

## **Intern Opportunity to Protect the San Juan Islands through effective Comprehensive Plan Engagement**

**Time Period: February- July, 2025**

**Stipend available: up to \$2500**

**Experience:** Students who have completed Community Development & Participatory Methods are in their Junior or Senior year in the Urban Planning, Urban Sustainability, or Environmental Policy programs, and who have a passion for environmental advocacy and it's intersection with strong community building and comprehensive planning.

**Location: Friday Harbor, although this internship can be fully remote with the option to attend community meetings on Orcas, Lopez, and San Juan islands.**

**Opportunity: Intern with the dynamic team at Friends of the San Juans.**

San Juan County is updating their Comprehensive Plan which will include a new climate element. They are planning to complete these updates by June 30, 2025. For 45 years as an environmental advocacy nonprofit, Friends of the San Juans, has informed the County's Comprehensive Planning process, providing a citizen voice that brings people and nature together to protect the islands and Salish Sea through education, science, policy and law.

To help us advocate for environmental protection of the San Juans and our island communities, Friends is engaging in ten trainings and listening sessions on at least 4 different islands to invite new and important voices into the process. We are also assembling a 'What If' Comp Plan Action Team that helps us plan for future scenarios that can better inform planning decisions today. As part of the team, you will join professional staff, volunteers, and policy and science professionals to support our community engagement processes, provide administrative analysis of community input and proposed updates to the Comprehensive Plan, and support the advocacy and engagement process for impactful environmental protection and climate-focused changes that are community centered. Friends of the San Juans is especially excited to host a remote intern who may visit the island on occasions to support the public engagement process we are guiding over the next six months.

Intern activities will include research, recording of public comments, support in development engagement tools and communications, inventory of comments and feedback within our tracking system, engagement, and input to the process.

## More Context

The Growth Management Act requires jurisdictions to conduct periodic updates of their Comprehensive Plans. Comprehensive Plans are a roadmap for our community's future. It's designed to manage growth and keep the islands a healthy place to live by setting long-term goals to protect our environment, support local agriculture, and preserve forests. These goals turn into actions, laws, and guidelines that shape daily life in the islands.

Both San Juan County (link to <https://engage.sanjuancountywa.gov/2025-comp-plan-update>) and the Town of Friday Harbor (link to <https://www.fridayharbor.org/2405/2025-Comprehensive-Plan-Update>) are being updated. This is also the first time that Climate Elements will be included in our communities' Comprehensive Plans.

On January 17, San Juan County's Planning Commission will review draft amendments to the Land Use and Rural element. You can view the draft amendments here:

<https://www.sanjuancountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/31554/> . And you can find the agenda and link to the virtual meeting here:

<https://sanjuancowa.portal.civicclerk.com/event/3067/files/agenda/5198> .

Friends of the San Juans staff is engaging in these updates in multiple ways. First, we are reviewing and commenting on the proposed changes with our eye on protecting our island resources and communities. We are bringing our legal, policy, and science smarts to this review. Second, we know that community voice is essential and with support from a Department of Commerce grant, we are partnering with the Family Resource Centers on Lopez, Orcas, and San Juan Islands to increase awareness and participation from vulnerable communities. Deeply connecting with our island communities is a Friends priority this year and our Executive Director Eva will be guiding all nine of these trainings and engagement sessions on Lopez, Orcas, and San Juan islands. Additionally, we have invited input of our Friends members and issue experts to join a 'What If' Comp Plan action team where we think together about our future considerations and the possible scenarios that help us prepare and make the best decisions for both today and tomorrow. Additionally, we have contracted with the Madrona Institute to increase engagement on the new Climate Element through interactive workshops and bring a globally known game –Climate Fresk and contextualize it for our island communities--Compass.

### **If interested, please submit a cover letter and resume to:**

Eva Schulte, Executive Director

Friends of the San Juans

[eva@sanjuans.org](mailto:eva@sanjuans.org)

