

2023

# Annual Report



Photo: Bryanna Bradley

# Contents

**04 Our Story**

**07 Message from the Team**

**08 Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion**

**10 Our Impact**

**11 Coastal Victories**

**12 Campaigns**

**13 Programs**

**14 Our Network**

**15 Network Highlights**

**16 Collaborators**

**18 Our Supporters**

**19 Staff & Volunteers**



DEDICATED TO THE PROTECTION AND  
ENJOYMENT OF OCEANS, WAVES, AND BEACHES,  
FOR ALL PEOPLE,  
THROUGH A POWERFUL ACTIVIST NETWORK



# Our Story

More than 35 years ago, a handful of surfers made a powerful statement by founding the Surfrider Foundation. The waves in Malibu, California, were threatened by development and pollution. The surfers wanted to protect what they loved, so they took action and organized a group to protest the threats to the local surf break. That spark ignited a movement that now consists of more than a million supporters, activists and members around the world.

Today, the Surfrider Foundation is a powerful network of coastal defenders who share a deep passion for the ocean, waves, and beaches because we live, work, and play there. We're surfers, swimmers, divers, beachgoers, stand-up paddleboarders, and coastal recreationists. It's our love for the ocean and coasts that drives us to defend clean water and healthy beaches.

Over the past 18 years, Surfrider chapters and clubs in Canada have had a tremendous impact by tackling numerous threats and advancing progressive policies to protect the ocean and coasts. During this time, we have grown and evolved to the point where we can now work independently on the national level in Canada as a Surfrider global affiliate. In March 2022, Surfrider Foundation Canada became the organization's newest international affiliate, marking a big milestone in our growth and evolution in Canada.

If we have the means to take action for the aquatic places we love and depend on, then we have a responsibility to do so for the people of today and future generations. The Surfrider Foundation invites all who care about the ocean, waves, and beaches, regardless of background, socioeconomic class, or geographic location, to join us as we work together to protect our coasts for the future.

Thank you for your continued support.



Photo: Kristina Lee



Photo: Jen Steele

**If we have the means to take action for the aquatic places we love and depend on, then we have a responsibility to do so for the people of today and future generations.**



Photo: Lilly Woodbury



Photo: Bryanna Bradley

A coastal landscape featuring a rocky shore with waves crashing against it. The sky is filled with dramatic, dark clouds. In the background, a grassy hillside with a small house is visible. The foreground shows green grass and some small plants.

OUR VISION IS TO STRENGTHEN AND EXPAND  
THE SURFRIDER NETWORK ACROSS CANADA  
TO ADDRESS THE GROWING ISSUES THAT THREATEN ALL  
OF THIS COUNTRY'S COASTS AND WATERS

# Our Movement is Growing

2023 was the first full year of Surfrider Foundation Canada being a stand-alone international affiliate of the Surfrider Foundation. Over the course of 2023, we gained strong momentum with network expansion and campaign advocacy, reinforcing our place as one of Canada's leading aquatic environmental organizations.

After approximately 18 years of a strong chapter presence in British Columbia (B.C.), we have fully expanded to the East Coast, establishing the Atlantic Canada chapter in Halifax, Nova Scotia. This chapter grew from the students that participated in the club at Dalhousie University that was set up in 2022, but were looking for an opportunity to continue with Surfrider after graduation. The creation of the Atlantic Canada chapter is a realization of our vision to expand the network across the country. It is also a true testament to our theory of change. By investing in a collective of individuals, we help grow environmental capacity on the ground in communities, which generates the political will necessary to enact strong coastal protection policies.

In 2023, Surfrider Canada evolved its beach cleanup activity from a patchwork of locally-led cleanup events across the country to a centralized program that enhances the coordination and impact of these powerful coastal restoration events. We now use a standardized data card across the entire chapter and club network to collect information on the dominant forms of pollution that we collect, which better equips us to design campaigns that target pollution that is most impactful in the coastal environment.

Last year was also an important year in our quest to eradicate plastic pollution in the marine environment. After years of increased pressure from local governments in B.C. and direct advocacy on behalf of Surfrider Canada, the Province introduced the Single-Use and Plastic Waste Prevention Regulation, which addresses hard to recycle and single-use plastic items. While it has taken us a long time to get here, and the work to reduce single-use plastic items will

continue on, this coastal victory is an excellent example of how taking on an environmental battle may not be easy, but with constant pressure, endlessly applied, it can be won.


We also continued our network-wide advocacy efforts to address expanded polystyrene pollution (EPS) often referred to as Styrofoam™, which is a petroleum-based plastic commonly used for protective packaging or dock floatation. EPS is one of the most detrimental forms of plastic pollution in both freshwater and marine environments in Canada. We continued to urge federal elected officials to support a motion to ban this material used in aquatic infrastructure. We have also engaged key stakeholders and decision makers in B.C., calling for action to be taken at the provincial level.

Looking forward to 2024, Surfrider Foundation Canada is excited to keep the momentum going with our campaign advocacy and network expansion. We have several strong prospects for new student clubs and chapters to explore. We also aim to expand our work on plastics with a multi-jurisdictional campaign targeting cigarette butt pollution. Year after year, butts are the most common form of litter that Surfrider volunteers collect at shoreline cleanup events. We are excited to focus our advocacy on this toxic form of pollution, helping to protect the shorelines that we all love to visit.

Thank you for your support. Long live the beach!



Lucas Harris  
Executive Director



Lilly Woodbury  
Regional Manager



Katie Keats  
Beach Cleanup Manager

# Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Why is the Surfrider Foundation working on Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) issues?

We know that creating an impact on healthy oceans and coastlines depends on learning and being responsive to our communities and acting in consensual allyship with them. Following our affiliation from the United States in the spring of 2022, we began the journey of developing a Surfrider Canada JEDI Strategy. The JEDI Strategy enables our team to take action to achieve our commitment to foster a just, equitable, diverse, and inclusive organization for all people.

The JEDI Strategy was developed with the input from our volunteer network, staff, and Board of Directors. We also provided honorariums to expert reviewers who are members of First Nations where our Chapters and Clubs are operating in British Columbia, gathering their feedback to strengthen the JEDI strategy. Based on the feedback, we have finalized the JEDI strategy, with a summary available on our website. We have also created an internal toolkit of JEDI definitions and resources, as well as an onboarding package for new volunteers that includes key documents like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission *94 Calls to Action*, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, and

the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan* in B.C. All of our resources are accessible via our internal JEDI Intranet for our volunteer network.

We're excited to move forward continuing to implement the JEDI Strategy throughout 2024. Our plans encompass developing an Inclusive Beach Clean Protocol to increase the accessibility of our events, partnering with communities directly impacted by plastic pollution in our initiatives and media, as well as launching a JEDI speaker series for our volunteer network. Ultimately, the JEDI Strategy impacts all of our internal operations and our advocacy. Thus, all of our efforts will be shaped by a JEDI lens and the actions in our JEDI Strategy in 2024 and beyond.

**Surfrider Foundation Canada is committed to fostering a just, equitable, diverse, and inclusive organization for all people. Our success and impact depends on learning from our community, standing in solidarity with our allies, and working towards a more just future.**



DEFENDING THE OCEAN AND WATERS  
FOR ALL TO ENJOY



Photo: Jen Steele

# Our Impact

In 2023, we made significant strides in our programs and campaigns, as well as expanding our network across Canada! At the end of the year, we welcomed the Atlantic Chapter, based in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Mi'kmaq First Nations territory.

Since 2019, Surfrider Canada has been advocating that the provincial government in B.C. implement strict plastic regulations, including banning all single-use plastics like beverage cups, as well as all bioplastics. In 2023, we

celebrated a victory in British Columbia, as the Province announced the "Single-Use and Plastic Waste Prevention Regulation". This new regulation falls under the umbrella of the CleanBC Plastics Action Plan, which seeks to protect the Province of B.C. from the continuous storm of hard to recycle and single-use plastic items impacting the streets, parks, landfills, and coastline.

**Surfrider Foundation Canada continues to have a major voice on critical issues facing Canada's marine environment.**

**2,636**

Volunteers across Canada engaged

## CLEAN WATER

**18**

Beaches Monitored

**252**

Sampling Sites

## BEACH ACCESS

**1**

Active campaign to enhance surf etiquette and the visitor experience in Jordan River, BC

## PLASTIC POLLUTION

**1**

Regulation in BC limiting single-use plastic

**49**

Total Cleanups

**6,427lbs**

Debris Removed

**422,700K**

Cigarette Butts Picked-up

**4**

Active campaigns on cigarette butts, EPS, and plastic bottles

**102km**

Shoreline cleaned

**192**

Ocean Friendly Businesses



Photo: Jen Steele

# Coastal Victories

# 1

**Total Victories**

A coastal victory is a decision made in favour of the coastal and ocean environment that results in a positive conservation outcome, improves coastal access, or both.

For more information visit <https://canada.surfrider.org/coastal-victories>

In 2023, Surfrider Canada had one coastal victory, increasing our total to 14.

## VICTORY LOCATIONS



VICTORY	FOCUS AREA	LOCATION
Regulation on Single-use Plastics	Plastic Reduction	British Columbia

# Campaigns

Surfrider Foundation focuses on several key environmental issues, including plastics reduction, ocean protection, beach access, coastal preservation, and water quality. With Surfrider Foundation Canada being a new global affiliate in startup mode, we focused our advocacy in 2023 primarily on plastic pollution. Our following campaigns are addressing predominant forms of plastic pollution, which we plan to expand on in 2024.



## PLASTIC POLLUTION

### Foam Free Waters

Expanded and extruded polystyrene (EPS & XPS) is one of the most intense forms of plastic marine debris. This is because it easily breaks down into tiny fragments that are next to impossible to cleanup. In 2023, we made progress on our Foam Free Waters Campaign, which is calling for a federal ban on EPS & XPS through Motion-80. 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. This is because EPS and XPS are used extensively in aquatic environments, such as in docks, marinas, and aquaculture infrastructure. In 2023, we were able to send over a thousand postcards from concerned citizens to Members of Parliament and the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada, as well as hundreds of digital letters. To learn more about our work on EPS, visit: <https://canada.surfrider.org/eps-pollution>



Photo: Alys Hoyland

### Hold On To Your Butt

Cigarette butts are the most common form of litter found at our beach cleanup events. Yet, they have gone unaddressed by policy makers. Hold On To Your Butt aims to reduce the amount of cigarette butt pollution occurring through local, provincial, and national campaigns. At the local level, numerous chapters are leading efforts to address cigarette butt pollution, through campaigns and cigarette butt recycling. We are also working with the Environmental Law Centre at the University of Victoria to develop policy recommendations for reducing butt waste at the provincial and national levels.

### Take Back the Tap

Single-use water bottles are a problematic form of plastic pollution. The Pacific Rim Chapter's Take Back the Tap Campaign has the end goal of banning all single-use plastic water bottles 1L and under from the Pacific Rim. From 2021 to the present, this chapter has received support from over 70 businesses in Tofino and Ucluelet, all of whom have eliminated plastic water bottles from their operations. Based on years of hard work and building momentum, we hope to see this campaign win a victory in 2024!

**Our model is to engage environmental experts to create solutions by uniting local and national resources to protect the coast.**

# Programs



## BEACH CLEANUPS

Beach cleanups restore coastlines from plastic marine debris and litter, safeguard the ocean from further pollution, and raise awareness about the plastics crisis. Surfrider Foundation Canada's volunteer network conducts beach cleanups throughout Western Canada and in Nova Scotia. Surfrider uses data from these cleanups to inform various campaigns. In 2023, the Surfrider Foundation Canada network performed a total of 49 community shoreline cleanups across Canada, removing 6,427 lbs of debris from 102km of shoreline. <https://canada.surfrider.org/beach-cleanups>



Photo: Jen Steele



## BLUE WATER TASK FORCE

The Blue Water Task Force is the Surfrider Foundation's volunteer-run water testing, education, and advocacy program. Our Vancouver Island chapter leads this program in Canada to alert communities and local officials of water quality problems in the Southern Vancouver Island region and to work toward solutions. In 2023 they performed 252 tests across 18 different sites. <https://vancouverisland.surfrider.org/blue-water-task-force>



## OCEAN FRIENDLY BUSINESS

Surfrider's Ocean Friendly Business program recognizes businesses that adopt sustainable practices to protect the ocean. Between the Pacific Rim Chapters work in Tofino and Ucluelet and our partnership with Synergy Foundation in other parts of B.C., we have certified over 194 businesses.

<https://bcgreenbusiness.ca/become-a-member/certification-process/>

<https://www.pacificrim.surfrider.org/ocean-friendly-business>



Photo: Reusables

# Our Network

Surfrider Foundation Canada has four local volunteer-run chapters and three student clubs that work collectively across Canada on various campaigns, programs and community events:

- Pacific Rim Chapter (Tofino/Ucluelet, B.C.)
- South Vancouver Island Chapter (Victoria, B.C.)
- Vancouver Chapter (Vancouver, B.C.)
- Atlantic Chapter (Halifax, N.S.)
- University of Victoria Club (Victoria, B.C.)
- Ucluelet Secondary School Club (Ucluelet, B.C.)
- Dalhousie University Club (Halifax, N.S.)

Our network is provided with a host of resources including: legal, financial, scientific, organizational capacity building, and governance services. In turn, the network fulfills our mission within their communities by providing opportunities to volunteer and engage in programs and campaigns that seek to address the roots of coastal and marine issues.

We are thrilled to grow our team of coastal defenders from coast to coast to coast. So, if you're keen to open a Surfrider chapter to transform the health of aquatic ecosystems in your community or school for all people, we'd love to hear from you.

## GLOBAL WAVE CONFERENCE

In October 2023, Surfrider Canada representatives travelled to Portugal to participate in the bi-annual Global Wave Conference hosted in Peniche, Nazare, and Ericeira. The conference was co-hosted by Surfrider, Save the Waves Coalition, Surfers Against Sewage and WildCoast, the leading surf-based environmental organizations. For three days, we met and connected with leaders and experts in the fields of conservation and activism. We also spent a full day with our fellow Surfrider affiliate leaders from eight different countries around the world, where we explored ways to deepen our connections and explore shared goals and initiatives.

## MEMBERSHIP

As part of becoming a new international affiliate, Surfrider Foundation Canada launched its own membership program on International Surfing Day - June 18, 2022. Members are recurring donors and form our activist network, protecting coastlines from harm, and yielding influence at the local, provincial and national level for regulatory and policy change. Since the membership program launched, we have steadily grown our membership base, closing out 2023 with 225 members! To join now visit: <https://canada.surfrider.org/join>



Photo: Lucas Harris

# Network Highlights

## CHAPTERS

**PACIFIC RIM** is highly active in the region, operating five community programs. They have continued with the Take Back The Tap campaign, as well as developed a new campaign that addresses end-of-life surfboard and wetsuit waste. The chapter continues to be a leader with cigarette butt mitigation, with 38 businesses participating, enabling the chapter to recycle 1.7 million butts to date. The chapter also operates the Youth Environmental Stewardship Program in collaboration with the **UCLUELET SECONDARY SCHOOL CLUB!**

**VANCOUVER** hosted seven beach cleanups at major beaches in Vancouver, with over 10 thousand cigarette butts removed and over 700 pounds of litter and marine debris. During World Oceans Week they unveiled "Ciggy Stardust," a visual representation of ocean cigarette waste in the form of a young Southern Resident orca whale covered in over 6,200 sorted and meticulously trimmed cigarette butts found on local beaches.

**SOUTH VANCOUVER ISLAND** changed its name in 2023 to more accurately reflect the region in which it operates. The chapter is a consistent presence in the area, hosting regular monthly cleanups. They also worked with Transport Canada and Prince of Whales to do an inner harbor cleanup in Victoria. Blue Water Task Force continues to be a main focus for the chapter, receiving excellent coverage in local media. The chapter also organized a variety of film screenings and community activities.

**ATLANTIC** got started in 2023, with a core team of nine volunteers. The chapter has already hit the ground running, organizing a few beach cleanup events. They have also identified the build up of litter and marine debris at spots along the Nova Scotian coast and are building a campaign calling on municipal governments to enhance waste management services in key areas.

## STUDENT CLUBS

**UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA** Club hosted seven beach cleanups, where they averaged 80 participants and 100lbs of garbage. They also partook in three remote cleanups, including Radar Beach in Tofino, Sidney Island, and Bennett Bay on Mayne Island. The club held monthly events such as an art night using trash from cleanups, ocean themed trivia, paint nights, and sewing nights to make your own reusable bags. The club also continued to campaign for the university to reduce single-use plastics by expanding and enhancing its reusable to-go food container program (including reusable cups).

**DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY** Club hosted four beach cleanups that covered 20 km of shoreline, and removed over 200 pounds of litter and marine debris. They also made headway on launching their Plastic Free Campus campaign, which seeks to eliminate single-use plastic and embrace reusables. They also set the foundation for getting cigarette butt disposal bins at designated smoking areas on campus.



Photo: Stephanie Gaultier

# Collaborators



## SURFRIDER TROPICAL IPA

Vancouver Island Brewery has a long and impactful history with the South Vancouver Island Chapter, and has been one of the organization's most consistent supporters in the region. In 2023, Vancouver Island Brewery continued its collaboration on the Surfrider Tropical IPA that was sold across western Canada, helping to raise awareness about our organization. \$1 from the sale of each four-pack went to support Surfrider Canada.

## SYNERGY FOUNDATION BC GREEN BUSINESS

Since 2018, our South Vancouver Island chapter has been collaborating with Synergy Foundation on the Vancouver Island Green Business Collective. The SURFRIDER APPROVED Ocean Friendly Business certification recognizes businesses that focus on direct and positive impact for our oceans. The program now called BC Green Business has expanded to focus on the entire province and Surfrider Canada has taken on the role of program ambassador, helping to encourage businesses throughout B.C. to join.



Photo: Synergy Foundation



## ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTER

Surfrider Foundation Canada chapters have been collaborating with the University of Victoria Environmental Law Center for many years. Previously the ELC helped submit an application of inquiry to Canada's Competition Bureau asking for an investigation into Keurig Canada's claims about the recyclability of their coffee pods. The ELC also helped develop a submission that provided comments on Canada's draft Single-Use Plastics Prohibition Regulations. In 2023, the ELC developed recommendations for a comprehensive Canadian legal scheme that would address abandoned commercial fishing gear, a critical issue in Canadian waters.

<https://elc.uvic.ca/ghost-gear-an-ocean-of-plastic-trouble/>



## OCEAN LEGACY FOUNDATION

Surfrider Canada's chapters and clubs have been leading volunteer shoreline cleanup efforts in B.C. for well over a decade. Historically, cleanups existed as a patchwork between the different chapters and clubs, with little to no coordination on data collection. In 2023, Surfrider Canada joined forces with Ocean Legacy Foundation on their application to the provincial governments Clean Coast Clean Waters initiative, a program that provides funding to organizations doing shoreline cleanups in B.C. The financial support Surfrider Canada has received through the program has allowed us to hire a Beach Cleanup Manager, upgrade equipment, and provide important safety training to volunteers. Overall, it has enabled us to enhance the coordination and impact of our shoreline cleanup activity.



TOGETHER,  
WE PROTECT CANADIAN COASTLINES

# Our Supporters

*On behalf of the ocean, waves and beaches, Surfrider Foundation Canada would like to thank the following individuals, foundations and organizations for their generous support.*

## NATIONAL SUPPORTERS



### 1% FOR THE PLANET SUPPORTERS

- Renewal Funds
- Treeline Collective
- Good Juju Body & Home
- Salty Face Naturals
- Wildplay Canada
- Wallop
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- Sunday Beer Co.

- Prince of Whales
- Origin Sustainable Design & Planning
- Sustaining Tourism
- Foe & Dear
- Tofino Towel Co.

### MAJOR DONORS

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- The Banner Foundation
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- Jillian Harris
- Ross Vendor - Scotia Wealth Management
- Investing News
- Babich Wines

- Brietling Watches
- Linda Nowlan
- James David
- Little Adventures on VI
- CRD
- City of Victoria
- Province of BC
- Whole Foods
- BC Parks Foundation

### BUSINESS MEMBERS

- OCIN Collective
- Island Temperature Controls
- Pacific View Windows
- Knowledge Solutions

- Consulting Inc.
- Hightower100 Enterprises Ltd.
- NAGI by Outopian
- Locality Brewing
- Pika & Bear Merchant Traders Intl.
- SHELF Natural Product Solutions
- NSC Seismic Consultants
- Peacock Real Estate Team
- Gathering Place Trading Ltd.
- Coastline Surf Shop

# Staff & Volunteers

## SURFRIDER CANADA HQ

### Executive Director

Lucas Harris

### Regional Manager

Lilly Woodbury

### Beach Cleanup Manager

Katie Keats

### Board President

David Boudinot

### Board Vice President

Kristina Lee

### Board Director

Hanna Hatherley

### Board Director

Gillian Montgomery

### Board Director

Nicole Bresser

### Board Director

Gerald Hartwig

### Board Director

Carolyn Whittaker

### Clubs Coordinator

Matt Miller

### Social Media Coordinator

Julianne Berg

### Website Coordinator

Rana Keen Zandbeek

### Membership Coordinator

Lucas Hayes

## PACIFIC RIM CHAPTER

### Chapter Coordinator

Daniel Raab

### Chairperson

Nick Goulet

### Treasurer

Ericka Chemko

### Volunteer Coordinator

Susan Jackson

### Secretary

Eliza Worrad

## Rise Above Plastics Lead

Robin Jackson

### Media Coordinator

Mackenzie Lang

### YES Program

Ben Reckner

Mandy Lawrenz

### Events Coordinator

Brandon Cardarelli

### Beach Cleanup Lead

Melanie Coutts

## VANCOUVER CHAPTER

### Chairperson

Johnny Rodgers

### Vice Chairperson

Carla Limon

### Volunteer Coordinator

Danielle Samson

### Treasurer

JY Fores-Pimentel

### Communications Director

Samantha Lynn

### Secretary

Amarys Joseph

## SOUTH VANCOUVER ISLAND

## CHAPTER

### Chairperson

Lynn Wharram

### Vice Chairperson

Melissa Tupper

### Secretary

Victoria Jackson

### Treasurer

Kelly Zaharko

### Membership Coordinator

Crystal Touhey

### Beach Cleanups

Sophia Olim,

Chris Adamache,

Sophie Leitch, Elise Coates

## Blue Water Task Force

Clive Webber, James Roorda

### Plastic Free Schools

Margaret McCullough

### Dock the Debris

Zoe Melanie Minnaard

### Rise Above Plastics

Ella Minicola & Noah Snell

## ATLANTIC CANADA CHAPTER

### Chairperson

Hannah Solway

### Vice Chairperson

Karinne Lantz

### Treasurer

Ben Bears

### Volunteer Coordinator

Keegan Leslie

### Campaign Coordinator

Ben Herringer

### Beach Cleanup Coordinator

Molly Gunn

### Program Coordinator

Faris Abdel-Majid

### Fundraising Coordinator

Madelaine McGarr

### Outreach Coordinator

Stephen Belfield

## UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA CLUB

### Chairperson

Micah Allen

### Vice Chairperson

Anabelle Traub

### Social Media & Comm's

Julianne Berg

### Volunteer Coordinator

Katherine Martin

### Treasurer

Lily Beveridge

### Beach Cleanups

Haley Senger & Agnes Dijoua

## Arts & Photography

Mev Daschuk,

Camille Lauridsen-Hoegh,

Rayne Loeffler

### Data Analysis

Ethan Davis & Elise Coates

### Member at Large

Matt Miller

### Events

Jade Lutz, Natalie Howell,

Elyse Siegel

## DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY CLUB

### Chairperson

Ariel Tzadok

### Secretary

Esteban Salazar Cervantes

### Treasurer

Maddy Welsh Schur

### Events

Amy McDonald

### Campaigns

Faris Abdel Majid

### Beach Cleanups

Caroline Hovey

### Logistics Coordinator

Marin Marsala

## UCLUELET SECONDARY SCHOOL

## CLUB

### Chairperson

Iris Hagar

### Vice Chairperson

Mackenzie Helliwell



**SURFRIDER**  
FOUNDATION CANADA®