

THE SINGLE-USE PLASTICS PROHIBITION REGULATIONS

The Single-use Plastics Prohibition Regulations (SUPPR) are part of the Government of Canada's comprehensive plan to address pollution, meet its target of zero plastic waste by 2030, and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

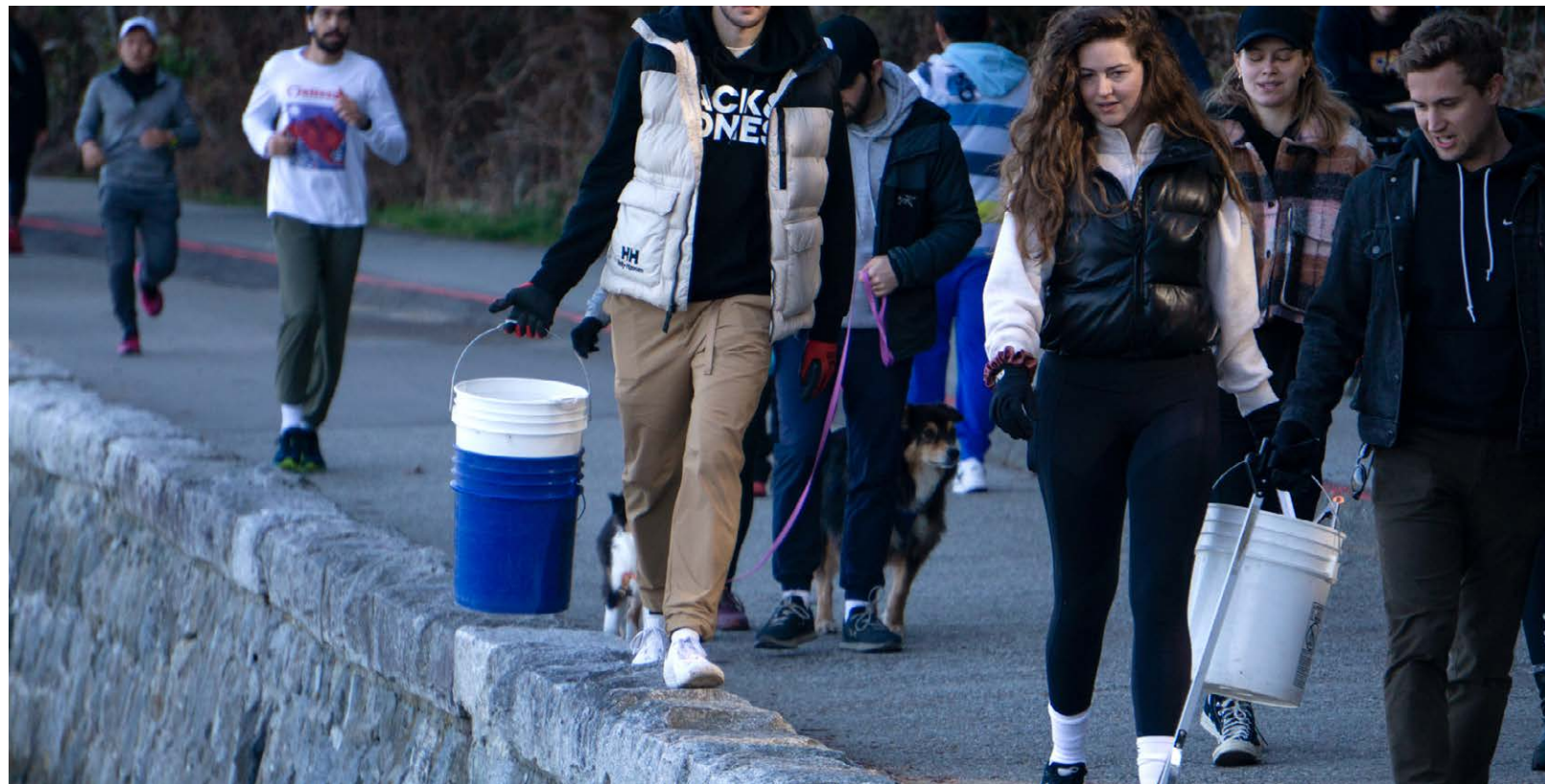
The Regulations prohibit the manufacture, import and sale of single-use plastic checkout bags, cutlery, food service ware made from or containing problematic plastics, ring carriers, stir sticks, and straws. Surfrider Foundation Canada has worked hard to be a consistent, positive and significant stakeholder in helping turn this into a nationwide reality.

POLICY CHANGE UPDATES

Motion 80: MP Rachel Blaney has put forward Motion-80 in the House of Commons, calling for a ban on both expanded polystyrene and extruded polystyrene (XPS) in floating structures in the aquatic environment.

EPS and XPS material and fragments are crucial to eliminate from the aquatic environment if we hope to make a significant impact on plastic pollution. These materials make up 50-70% of pollution collected by cleanup groups in British Columbia, in both urban and remote coastlines of BC. These materials are also the most common material collected across Canada during Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup events. This is because EPS and XPS is used in aquatic environments, such as in docks, marinas and aquaculture infrastructure. [Learn more about this active campaign here](http://canada.surfrider.org/polystyrene-pollution) (canada.surfrider.org/polystyrene-pollution).

You can find more details on our cross-chapter coastal victories on Surfrider Canada's website: canada.surfrider.org/coastal-victories



OUTLOOK ON THE COMING YEAR

Surfrider Vancouver is thrilled to present an array of exciting projects on the horizon for the upcoming year. In line with our program objectives, we are dedicated to scaling up our beach cleanup initiatives, with the target of hosting at least 8 cleanups in different Vancouver lower mainland locations throughout 2024. Your support is crucial in helping us achieve this milestone, so join us in making a tangible impact!

A key focus area for our chapter revolves around the Hold On to Your Butt campaign, aimed at combatting cigarette litter not only in Vancouver but also beyond. Our multifaceted approach involves raising awareness about the detrimental effects of cigarette butt pollution, developing innovative strategies to address the issue, and actively removing cigarette butts from beaches and public spaces. By spearheading these efforts, we strive to foster a cleaner environment and instill responsible habits among individuals.

At Surfrider Vancouver, one of our primary goals is to establish and nurture a robust network of passionate and engaged volunteers who champion our cause. We invite you to explore our [open volunteer positions](https://vancouver.surfrider.org/open-positions) (vancouver.surfrider.org/open-positions), as we are constantly seeking to expand our Surfrider community and shine a spotlight on the exceptional individuals making waves in our local area. Together, we can build a powerful force for positive change and amplify our collective impact.



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

We love leaving our urban beaches clean. But, that's not all we do. We connect and build a strong community of coastal defenders. We also love that we are 100% volunteer led. This also means that we are a small but mighty crew where every donation goes to not only helping us divert beach cleanup waste away from landfills, but also launch campaigns that are meaningful to the communities we live and play in.

In 2023 we cleaned 4.17 km of coastline in Metro Vancouver and the estimated cost of facilitating volunteer beach cleanups is \$2,000/km. The number is high and gets bigger, especially when we clean remote areas of our coastlines. 100% of every donation we receive goes directly to our volunteer-run charity. We are a registered charity and receipts are issued upon request. We deeply appreciate your support.

To talk more about your donation and how we are committed to it being a win/win for both of us [contact our development team](mailto:development@vancouver.surfrider.org) (development@vancouver.surfrider.org).

DONATE TO SURFRIDER VANCOUVER NOW!
vancouver.surfrider.org/donate



CONNECT WITH US

Connect with **Surfrider Vancouver's Chair** (chair@vancouver.surfrider.org) if you have an idea or any feedback about our programs/campaigns.

Connect with our **Development Director** (development@vancouver.surfrider.org) to learn more about partnerships and donations.

Connect with our **Volunteer Coordinator** (volunteercoordinator@vancouver.surfrider.org) to learn more about us and to get involved.





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