

Annual Report 2017



Learn. Have fun.

Mission

To inspire stewardship of the Puget Sound, and greater Salish Sea, by providing equitable learning opportunities about the environment to our local community and beyond.

Vision

To be a catalyst for environmental education contributing significantly to our community's understanding of the environment in which we live and our impact on



HARBOR
WILDWATCH

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About Us

Harbor WildWatch's public, youth, member, and private programs are fun, interactive, and designed to educate and engage participants in the **preservation of our natural marine resources**. Our individualized outreach gives citizens, students, and visitors the opportunity to examine how their own behaviors impact the environment, gain a sense of place, and **discover ways to become better stewards**.

KGI Watershed



Our programs are primarily delivered in the Key Peninsula, Gig Harbor, Islands (KGI) Watershed. This unique area covers over **100,000 acres**, **including 179 miles of saltwater shoreline**, and is home to 70,000 residents. Our goal is to encourage residents and visitors of all ages to get outside and experience the marine environment through our fun and unique experiences.

We are pleased to continue our partnership with the City of Gig Harbor in bringing life back to the Historic Skansie House in Downtown Gig Harbor. Over the past five years, over 15,000 individuals have visited us at the **Skansie Visitor & Interpretive Center** to observe plankton under the microscope, play in the 3D sandbox, and watch the live underwater camera of Gig Harbor Bay. Join us during our open hours, Wednesday through Sunday (April - September) and Thursday through Saturday (October - March) from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Youth Programs

Our youth programs strive to connect **STEM-based learning** and ecological stewardship to everyday life. Our goal is to increase academic performance, interest in science, technology, engineering and math, and access to community experiences for local students. We do this by offering a variety of unique educational programs that **foster a passion for learning and encourage curiosity and critical thinking** for kids ages 5-17.

The ***Harbor Outreach Program*** offers STEM-based workshops to our local K-12 classrooms.

Consisting of 20 interactive workshops, this program allows students to explore complex topics such as erosion, tectonic, transference, and chemistry through the environmental lens.

The ***Explorer Series*** immerses students in the outdoor classroom to have a firsthand perspective of one of three unique habitats: beaches, estuaries, and wetlands.

In a field trip setting, students are challenged to put their classroom knowledge to work as they observe zonation, predation, and adaptation demonstrated right before their eyes!

In
2017,
we delivered
over **446**
STEM-based
programs to
nearly **10,977**
students in the
community



Youth Programs



seaStars & Beyond is our most intensive program for young nature enthusiasts. Over the course of a year, students ages 5-17 explore a variety of environmental topics through monthly workshops -- from marine mammal anatomy to ocean acidification. Students also learn to interpret scientific information to the public by volunteering and completing a self-guided service project to benefit the local environment.

The *After School STEM Club* engages middle school students with science, technology, engineering, and math activities during the school year. The After School STEM club is designed to increase science literacy, cultivate a sense of place, and provide inspiration to the future scientists and leaders of our region. As Washington is currently the second largest importer of STEM related jobs in the nation, we believe support for STEM education is essential to preparing the next generation to enter STEM career fields and expand the economic and environmental prosperity in our region.



The *Internship Experience* allows current high school, college, and recent graduates to gain valuable, real-world experience in the environmental education industry.

Interns learn to deliver classroom workshops and field courses, as well as assist with marketing, fundraising, and administrative activities at Harbor WildWatch. Upon completion, our interns have excelled, moving on to full-time positions in the industry or even openings at Harbor WildWatch!

Public Programs



Get Your Feet Wet introduces beach-goers to the animals that live in the intertidal zone at our local city, county, and state parks each summer. Visitors interact directly with marine invertebrates through guided beach walks or popular touch tank events led by staff biologists and experienced volunteers. We hope to inspire beach visitors to exercise care while enjoying the wonders of the Puget Sound!

Pier Into The Night allows visitors the opportunity to catch a glimpse at Puget Sound nightlife. Our volunteer scuba divers are equipped with an HD video camera and a live feed to the surface, allowing visitors to have a virtual underwater experience! Unique fish, squid, and even octopus are known to make appearances at this winter program.

The Citizen Science Experience allows us to contribute meaningful baseline biodiversity data from our local beaches, estuaries, and creeks. With the help of our local and regional partners, regular citizens are trained to monitor water quality, shellfish, and other plants and animals.

Harbor WildWatch offers three ***Walking Tour*** experiences throughout the year. ***Salmon Walking Tours*** in the winter introduce individuals to the natural history of Donkey Creek and Austin Estuary Parks, while looking at the ecological and cultural significance of salmon. ***Historical Walking Tours*** are in partnership with the Downtown Waterfront Alliance and Harbor History Museum in the summer and examine the history of Gig Harbor Bay. Finally, ***Wetland Walking Tours*** in the fall take a stroll through Sehmel Homestead Park and discuss what makes a healthy wetland and the plants and animals that call it home.

Harbor WildWatch also continues to offer unique ***Private Programs***, including birthday parties, beach tours, and live dives in the wintertime. These programs are an excellent opportunity for kids, families, and businesses alike to explore the Puget Sound or have a scientific adventure. Our ***Special Events*** also allow us to partner with local organizations to offer interactive opportunities.

In 2017, we delivered **222** quality, interactive programs to over **21,981** adults, kids, and families in the community



Volunteers

As with many non-profit organizations, Harbor WildWatch relies on our volunteers to help deliver quality environmental education programs to our community.

We are lucky to have an **incredible group of adults, teens, and students** who have assisted us in spreading our mission of stewardship for the past 14 years! Without our dedicated volunteers, we would not be able to deliver over 600 programs annually in the South Puget Sound.

Through the ***Teen Mentor Program***, students ages 13-17 have the change to increase their eco-literacy and gain valuable life skills. They assist with a variety of activities including interpreting to the public and serving as mentors for our younger students.



83 volunteers contributed their time and talents in 2017. In total, our volunteers dedicated **1,751.5** hours of service!



Our volunteers are passionate about the Puget Sound. They come from many different backgrounds: some with degrees in marine biology, some with a pure love for the great outdoors, others with a passion for civic engagement. Whether they grew up on the shores of Puget Sound or relocated from a land-locked state, all of our volunteers share a common idea that *education is the key to inspiring personal stewardship for the local environment.*

Harbor WildWatch's volunteers have fun engaging with their fellow community members at our local parks, piers, and beaches and find it rewarding to share the knowledge of how to protect these creatures and their habitats for generations to come. We are so thankful to the **commitment, passion, and love for the Puget Sound** which exists within our volunteer-force!

Steward Club

The **Steward Club** provides an opportunity for residents and visitors who seek a connection with like-minded individuals on a larger scale. Since then, we are proud to have a thriving and engaged membership of over 200!

Becoming a member of the Steward Club provides individuals, families, and business with the opportunity to connect with Harbor WildWatch through an annual financial contribution and a variety of benefits. The Steward Club continues to grow every year, and members enjoy **Cocktails & Fishtales**, a monthly science social that engages members with a local guest presenter on relevant environmental topics.

\$50 to \$100

Tracy Anderson
Amanda Babich
Greg Baer
Susan Bennett
Rachel Berry
Maureen Borditsky
Susan Buell & Dustin Renfro
Carolyn Buttofoco
Dr. Michael & Dr. Michelle Behrens
Marcia Black
Daniel & Thelma Brown
Janice Brown
Eileen Cahill
Jim & Ginny Christensen
Kristi Collins
Larissa Crawford
Abigail Crum
Kathy Currie
Les & Jan Davis
Lynette Elliott
Josh & Christine Fisher
Kayla Jorgenson
Everett Gross
Kandi Horton
Karen Kretschmer
Paula Larson & Julie Westcott
Paul Miller
Keith Lucey
Andrew Medina
Mitch Landry
Liz Lathrop
Nancy Leahy
Terry Lee
Jack Leiman
Sara McDaniel
JoAnn Moore
Nancy Muggoch

Gary Newman
Geneva Norton
Leann O'Neill
Robin Peterson
Joe & Bernie Piscatella
Meredith Phillips
Roberta Polk
Susan Powers
Kathleen Robinson
Dana Rishwain
James Rogers
Robert & Julia Sawyer
Jan Seigel
Lin & Connie Sewel
Brian Shelver
Sara Slater
Ted & M.K. Smith
Jason & Leah Smith
Robert & Voski Sprague
Kimberly Stanfield
James Sturiano
Danielle & Benjamin Taylor
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Julianna Verboort
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Susan & Gary Whitney
Ryan Will
Mark Willson
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Gail Leese & Tom Wokasch
Warren Zimmerman

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Verner & Marianne Stillner
Spencer & Barbara Tripp
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Gunda Meissner
Taylor Shellfish Farms
Tides Tavern
Aamir Qaiyumi

\$1,000 to \$99,999

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Dr. John & Susan Conway
Brett Marlo Designs
Robyn Denson
Tony & Erin Ewald
Gig Harbor Marina & BoatYard
Meacham Family Foundation
Wade & Beth Perrow
Howard & Elizabeth Svigals
US Bank (Stinson Branch)
Gary & Sue Villella

\$10,000 & Up

Anonymous Donors
Babare Family Foundation

Generous Grant Funders

Greater Tacoma Community Foundation
KGI Watershed Council
Norcliffe Foundation
Mountains Foundation
Pierce Conservation District
Seldon Maritime Fund
The Rose Foundation
The Russell Family Foundation
Windows of Hope Foundation

Partners

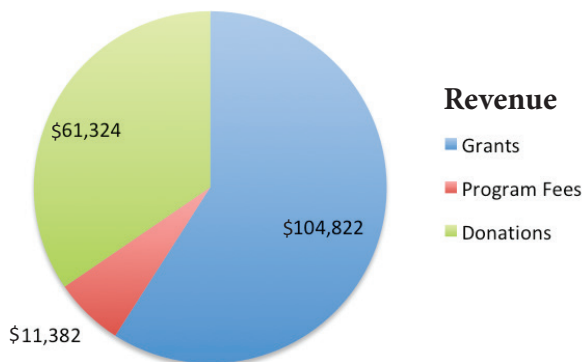
City of Gig Harbor
Downtown Waterfront Alliance
Foss Waterway Seaport
Gig Harbor Boat Shop
Gig Harbor Chamber of Commerce

Gig Harbor Living Magazine
Gig Harbor Marina & BoatYard
Greater Gig Harbor Foundation
Harbor History Museum
Heritage Distilling Company
Key Pen Parks
Kitsap County BeachWatchers
NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region
PenMet Parks
Peninsula Gateway
Peninsula School District
Puget Sound Partnership
Pierce County Public Works & Utilities
Pierce County Surface Water Management
South Kitsap School District
Sunshine's All Natural Catering

Tacoma School District
Taylor Shellfish Farms
Washington Sea Grant
Washington State Parks

By The Numbers

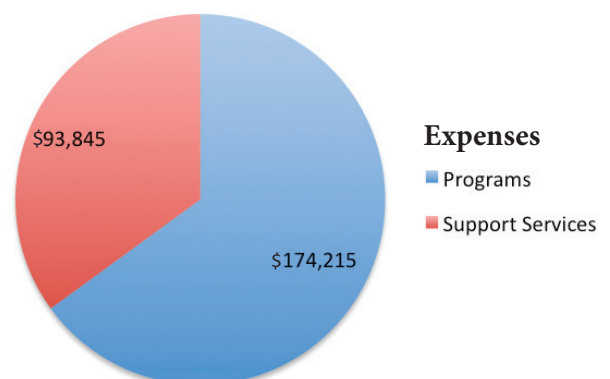
Harbor WildWatch had a fantastic 2017! We added a younger level to our seaStars & Beyond program called SeaSquirts for kids 5-6 years old; developed a new evaluation technique for classroom programming based off of the popular escape room experiences; and expanded our Citizen Science Experience to include private citizen science beach monitoring.



In addition to expanding programs, we are also working to diversify our funding sources in 2018 and beyond. This is being accomplished using several methods, including the continued development of a membership program, new fundraising events, multi-year grant opportunities, and planned giving options for savvy philanthropists. If you would like to learn more about how you can support Harbor WildWatch, please contact Executive Director Lindsey Stover at lindsey@harborwildwatch.org.

In total, we delivered over 668 quality, educational programs to nearly 33,000 adults, students, families, and visitors to the greater Gig Harbor and Key Peninsula communities.

The Board of Directors is dedicated to carrying out the mission and vision of Harbor WildWatch through careful management of the resources of the organization. In 2017, Harbor WildWatch **generated \$178,100** in total revenue, and **expended \$268,060** due to a surplus from 2016.



Looking Ahead

2018 is already shaping up to be a fantastic year. The Board of Directors and staff will continue to use our 5-year Strategic Plan as a guide to carefully balance the needs of the community with the organization's resources.

Upcoming goals include new fundraising opportunities, including events and endowments; developing summer camps in partnership with PenMet Parks; and the development of Tech Team, an expansion of our Teen Volunteer program with hands-on activities in areas like ROV, our underwater camera, and creating artificial reefs.



Programs & Events Overview

Pier Into the Night

First Saturdays, October - March
Jerisich Public Dock

Get Your Feet Wet

Low-tide events, June - August
State, County & City Beaches

Farmer's Markets

Thursdays, June - August
Skansie Brothers Park

Natural History Tours

Saturdays, June - September
Historic Downtown Gig Harbor

Salmon Tours

Saturdays, November & December
Austin Estuary/Donkey Creek Parks

Wetland Tours

Select Saturdays, Spring & Fall
Sehmel Homestead Park

Citizen Science

Year-Round
State, County, and City parks

Cocktails & Fishtales

Wednesdays, February - November
Gig Harbor taprooms & restaurants

Private Events

Year-Round
Various Locations

Visit Us

The Skansie Visitor and Interpretive Center is located in downtown Gig Harbor, a dynamic destination for resident, visitors, and boaters to learn about everything that Gig Harbor has to offer. Hours are Wednesday through Sunday (April - September) and Thursday through Saturday (October - March) from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Staff

Lindsey Stover, *Executive Director*
Rachel Easton, *Education Director*
Stena Troyer, *Science Specialist*
Carly Vester, *Communications Specialist*
Jennifer Beard, *Development Associate*

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