FRIENDS *of* CORTES ISLAND

For nature, for people, for life

2026 Annual Report



Photo: **European Green Crab Trapping Volunteers at łaytoθɛn** (Manson's Lagoon)

Friends of Cortes Island
2026 Annual Report

Our goal is to protect, restore, and conserve the outstanding natural beauty and diverse ecosystems of Cortes, while educating and inspiring the community to take action. We achieve this through hands-on conservation, community events, and partnerships that are making a real difference for nature and people.

This year, we maintained local parks and trails, restored wetlands, monitored eelgrass habitats, and ran an island-wide beach cleanup. We created inspiring nature-based spaces at the Cortes School, hosted community work bees, and delivered our popular events program.

Alongside this work, we continued to strengthen FOCI as an organization, with a focus on workplace culture and staff wellbeing. We're also building new partnerships to extend our impact, including an exciting new collaboration with The Land Conservancy, supporting their covenant program on Cortes.

We are thrilled by this year's achievements and delighted to share some highlights with you.



A big thank you to our many funders, partners, volunteers, donors, supporters, contractors, and staff for their fantastic contributions to our important work.

Special thanks to:

- Klahoose First Nation
- Klahoose Aquaculture
- The Land Conservancy
- SeaChange Marine Conservation Society
- Project Watershed
- Linnaea Farm Society
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- Strathcona Regional District
- Misty Isles Adventures
- Cortes Island Museum and Archives
- BC Parks
- Comox Strathcona Waste Management
- Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
- Cortes Island School
- Rewilding Water and Earth
- Province of BC Community Gaming Grant
- Cortes Community Docks
- Cortes Community Foundation
- Marc Torrence Foundation
- Hollyhock Leadership and Learning Centre
- Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation


19km
of trails maintained every month
8
new parks infrastructure projects
40
ecosystem monitoring activities
8th
annual broom bash at Mansons spit
4
greening projects with Cortes School
10
community events
0
invasive green crabs found
16
partnerships working together for nature
1
Island-wide beach clean-up

Parks and trails

We continued trail maintenance in Kw'as, Whaletown Commons, Whale's Rest, Siskin, and Carrington Bay Regional Parks, as well as at Moon, Hayes, Seascape, and Gnat Beach accesses. We built new footbridges at Whaletown Commons and Whale's Rest, new boardwalks in Kw'as, and outhouses in Carrington. Working with BC Parks at Mansons Landing Provincial Park, we installed new steps beside the dock and split-rail fencing on the Spit to help prevent erosion. We also held our annual community broom bash to protect the Spit and its coastal ecosystems.





Beach clean-up

We ran our third island-wide beach clean-up, a major community effort to protect shorelines. During May, residents collected garbage off the beaches and deposited it in super sacks left at key collection sites. In June, garbage was sorted into an Ocean Legacy Bin hosted by Klahoose Aquaculture to be taken off island for recycling.

Cortes Island School

We continued transforming the school grounds into an imaginative outdoor classroom, working with students to weave a willow fence around the Butterfly meadow, plant a wildflower lawn around the living willow dragon, establish a willow nursery, and enhance the new wetland. These projects create inspiring spaces where children can connect with nature, learn and have fun.



Wetland and lakes

In partnership with Linnaea Farm, we continued our restoration and enhancement work at the Dillon Creek Wetland. We installed nesting boxes, planted trees and shrubs, did ecological monitoring and invasive species removal. Dedicated community volunteers also continued year-round water quality monitoring in Hague and Gunflint Lakes, helping us track the health of these important waterbodies.



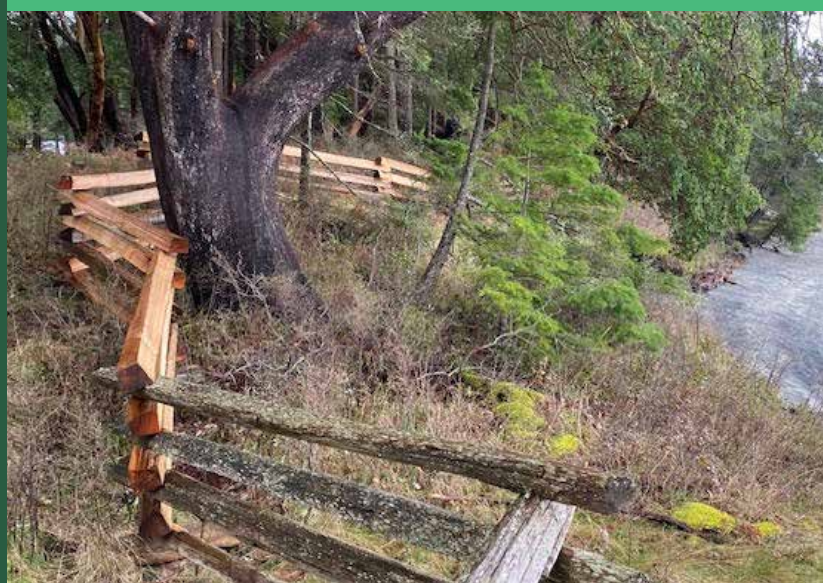


Summer Events

We delivered our popular summer events program, featuring a Secret Shelf tour with Misty Isles, low tide exploration at Mansons Lagoon, and discovery walks and activities celebrating moths, moss and beavers. We also held a Purple Martin nest box making workshop with Cortes Community Docks. Our Summer Friendraiser brought people together to celebrate FOCI's work and raise awareness about our work.

Coastal Erosion Study

We supported the SRD in securing funding from the Canadian Green Municipalities Fund for a Coastal Erosion Study on Cortes. The study will look at coastal erosion on Cortes, identify places where nature-based solutions could help protect shorelines from Climate Change, and recommend next steps.



Streamkeepers

FOCI Streamkeepers continued working with Klahoose Fisheries to support salmon enhancement, releasing fry from the hatchery and Whaletown incubation box in March. They also placed eggs in James Creek “reds” (salmon egg nests). Streamkeepers continued their salmonids in the classroom program and have been busy monitoring bays and creeks, looking for fall chum spawners.



Monitoring for European Green Crab

The European Green Crab is one of the world’s most harmful invasive species and is spreading along the BC coast. Supported by Fisheries and Oceans Canada and community volunteers, we did early detection monitoring in Mansons Lagoon, setting traps every two weeks from July to September. We are pleased to report we did not find any Green Crabs!

Strengthening Partnerships

We continued to strengthen our connections with provincial and regional conservation organizations, including a new partnership with The Land Conservancy to support their covenant program on Cortes. Together we are helping protect private land for conservation in perpetuity. We also co-hosted an event with them in the spring about coastal forest care and the removal of invasive species.



Eelgrass Monitoring

In the spring we worked with Project Watershed, Klahoose Guardians, and BC Parks to survey eelgrass beds in Mansons Landing Park, mapping their extent and condition to inform future conservation and restoration work. This is part of a wider program we are developing to protect and enhance vital eelgrass habitat around Cortes.

2026 Financial Landscape

Opening Balance
$102,254

Total Revenue
$127,610

Sourced from grants, donations, and earned revenue

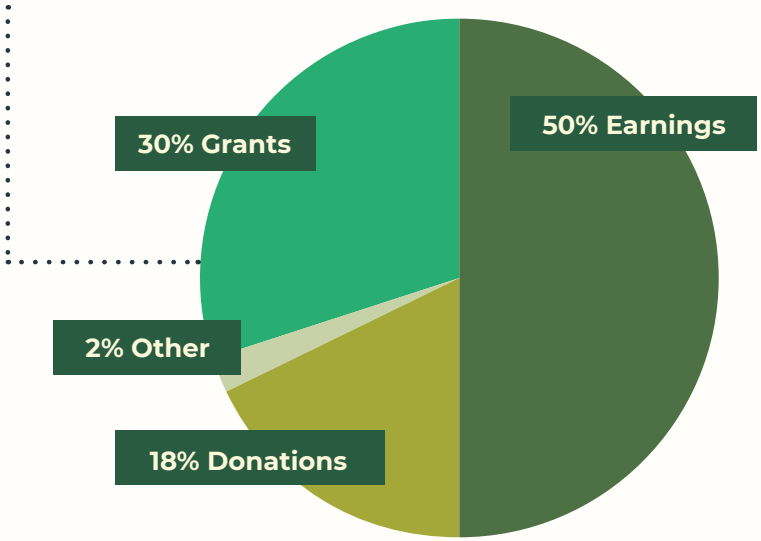
Total Expenditures
$152,751

Programs and Projects: Includes expenditure on staff and contractors, materials and equipment.

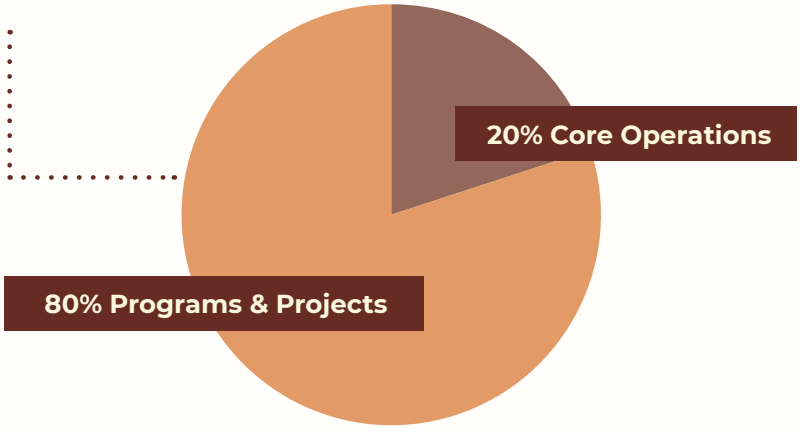
Core Operations: includes insurance, office supplies and administration.

Closing balance
$77,234

Revenue Sources



Expenditures



Friends of Cortes Island acknowledges that we live and work in the traditional, and ancestral, territories of the **toq qaymɩxʷ (Klahoose), ɬəʔamɛn qaymɩxʷ (Tla'amin), ʔop qaymɩxʷ (Homalco) Nations.**

Support our work:
friendsofcortes.org/donate

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