



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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8 Metric Tonnes of Invasives Removed from Gerald Island

Nanoose Bay, British Columbia – A record-breaking 84 volunteers removed and burned approximately eight metric tonnes of invasive plants during a six-day restoration effort on Gerald Island (April 15–20), led by BC Marine Trails (BCMT).

The effort included 39 students and staff from high schools in Qualicum Beach and Port Alberni, contributing to the largest volunteer turnout in the project's nine-year history.

Volunteers removed an estimated 616 “person-loads” of invasive vegetation (measured by how many people were needed to carry each tarp of vegetation). Using a conservative estimate of 30 pounds per load, the total biomass cleared reached roughly eight metric tonnes, about the weight of two adult orcas.

This year's work also marked a major milestone for the project. For the first time, volunteers were able to fully circumnavigate the nearly 30-acre island using newly established trail systems. These trails improve access for restoration work while helping protect sensitive coastal bluff ecosystems from trampling. The work also unearthed and removed hazardous debris from a long-abandoned homestead.

Strong indications of ecological recovery are visible. Native species such as chocolate lilies, fawn lilies, camas, and coastal wood ferns are re-establishing across previously impacted areas.

The next cleanup is scheduled for fall 2026.

The project was supported by Athletic Brewing's 'Two For The Trails' fund, and 4TVI.

Photos from the event are available [here](#). All photos attributed to Sam Cutcliffe.

Quotes:

“At a time when so much in our world feels uncertain, this work offers something tangible. You can see the impact of your effort right away and know you’re helping restore something important.”

– David Littlejohn, Gerald Island volunteer

“This project shows what’s possible when community members come together to care for the coast. Returning volunteers are continually surprised by the speed of ecological recovery on the island.”

– Sam Cutcliffe, BCMT Communications & Stewardship Coordinator, Gerald Island lead

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Additional Information

- [BC Marine Trails map](#)
- [Who is BC Marine Trails?](#)
- [BC Marine Trails media kit](#)
- [History of Gerald Island](#)