

GREAT CANADIAN
**Shoreline
Cleanup**
OCEAN WISE & WWF



A CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP BY

2020 Annual Report

HELP KEEP OUR WATER ECOSYSTEMS HEALTHY FOR EVERYONE





Thank YOU from the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup

Let us begin by saying thank you to everyone who has supported the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup over the last rollercoaster year. We are so grateful to our tremendous volunteers who made 2020 a success, despite the challenges facing people across the country because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We always knew that Shoreline Cleanup volunteers cared deeply about their local environment, but this year proved it in a whole new way. Our team was so inspired by the thousands of volunteers who coordinated solo and small group cleanups throughout Canada. We hope that this action for nature allowed you to spend more time outside and provided positivity and hope to you and your loved ones.

We are humbled by the impact our volunteers made in 2020. Thank you!



A Different Year for Shorelines

After our biggest year on record in 2019, we were excited to see what 2020 would bring for the Shoreline Cleanup. It quickly became clear that this would be a vastly different year for our program. Our top priority is always the health and safety of our volunteers, so when COVID-19 hit in March, we cancelled cleanups across Canada.

Through the uncertain months of spring, we engaged with our volunteers and supporters virtually. Meanwhile, we were developing guidelines for safe solo and small team

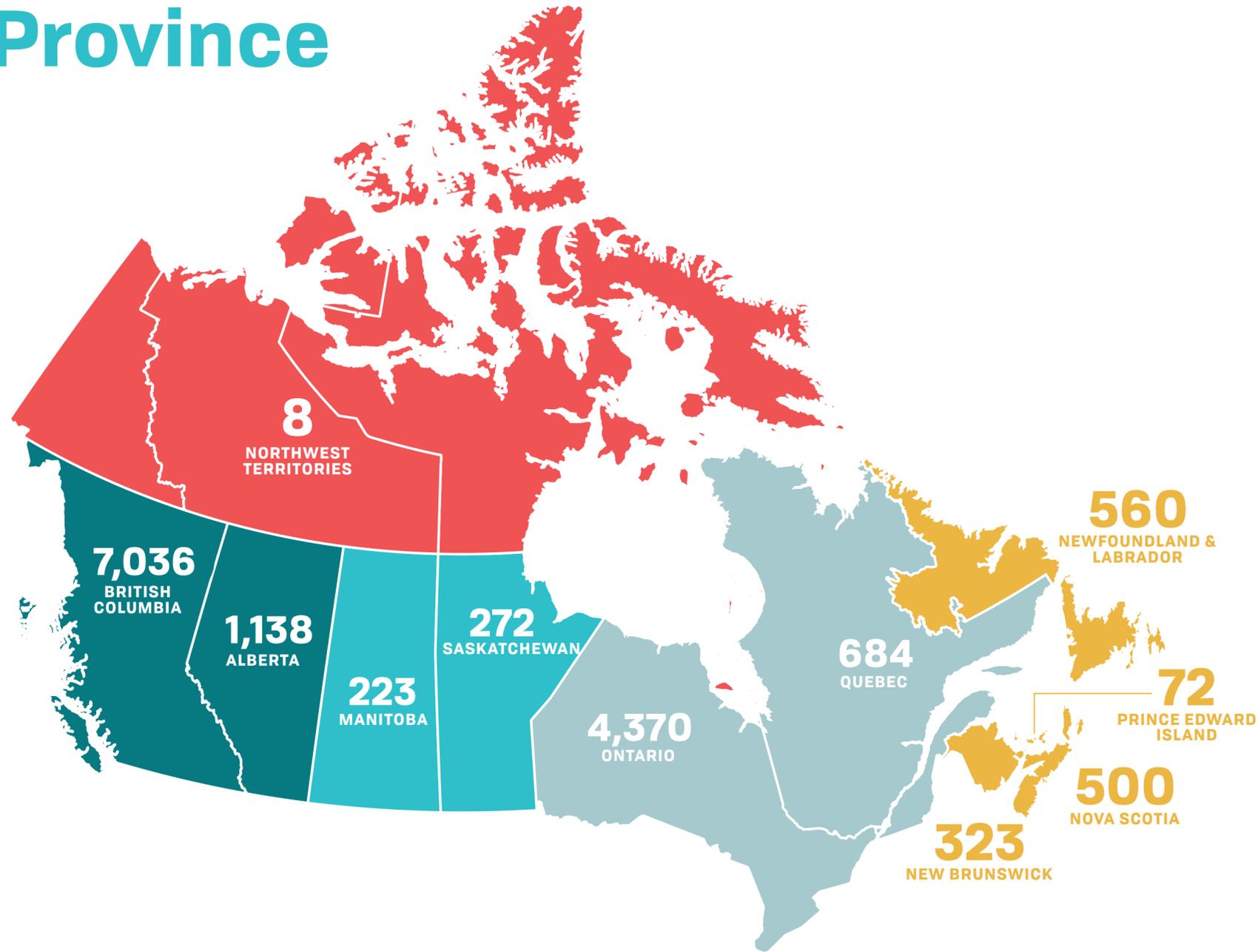
cleanups for when the country was able to open up again. We relaunched our program in July and were thrilled to see so many volunteers return to their shorelines. And despite all the challenges, we saw 15,186 volunteers take part in 929 cleanups, removing 41,905 kilograms of litter from 1,491 kilometres of shoreline.

Your safety during your cleanup is our top priority. Please continue to follow public health guidelines in your region throughout 2021. See [our checklist](#) for more information.

“ The Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup is a wonderful example of community volunteers taking real, measurable action for conservation. We are so grateful to all of our volunteers who participated over the last year, despite all the challenges of 2020. Ocean Wise is proud to collaborate with WWF-Canada on this respected and impactful program. ”

LASSE GUSTAVSSON
PRESIDENT AND CEO OF OCEAN WISE

2020 Participants by Province



Nationwide Data

Number of registered cleanups	929
Number of registered participants	15,186
Distance of shoreline cleaned (km)	1,491
Weight of litter removed (kg)	41,905
Trash bags filled	3,674
Recycling bags filled	860

Volunteers on the Shoreline

SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES

 **2,665**
PARTICIPANTS

 **1,052 kg**
OF LITTER
REMOVED

 **83 km**
OF SHORELINE
CLEANED

 **3,638**
FOOD WRAPPERS
REMOVED

COMMUNITY GROUPS

 **4,586**
PARTICIPANTS

 **25,396 kg**
OF LITTER
REMOVED

 **534 km**
OF SHORELINE
CLEANED

 **11,940**
BEVERAGE CANS/
BOTTLES REMOVED

CORPORATE GROUPS

 **2,415**
PARTICIPANTS

 **4,273 kg**
OF LITTER
REMOVED

 **203 km**
OF SHORELINE
CLEANED

 **12,858**
CIGARETTE BUTTS
REMOVED

YOUTH GROUPS GUIDES & SCOUTS

 **4,627**
PARTICIPANTS

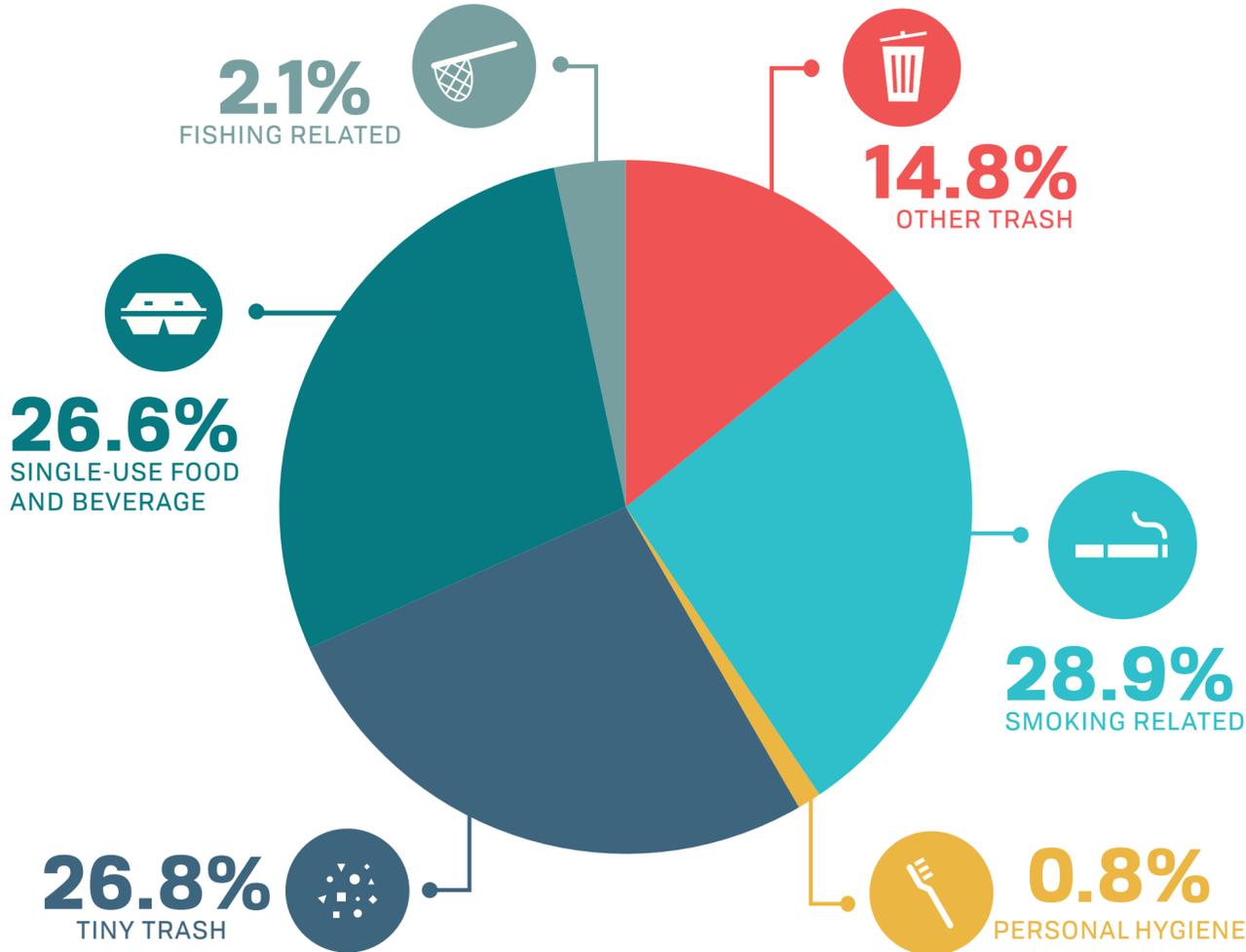
 **2,285 kg**
OF LITTER
REMOVED

 **526 km**
OF SHORELINE
CLEANED

 **5,498**
FOOD WRAPPERS
REMOVED



Types of Litter Found in 2020



The proportion of **single-use food and beverage litter** increased from 15.3% of all litter in 2019 to 26.6% of all litter in 2020. We believe that this change could be another effect of the pandemic, as restrictions on indoor dining and reusable beverage containers led to people consuming more takeaway products with their associated single use litter.

The 2020 Dirty Dozen

Each year we identify the 12 litter items most commonly found by our volunteers. Our data is shared with researchers, government agencies, media and the public to help raise awareness about shoreline litter and inform solutions.

For the first time in our history, many of our volunteers noted that they found masks and other personal protective equipment (PPE). To formally track this type of litter, we will be adding a new category to our data card for 2021.

1.	Cigarette butts	83,693
2.	Tiny plastic or foam	77,705
3.	Food wrappers	21,800
4.	Paper	17,534
5.	Bottle caps	13,285
6.	Beverage cans	10,631
7.	Plastic bottles	8,216
8.	Plastic bags	8,052
9.	Other packaging	6,511
10.	Coffee cups	5,426
11.	Straws	5,289
12.	Foam	4,663





Quebec City Cleanup

The Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup joined forces with the Groupe d'éducation et d'écosurveillance de l'eau (G3E), Mission 100 tonnes, Stratégies Saint-Laurent and the Blue Organization for a plastic-free St. Lawrence. Together, we cleaned shorelines in Quebec City's Port of Quebec, from the runway cycle route of Beauport bay to Île d'Orléans to Côte de Beaupré. We identified these sites because they are part of, or are close to, an important conservation area for birds: the Battures de Beauport and the Orléans Island Channel. Being so close to the urban environment, it is fragile and vulnerable to human activities. The 150 participants followed local health guidelines to safely participate at one of the four cleanup sites, whether by bicycle, on a beach, or on the shores and collected almost two tons of litter.



Cleanup Across Canada

Typically, we celebrate International Coastal Cleanup Day every September with thousands of supporters joining in-person events across the country. As large events with hundreds of volunteers were not possible in 2020, we had to do things differently.

#TeamShoreline challenged Canadians to come together while staying apart by stewarding different areas of the same watershed. Volunteers planned solo, household and small group cleanups across the country, with more than 6,000 Canadians joining in. Whether they were a few blocks apart or had hundreds of kilometres between them, folks challenged each other to care for our rivers, lakes and oceans.

Over the course of September, volunteers prevented 3,858 plastic bags, 2,954 plastic bottles and 62,671 cigarette butts from polluting the environment and harming humans and animals alike.

Learn more about this amazing event [here](#).

Shoreline Spotlights



Connor Garrod

**OCEAN BRIDGE AMBASSADOR
WINDSOR, ON**

“The Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup map and search tool is an awesome way to find shoreline cleanups happening near your community and everywhere across Canada. Finally, getting to the source and cutting back on single use plastics will aid in the amount of garbage finding its way to our lakes and oceans. Anyone can make a difference.”

Ocean Tavares

**YOUNG CLIMATE ACTIVIST
TORONTO, ON**

“The lake is sooooo big, it’s like an ocean. The waves are big and the wind blows the trash. It was super fun because I got to see a lot of squirrels while I picked up trash. I found lots of masks and gloves this time.”



Jonathan Guan

**YOUTH TO SEA AMBASSADOR
VANCOUVER, BC**

“I worked with a team of students to create an environmentally oriented club at my school: The Community Cleanup Crew. We started late in 2020 and quickly realized that there were many other opportunities beyond traditional cleanups for us to help clean the environment, even during a pandemic! One of our solutions was a ‘lending initiative’ where we lent out equipment for free so people could safely access the tools necessary for their own cleanups, an idea that has since shown that even when forced to work individually, we can all still make a difference.”



Canada Plastics Ban

For over two decades our volunteers have collected citizen science data from coast to coast to coast—and your efforts have contributed to a momentous milestone. In 2020, the federal government announced a ban on six types of single-use plastics that will come into effect in 2021. Litter data collected by the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup was shared with the Government of Canada and used to inform this decision in their Science Assessment of Plastic Pollution.

Plastic checkout bags, straws, stir sticks, six-pack rings, cutlery, and foodware made from hard-to-recycle plastics are the six items included in the ban. Most items on the proposed ban list are also found in our Dirty Dozen. Used only once and then discarded, single-use plastics can have a harmful impact on wildlife and ecosystems when they enter our waterways.

We are so encouraged to see progress towards reducing single-use plastics. We will continue to share our litter data with decision makers throughout the country to inform further action.

Get the latest stories from the shorelines and read more news and research on [our blog!](#)

Going Virtual

In 2020 Shoreline Cleanup went online!

We have always led virtual trainings for our volunteers, including a how-to cleanup webinar, Shoreline Cleanup 101. In 2020 we expanded our online offerings to include everything from educational Instagram conversations with our expert staff to webinars and panels with program partners, new and old.

We led 24 online events, teaching alongside our friends at Ocean Wise and WWF-Canada. We collaborated with the Plastics Lab, the Vancouver Aquarium, WWF-Canada's resident biologists and the Ocean Wise Education program to talk about ocean health and the challenges our planet faces today. Outside partners like Parks Canada, Nova Scotia's Adopt-A-Highway and Waste Reduction Week joined us to talk about our cleanups' positive impact on Canadian watersheds. We organized a panel with UNAC-Vancouver to discuss combatting environmental racism with experts from diverse fields. Over the year, we were privileged to learn alongside our volunteers as we led virtual events for youth, adults and everyone in between.

Visit our webinar series webpage to access many of online events [here](#).

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Lead Join Data Online Education Municipalities AquaBlog About **FR**

Sign up or Login

Shoreline Cleanup Webinar Series

Interested in learning more about ocean and freshwater health? Tune in to one of our past webinars for a chance to learn about important ocean topics.

World Oceans Day Panel

Join leading scientists, experts and change makers from coast to coast to coast as we explore innovation in science, collaboration, communications and citizen engagement for the protection of our oceans.

Watch

Engaging corporations for clean shorelines

Learn how Shoreline Cleanup engage their corporate partners in the pursuit of cleaner oceans and healthy ecosystems.

Watch



Girl Guides

Girl Guides have been by our side since 2005 and this year their impact was bigger than ever. With many groups unable to participate, Girl Guides stepped up to make sure Canadian shorelines were cared for. Sparks, Brownies, Guides, Pathfinders and Rangers joined together to make up more than 20 per cent of cleanups in 2020.

Highlights of their support included:

- Pathfinders in the City of Brandon, MB wrote letters to their municipality inquiring about dumped construction materials.
- The 9th Brandon Brownies completed cleanups in their own backyards, gathering virtually to compile their findings and discuss the difference they made by working together.
- The 1st Golden Lake Girl Guides took part in household cleanups in Bonnechere Valley.

Guides continued cleaning up their watersheds even in a time of adversity and change. They made a world of a difference by becoming citizen scientists and collecting litter data in their own communities.

“ Girl Guides has always been a place where girls explore what they care about, get involved in their communities, and connect with nature and the outdoors. Participating in the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup helps girls experience all of this in a fun and tangible way, while also adding to a larger national impact. To know you’re making a difference is a special kind of pride, and we are so glad to be able to offer that feeling to girls through our partnership with the Shoreline Cleanup.

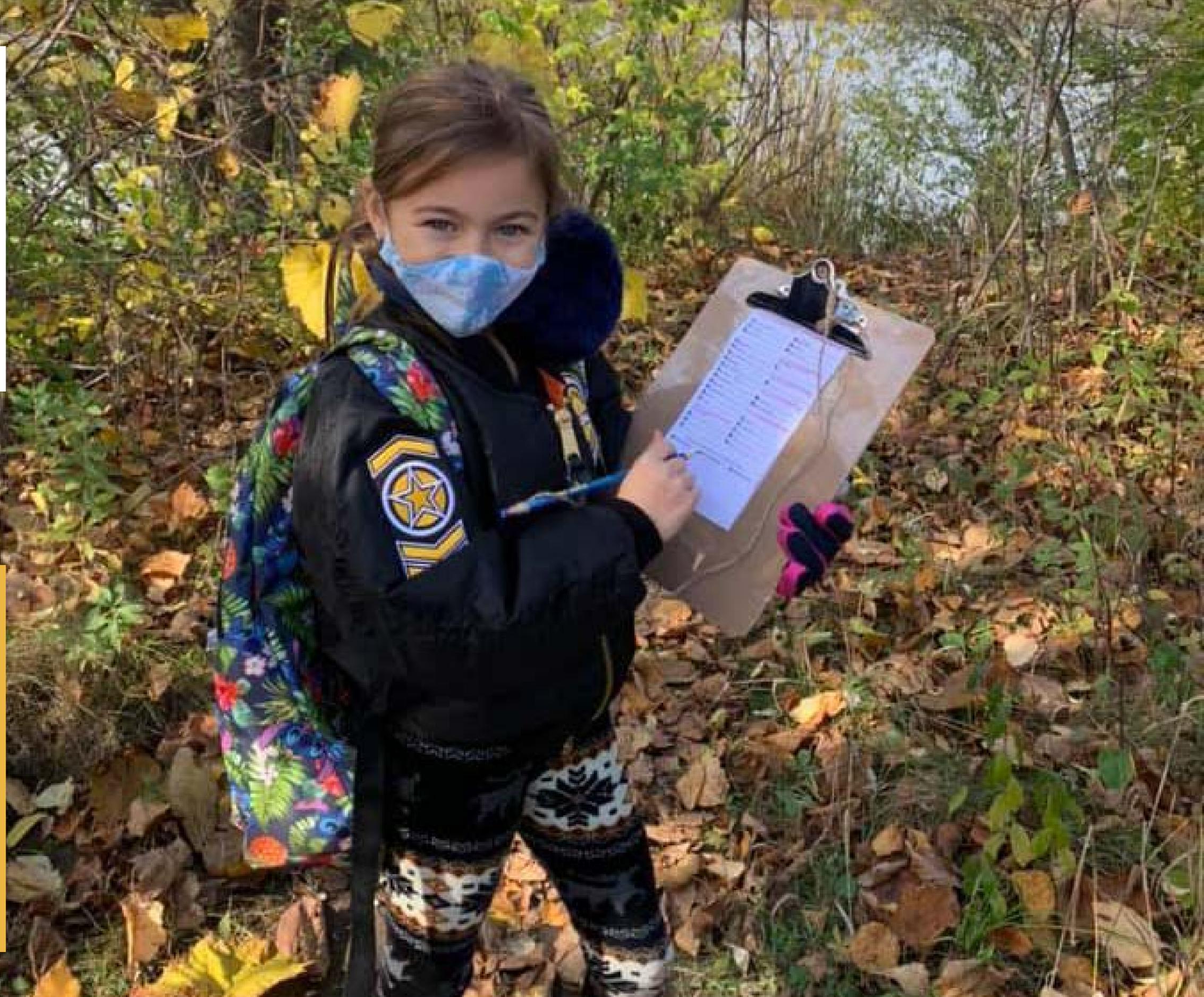
LOUISE KENT
DIRECTOR, MEMBER EXPERIENCE, GIRL GUIDES OF CANADA

Leave No Trace

The Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup worked with De ville en forêt to create a new [French resource](#) for our volunteers to reduce their impacts on nature during clean-ups and other outdoor activities. We used the Leave No Trace Seven Principles, which are based on science and can be applied anywhere in Canada and in most ecosystems and habitats on the planet.

“Fish, birds, turtles and other wildlife can mistake litter and plastic for food or become entangled. Every piece of garbage we remove from our freshwater and marine shorelines is one less piece that can harm wildlife. We are so proud to deliver such a meaningful program with Ocean Wise, and grateful to all of our volunteers for their efforts to protect wildlife habitat. Together we can create a world where nature and people thrive.”

MEGAN LESLIE
PRESIDENT AND CEO OF WWF-CANADA





Our Donors and Supporters

Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup's work is made possible through the generous contributions of individual donors and corporate partners. We are deeply grateful for your trust and commitment and recognize your role in our achievements this past year. Thank you for your gift to our oceans, lakes and rivers—and for believing in our mission.

Presenting Sponsors

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We also acknowledge the financial assistance provided by the province of British Columbia.

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The Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup, presented by Loblaw Companies Limited and the Coca-Cola Company, is one of the largest direct-action conservation programs in Canada. A conservation partnership by Ocean Wise and WWF-Canada, the Shoreline Cleanup aims to promote understanding of shoreline litter issues by engaging Canadians to rehabilitate shoreline areas through cleanups.

ShorelineCleanup.ca


ocean wise[®]

Ocean Wise is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to inspiring the global community to join forces to protect the health of our oceans. Specifically, we work to engage, inform and inspire people to experience curiosity, wonder, and a desire for an ever-deeper understanding about oceans, as well as a way to conserve them.

ocean.org


WWF[®]

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World Wildlife Fund Canada creates solutions to the environmental challenges that matter most for Canadians. We work in places that are unique and ecologically important, so that nature, wildlife and people thrive together. Because we are all wildlife.

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