



# SEIZE CHANGE

Reframing the face of adventure

**In the summer of 2019, we will circumnavigate Vancouver Island in our sailboat to raise awareness of marine debris. Along the way, we will perform beach cleanups, and collect data as citizen scientists to support conservation research. We are reframing the face of adventure, and inspiring others to be stewards of the earth as they venture into the outdoors.**

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## ***Our Objectives (Overview)***

1. To monitor and collect marine debris and provide insightful and high quality data which can be used to tackle the issue from the source
2. To connect and liaise with conservationists, researchers and local changemakers working on scientific and conservation projects
3. To reframe the face of adventure, and inspire others to be stewards of our oceans whilst exploring the world
4. To complete our expedition single-use plastic-free
5. To embark on our journey with respect for the First Nations People whose lands and waters we will be travelling through

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## **About us**

We are four friends: Mathilde Gordon, Daniel Greenwood, Kirsten Mathison, and Nic Annau, passionate about the protection of our oceans, and connected by our love for the outdoors. We are a team of cavers, climbers, kayakers, circus performers, astronomers, engineers, scientists, educators and campaigners, with various complimentary (and some completely random) skills. We haven't spent more than a few days at a time together, and hail from different sides of the Pacific Ocean, but we are uniting for a cause close to our hearts.

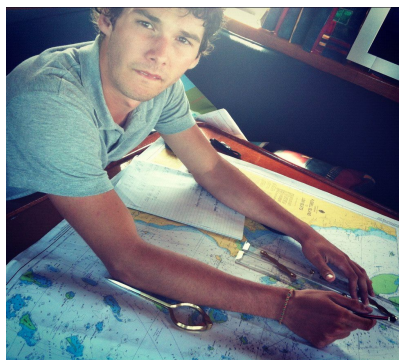


## ***Mathilde Gordon - Scientist, Conservationist, Marine Debris Campaigner and...kayaker?***



In the Summer of 2018, my best friend and I sea [kayaked 2,042km from Alaska to Canada](#), to raise awareness about marine debris and women in adventure. Growing up with a family of outdoor enthusiasts, I have always had a strong passion for the outside world, which has developed into a determination to protect it. This has led to a career in ecology and conservation, with some campaigning on the side. The issue of marine debris lies close to my heart. I have completed a number of beach cleanups, and am passionate about data collection and community education. I have also been living single-use plastic-free since 2016 and will never go back!

## ***Daniel Greenwood - Environmental Manager, Mechanic, Nature Boy***



‘Nature Boy’ was an attempted taunt by boyhood friends, but is a nickname I have proudly turned into a professional career and lifestyle. With my interests in environmentalism and adventure I have always endeavored to expand my knowledge, share information and empower people to make positive changes in their environment. After completing my tertiary education I have built upon my experiences in a number of professional roles that include; ecology, engineering, team supervision and education. The main lesson that I have learnt, is that, in the fight for our future ecosystems, there is no down time, the face of adventure must be adapted to not only explore our natural world, but continually protect it. Sailing is a dream, sailing in a clean ocean is priceless!

## ***Kirsten Mathison - Explorer, Story teller, Caver***



When I moved to the coast from the land-locked prairies, I immediately got caught up in the adventure of sailing, snorkelling, and beach combing. I fell head over heels in love with the sea. I realized the ocean’s importance as a environmental and cultural nexus, and have focussed my professional and volunteer work on exploring and conserving it. I work with a number of organizations, working on environmental campaigns and facilitating workshops and classroom activities to help people connect with our waterways and oceans.

## ***Nic Annau - Scientist, Astrophysicist, Dog Lover, Nerd***



Growing up sailing the Salish Sea with my family, I’ve craved proximity to the ocean my entire life. The ocean still evokes novel emotions in my life, shaping my desire to use science as a tool for conservation. The night sky also presents me with similar novelty, and from an understanding of the most violent scales of the universe came a profound appreciation for the fragility of our home planet and its sensitive ecosystems. My experience in astrophysics led to honing my skills as a data scientist and passionate science communicator. I strongly believe in the power of science and data to effect cultural change and highlight our obligation to protect and cherish our only home.

# The Cause - Our Dirty Problem

## MARINE DEBRIS

Marine debris is classified as man-made items that end up in the marine environment through littering or dumping. It injures and kills marine wildlife, affects human health and coastal habitats and is a major pollution issue around the world. Most of the marine debris we find today is made of plastic, which never “disappears”. By 2050, it is estimated that there will be more plastic in the ocean than fish, by weight. However, we, and many others around our globe, are determined to not let this happen.

## INTERCONNECTED OCEANS

Marine debris is an international problem that one country cannot fix alone. In the years following the 2011 Tsunami in Japan, residents along the coastlines of BC and Alaska saw just how connected our oceans are, as tonnes of trash washed up on their shores as a result of oceanic currents. In order to solve an issue of this magnitude, we need to work together, and tackle the problem from a variety of different angles; from behavioural change on the individual level, to changing international and national legislation.

## Making Change

### GLOBAL AWARENESS

Two decades ago, the average person had not been exposed to the concept of marine debris. This knowledge has since spread, but not wide enough, and not with the sense of urgency it requires. We need the world to know more, and we want the everyday person to understand the problem and most importantly, how to make a difference. In order to inspire others to also be stewards of our oceans, we will educate, lead by example, and continue the conversation.

### CITIZEN SCIENCE AND DATA ORIENTED SOLUTIONS

Citizen science is the collection and analysis of data relating to the natural world by members of the public. Citizen science initiatives help us to recognize human-made issues, address accountability within those issues, and take action to reduce their scope. The ability of citizens to access and contribute to marine debris data collection, has been paramount to tracing how much of it there is, where it comes from and, most importantly, how to stop it from entering our oceans.

### REFRAMING THE FACE OF ADVENTURE

It seems today that every mountain top has been climbed, every river kayaked down and every valley traversed. Whilst these journeys are incredibly inspiring, adventure doesn't always need to be about pushing the limits and branching into “new” and exciting territory. Reframing the face of adventure is about continuing to appreciate and explore our natural world, whilst maintaining these sanctuaries for the benefit of the environment, ourselves, and future generations to come. We hope our adventure will inspire others to pursue their own, and also encourage people to begin their journey to protecting our beautiful oceans.

## The Journey

Starting in May, 2019, we will set sail on a 2 month circumnavigation of Vancouver Island. We will leave from Nanaimo and head North into the passages and islands that scatter the eastern coast. This will be an opportunity to work with different local communities, be a part of education events, and conduct a number of public beach cleanups. As we sail across and then down the west coast, we will participate in several remote beach cleanups run by local marine debris and ocean conservation organisations. Although Vancouver Island has been circumnavigated many times, we are using this voyage to continue to shine the light on a very important issue that impacting our oceans worldwide.





# Our Objectives

## OUTPUT COMMITMENTS

- ⚓ We will do the sailing trip single-use plastic-free
- ⚓ We will do at least 12 beach cleanups
- ⚓ We will visit at least 5 schools prior to, during and after our journey
- ⚓ We will do at least 3 public talks prior to, during and after our journey
- ⚓ We will run at least 1 video conference during our journey
- ⚓ We will engage a large audience via social media by the end of the trip
- ⚓ We will visit at least 1 research station en route

### 1. To monitor and collect marine debris and provide insightful and high quality data which can be used to tackle the issue from the source.

*Collecting scientific data and expressing the need for a national marine debris database*

- ⚓ Our hope was to collect data according to procedures which are already in place in British Columbia, in order to provide continuity and contribute to already-existing databases. The data would be used by local organisations and programs to continue to tackle the issue at the source. Unfortunately, there is no nation-wide Marine Debris Database, so our journey will also be an avenue for discussion on this issue, which we hope will lead into further action.

*At least 1 beach cleanup per week, for 8 weeks*

- ⚓ This will be weather permitting and will rely heavily on beach access
- ⚓ Beach cleanups will be done in remote areas by the sailing team, and alongside other local communities in more populated areas
- ⚓ During these cleanups, we will categorise debris and collect data (type and source of trash)
- ⚓ Trash will be stored above the high tide line. We will arrange for transportation and correct disposal of debris from the beaches. This will involve liaising with local groups, organisations, rangers and individuals to pick up the trash and take it to a disposal facility. Trash will be recycled where possible.

*Mapping of the marine debris*

- ⚓ Using GPS (Garmin inReach) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

### 2. To connect and liaise with conservationists, researchers and local changemakers

*Connecting organisations, groups and individuals who share a common goal across the seas*

- ⚓ There are several local groups and individuals who are doing amazing work on marine debris and citizen science around Vancouver Island. We will contact as many as we can and investigate whether there is any scope for us to assist.
- ⚓ We will conduct public talks throughout our travels, in order to both share our experiences and learn from others.

*Creating partnerships with local researchers*

- ⚓ We are providing a vessel, with keen and professional crew, which can contribute to any current relevant studies around Vancouver Island. We can help conduct both observational and experimental studies where possible, and have an ability to access remote locations



### 3. To reframe the face of adventure, and inspire others to be stewards of our oceans

*Inspiring others to follow their dreams of adventure and connect with nature*

- ⚓ Serve as a model of adventure that is balanced with the preservation of our environment
- ⚓ We will promote science and conservation as an innate part of adventure, by continuing the discussion through public talks, and sharing experiences on social media platforms (website, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn)

### 4. To complete our journey single-use plastic-free

*Inspiring others to pursue adventure whilst minimising single-use plastics*

- ⚓ Demonstrate that food, toiletries and other consumer goods do not need to be contained within single-use plastics on an adventure, even when it involves the ocean!
- ⚓ Present and provide advice on how to minimise plastics in everyday life

### 5. To embark on our journey with respect for the First Nations whose lands we will be travelling through

*In our mission to care for and protect the ocean, we acknowledge the First Peoples who are the original stewards of these lands and waters*

*In the course of our journey we will pass through the territory of many diverse First Nations groups. Whenever possible, we would like to form connections with the local First Nations to learn about their culture and respectfully travel through their territory*

## Potential Partnerships and Projects

Whether you are an individual, organisation, researcher/research station, First Nation, not-for-profit, skiff operator, sailor, fellow adventurer etc, we would love to hear how we can work together on this project. Let's see what we can make happen! Here are some of our ideas...

<b>DATA COLLECTION/RESEARCH</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>⚓ In Australia, marine debris cleanups and the resulting data collected are entered into an <a href="#">online database</a>. We are trying to identify similar organisations and projects here in BC. Are you one of them? Contact us!</li><li>⚓ Conducting scientific research (observational or experimental) for other projects and studies</li></ul>	<b>BEACH CLEANUPS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>⚓ Collaborating with your local community to conduct a beach cleanup</li><li>⚓ Helping remove the trash we collect from remote beaches (anyone with a skiff)</li><li>⚓ Helping dispose of the trash we collect from remote beaches (ideas on how to not clog up local landfills, and where we can recycle)</li></ul>
<b>OUTREACH/CONNECTING PEOPLE ACROSS OUR OCEANS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>⚓ School presentations</li><li>⚓ Presentations at local venues (i.e. library or bar), or videoconferences</li><li>⚓ Plastic-Free Living workshops</li><li>⚓ Meetings with local groups and initiatives</li></ul>	<b>JOIN US or WE JOIN YOU?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>⚓ We are available as ambassadors for an existing campaign</li><li>⚓ Do you have a boat and want to come along for a section of the trip? The more hands the better! Let's create a flotilla of vessels and together we can Seize Change!</li></ul>

## Contact us

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**Thank you for taking the time to read this project brief, we look forward to hearing from you!**