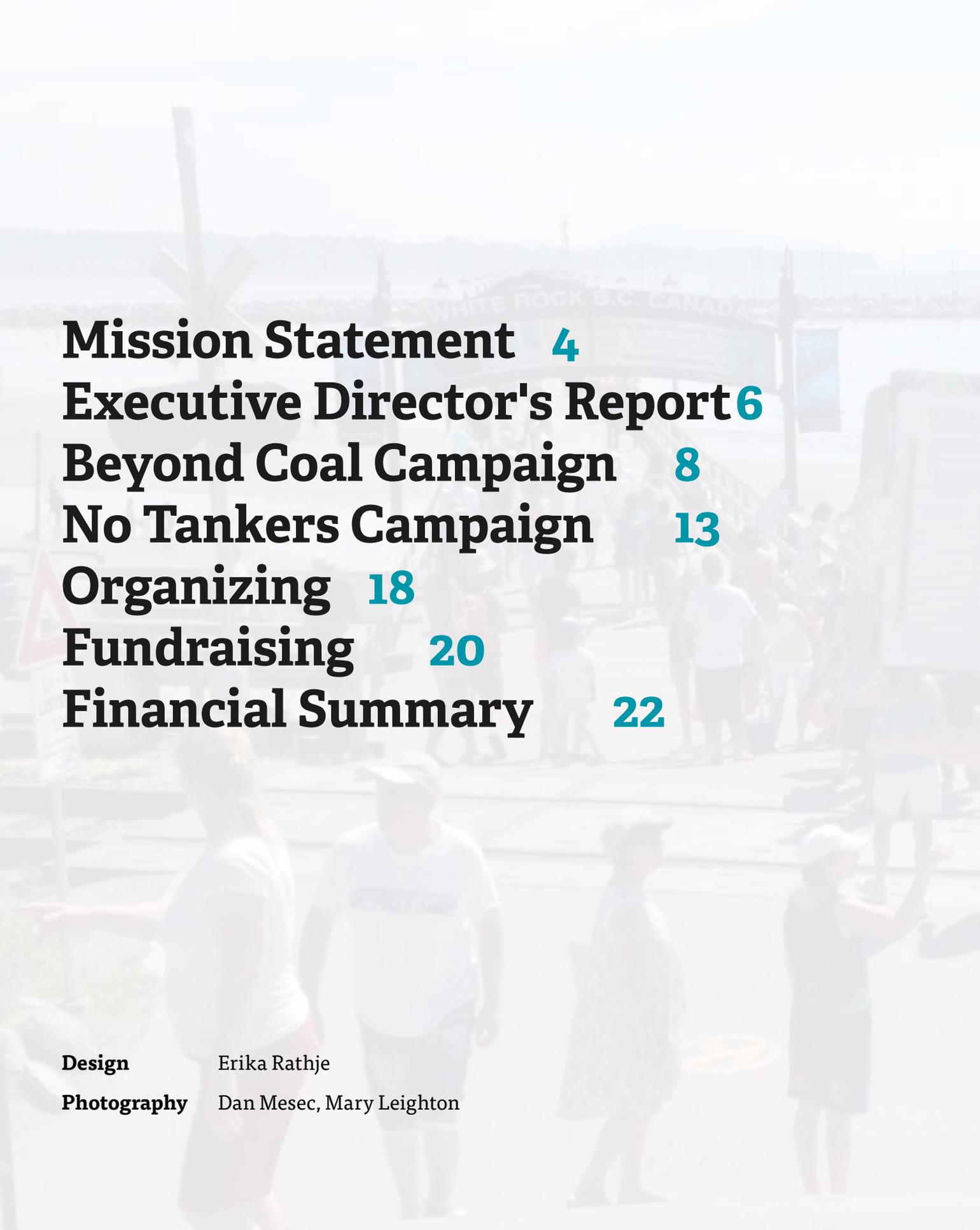


# 2015





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**Design**

Erika Rathje

**Photography**

Dan Mesec, Mary Leighton



The background image shows a park-like setting with numerous trees, some with green leaves and others bare. In the lower part of the image, several people are visible, some standing and some walking. There are also some structures or tents in the background, suggesting an outdoor event or gathering. The overall scene is bright and outdoorsy.

**Dogwood Initiative  
brings together  
everyday British  
Columbians to  
reclaim decision-  
making power over  
the air, land & water  
they depend on.**



BY WILL HORTER

# Executive Director's Report



Fifteen years ago when Dogwood Initiative started operating out of my extra bedroom, I dreamed someday we would have formidable organized local teams that were ready, willing and able to stand up and defend their communities. It seemed like a fantasy as Forest Futures (Dogwood Initiative's original name) was a one-man show with few resources.

I remember travelling to Port Alberni for a community meeting about U.S. logging giant Weyerhaeuser's proposed takeover of B.C.-based MacMillan Bloedel. It was a sunny autumn day and everyone was at the fall fair. There I met an older woman with battle scars from the Clayoquot era valley-by-valley forestry battles. She was a veteran activist who'd been involved in countless campaigns and I remember her saying to me with some despair, "You know, once every few years some big issue comes along and outsiders descend on our town to help us, then when the meetings are all over they disappear. When are people going to realize that we will always lose if we can't build a local group willing to work everyday to shape the future of our town?"

Over the years as Dogwood Initiative has grown into British Columbia's largest and fastest growing people-powered democracy group, I've thought back to that conversation often — and the dream that conversation ignited finally came true.

For years I dreamed that one day Dogwood Initiative would have a network of committed local teams working together to create just, equitable and sustainable communities in neighborhoods where they live. This was the year that dream became a reality.

At the end of this fiscal year Dogwood Initiative

had 119 local teams knocking on doors and working the phones in 37 provincial ridings across British Columbia. We have trained over 250 organizers, and 10,440 canvassers have volunteered to organize and canvas in their neighborhoods.

Dogwood Initiative strives to excel at connecting local people to points of power. Our local teams in Esquimalt, Saanich, West Vancouver, Sooke, Victoria, Courtenay, Burnaby and Nelson are taking the words on the page and making them mean something in the real world.

The results in last fall's municipal elections revealed our local teams are making a measurable difference:

1. 180 organizers from 17 Dogwood teams contacted 19,625 individual voters.
2. Voter turnout increased by 26 per cent in the seven cities we worked in — more than double the provincial average.
3. In Vancouver the average rate of turnout for Dogwood supporters was more than 53 per cent higher than general voter turnout.
4. Supporters who got a live call from a Dogwood volunteer in the final days of the campaign had a voter turnout of 82 per cent.

Increasing turnout produced results:

- 27 of the 35 highlighted candidates were elected in the seven target cities.
- A No Tankers plebiscite passed by 70 per cent in Sooke.



- Strong anti-oil tanker mayors were elected or re-elected in five cities.

Organizing is the foundation of all of Dogwood Initiative's work. Our success or failure in promoting democracy and stopping oil tankers and coal exports will ultimately depend on how successfully we integrate organizing concepts into the DNA of our organization.

There's lots more work to do to achieve our goal of active, trained teams in all 85 ridings in B.C., but it feels like we've turned a corner this past year.

I don't remember the name of the woman from Port Alberni, but I like to imagine that if she had ever connected with one of our local teams, if she experienced the training and camaraderie our local team leaders are generating, her despair would transform into hope and her boundless desire for a better community, province, and nation would be reinvigorated.

As a result of the courage, resiliency, creativity and endless energy of Dogwood Initiative's canvassers, organizers, and staff—I know mine has.

BY LAURA BENSON

# Beyond Coal Campaign



## Goal: No further expansion of coal exports through B.C. ports

Since Dogwood Initiative released BC's Dirty Secret: Big Coal & the Export of Global-Warming Pollution in 2011, exports of thermal coal through B.C. ports have skyrocketed. Wyoming's Powder River Basin coal mines have faced enormous local, state and tribal backlash against their attempts to build new coal export terminals in California, Oregon and Washington.

B.C. continues to be on the frontlines of the fight to block coal exports from the west coast of North America. B.C. ports currently have the capacity to export over 50 million metric tons of coal annually, with proposed and approved capacity increases of up to 32 million metric tons. If these projects are approved and built, B.C. could be exporting over 80 million metric tons of thermal and metallurgical coal annually within the next 5-10 years. Dogwood Initiative is attempting to expand the barricade against Powder River Basin coal exports and close the backdoor for shipping U.S. thermal coal to Asia.

## Where we've been

In last year's annual report I made two predictions about 2014-15:

1. This would be a decisive year for stopping the Fraser Surrey Docks-Texada Island coal port proposal.
2. We would deepen and strengthen our network of campaign allies and build a bigger, more pow-

erful network of Beyond Coal supporters.

I was right about one of those.

When Fraser Surrey Docks and Lafarge Quarries first proposed their coal transshipment project in 2012, most observers thought permits would be issued within months and predicted our odds of defeating the project were slim. Three years later, the proposal is no closer to starting construction and faces mounting political, legal and economic hurdles.

## Here's a taste of what Dogwood and the movement at large accomplished this year:

- Dogwood grew its grassroots base of Beyond Coal supporters to 46,000 people – an increase of 15,000 people.
- Over the course of the year, we increasingly integrated Dogwood's campaign work, tapping into the power of the organization's network of 225,000 supporters.
- That integration allowed Dogwood to mobilize 19,800 voters during the 2014 municipal elections through a non-partisan 'get out the vote' campaign that increased voter turnout and helped elect champions for local decision-making on coal and oil export projects.
- Dozens of Beyond Coal supporters deepened their engagement and became Dogwood organizers, starting small local teams in places like New Westminster and Burnaby, and staffing our municipal election's 'get out the vote' efforts.

- Elected officials passed a resolution at the Union of B.C. Municipalities convention demanding full health and environmental impact assessments of the barge and rail routes associated with the Fraser Surrey Docks-Texada Island project.
- Partner groups Voters Taking Action on Climate Change and Communities & Coal launched two major legal challenges to port and provincial government permit approvals.
- Dogwood deepened work with our U.S. allies and local politicians to integrate B.C. into the Safe Energy Leadership Alliance.
- Critiques from partner organizations and heightened public interest in the issue caused the Metro Vancouver regional government to take public comments on Fraser Surrey Docks' wastewater permit — an unprecedented move.
- Never have so many concerned citizens weighed in on sewage. Dogwood and partner groups mobilized 3,414 comments to Metro Vancouver.

In 2014, we gained more supporters, developed deeper engagement from organizers, strengthened relationships with U.S. and B.C. allies, and organized large mobilizing actions at key decision points.

But in 2014, even the downsides had upsides.

Downside: in April, news seeped out that the provincial government had approved a permit for expansion of the Texada Island coal transfer facility despite public opposition and the absence of an environmental assessment (they forgot to notify anyone of the approval for more than a month).

Upside: Voters Taking Action on Climate Change launched a legal appeal of the permit approval, further delaying progress on the project.

Downside: in August, Port Metro Vancouver followed the provincial government's lead and approved a permit for Fraser Surrey Docks, ignoring the call from health authorities, local governments and thousands of residents for an independent, comprehensive and democratic Health Impact

Assessment. Upside: the approval — which was widely characterized as controversial and came flying in the face of widespread public opposition — sparked a serious backlash. In the weeks following the decision, more than 6,000 new people signed Dogwood's Beyond Coal petition.

Double-upside: Voters Taking Action on Climate Change and Communities & Coal teamed up with Ecojustice to challenge the permit approval in court. In a separate move, the Musqueam First Nation also launched its own legal challenge.

Not bad for a new campaign only in its second year.

## Hard lessons

This year we struggled to find the right opportunities for innovative ways to reach a broader audience of British Columbians. We considered, but ultimately did not have the resources to fully pursue a transmedia campaign, but we invested in a beautiful interactive website, [CoalExportStories.org](http://CoalExportStories.org), to map stories of affected people and activists along the coal export routes. We learned how important it is to focus on the fundamentals and wait for the right opportunity where luck and resources align to allow a full investment in innovation and strategic communications.

## Where we're headed

Important legal challenges will make their way through the courts while we galvanize more strength to win each permit battle. The project has two of five necessary permits. Two are pending legal challenges. The wastewater permit from Metro Vancouver will be decided sometime this year based on input the regional government received from concerned British Columbians. Fraser Surrey Docks still needs an air quality permit (also from the regional government) and a provincial permit under the Water Act, which the company has not yet applied for. One way or another, we will continue to close doors on the risky, wacky proposal to ship U.S. thermal coal through B.C. communities.







**"Whatever decision the federal government announces today, our five conditions are not changing and none of the proposals have met those conditions, so we don't support any of the projects as they stand."**

—Premier Christy Clark (June 17, 2014)

BY KAI NAGATA

# No Tankers Campaign



## Goal: To halt the expansion of crude oil tanker traffic on our Pacific coast.

Step-by-step we're getting closer to achieving our goal, while channeling our growing power into transforming politics in British Columbia.

The Supreme Court's landmark *Tsilhqot'in* decision established last summer what First Nations have been telling us for centuries: most of the land beneath our feet still belongs to its original owners. Now the families that have stewarded this province's watersheds and coastline for untold generations are reasserting their title — and their right to decide what happens on their territory.

At the same time, through the work of Dogwood Initiative and its organizing allies, British Columbia voters are taking back control of our democracy. We started with the oil tanker campaign because it represented the most egregious incursion by faraway corporate interests on our communities and way of life. It was a fight we couldn't afford to lose. Now the skills and relationships we're building have the potential to change grassroots politics across the province.

When those two forces align — the power to influence both laws and lawmakers, to win in court and at the ballot box — anything is possible. Not only does it make proposals by Enbridge and Kinder Morgan highly tenuous, it makes it politically dangerous for elected representatives to side with corporate interests over their constituents. United by love for our shared home, First Nations and everyday British Columbians are working to realign Canadian law with underlying Indigenous laws.

That's reconciliation in action.

## Where we've been

2014–15 has been a year of exciting victories for the No Tankers program as a whole and its flagship campaign, Let BC Vote.

In April the citizens of Kitimat stunned the country by voting "no" to Enbridge's Northern Gateway pipeline and oil tanker project in a symbolic but devastating plebiscite. Here was a hardworking industrial seaport — the one town in B.C. that would stand to gain the most jobs — but residents sided with their Haisla neighbours and decided it wasn't worth the risk.

With a federal cabinet approval looming for Enbridge, we staged a news conference with Coastal First Nations, Unifor and other partners where we threw down the gauntlet to provincial leaders. We announced our intention to run a citizens' initiative in the event that B.C. buckled to pressure from Ottawa — triggering either a referendum or a change in provincial laws that would nullify Enbridge's certificates.

Premier Christy Clark responded: "I think if there's a referendum — that's up to them, the public, to decide. So I'll let that unfold as it may." On the day of the deadline she scheduled a photo op with Haisla leadership in Kitimat. "Whatever decision the federal government announces today," said Christy Clark, "our five conditions are not changing and none of the proposals have met those conditions, so we don't support any of the projects as they stand."

Then the federal government broke the suspense, issuing an eleventh-hour press release confirming the project's approval. Social media

proceeded to blow up. In the 48 hours after cabinet gave Enbridge its certificate, 48,000 new supporters flocked to Dogwood and the Let BC Vote campaign. Over the course of the year, new signatures topped out at more than 100,000.

All three opposition parties swiftly promised to cancel the project if they form government, meaning if the Conservative majority crumbles in the next election, Northern Gateway is dead.

Even if pro-tanker forces hold on in Ottawa, eight different First Nations lawsuits each have the potential to stop the project in its tracks. With the Tsilhqot'in decision delivered in July, legal analysts were unanimous: any nation proving title anywhere along the pipeline route could effectively sideline Enbridge forever.

In the fall we pivoted to Kinder Morgan, which was busy buying up advertising space for the province-wide municipal elections. The company made itself into an election issue, giving us ample reason to jump in and make sure No Tankers supporters got out to vote. The November elections were a chance to test-drive our field systems and the results were fantastic: up to 81 per cent voter turnout among Dogwood supporters and local champions elected everywhere our teams worked.

Stung by the election results, Kinder Morgan charged into the Burnaby Mountain conservation area, determined to drill core samples for submission to the National Energy Board as part of its review of the Trans Mountain expansion project. With citizens being arrested left and right for crossing the injunction line, we issued a call for the province to withdraw from the broken NEB process and start over with a fair, independent review.

We've been building the case ever since as the blatantly rigged Kinder Morgan review has trundled along. High-profile intervenors have dropped out in disgust, municipal leaders have dug in their heels and now the Gitga'at have added a lawsuit to the pile. The First Nation alleges that B.C. violated its constitutional duty to consult when it signed away its powers

of review to Ottawa, way back in 2010.

That issue will come to a head in December 2015. For now, we're focused on building for the federal election in October. With six new seats being contested in B.C. and 21 Conservative incumbents facing voters angered by the federal government's take-no-prisoners approach to pipeline policy, it's time to deliver a message to politicians: you can't toe the party line in defiance of two thirds of your constituents back home and expect to keep getting elected.

## Hard Lessons

Maintaining momentum and enthusiasm amongst staff and supporters through the ups and downs of a multi-year campaign is difficult at the best of times. In our case, the opposition — Kinder Morgan, Enbridge and the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) — has the financial resources to run never-ending, saturation advertising campaigns across all platforms, whenever they choose.

We, along with all our colleagues working on related campaigns, were able to maintain broad 2 to 1 opposition to the expansion of oil tankers in B.C. However, in the face of an unrelenting tsunami of slick oil industry advertising, we struggled against the notion that these projects are inevitable. While the ads didn't erode opposition to the projects, many of those opposed began to believe that the majority of citizens in the province would simply be overruled.

## Where we're headed

After ten years, we're closer than ever to a final death certificate for the ill-conceived Enbridge Northern Gateway project. It will take 170 out of 338 MPs in support to bring in a legislated oil tanker ban on the North Coast, cancelling the pipeline. At the same time the outcome of the federal election will have repercussions for Kinder Morgan: both NDP and Liberal candidates have made it clear the current NEB review is illegitimate.





We'll play in the federal arena if that's where we can make policy headway. But if pro-tanker candidates win another majority – or opposition parties let us down – we will fall back to B.C. jurisdiction and our regional power base on the West Coast.

We still have the option of running a citizens' initiative if all else fails – and thanks to our election work and steady team growth, we're more ready to do so than ever before. If the B.C. government colludes with Ottawa to expand oil tanker traffic on our coast, we may have no choice but to take over the decision as citizens.

But that looks increasingly unlikely as project timeframes drag on and the uncertainty created by First Nations legal action kicks in. We may find ourselves at a crossroads soon where the pipeline projects are essentially dormant. When that happens, it will be time to take the grassroots strength we've built and channel it into something positive. I look forward to your input on where the campaign goes in the next few years.



**"If we don't take action and become stewards of our own environment and our own communities, we are leaving it up to a government that is failing us. Our only choice is to stand up and make a change and we must get everyone who cares involved in that change."**

— Virginia, Dogwood Organizer in Smithers

BY CELINE TROJAND

# Organizing



## Goal: Establish one local leadership team in every provincial riding

In early 2014, Dogwood Initiative prioritized organizing. We established a new director of organizing position, began hiring organizers and prioritized training our keenest volunteers as local team leaders.

### Where we've been

When the federal cabinet approved Enbridge's Northern Gateway proposal on June 17, 2014, citizens from across B.C. clamoured for avenues to take action. In the month after the decision, 4,047 British Columbians' chose to join our organizing teams and actively practice democracy. We didn't know where our organizing efforts would take us this year but we expected growing pains and transformation. Considering our relative newness to this type of grassroots and relational organizing, we certainly have transformed.

Last year I personally spent 18 weeks on the road, travelling to small towns and big cities alike to train and share my own growing understanding of organizing with our supporters. Sometimes the creation of a team involved a packed room, other times it was three strangers converging in a coffee shop. After an hour of discussion and a commitment to receive more training, they somehow found enough shared purpose to step out of their comfort zone, disrupt their everyday life and join us to make a difference.

A year later, our organizers are becoming seasoned and savvy. We've travelled through many peaks and valleys. One of our most intensive climbs

was our work in the municipal election. After months of preparation, our field teams pulled ten of thousands of people to the polls, securing councils that will uphold the values of the people of this province. We discovered that our supporters and community really do engage with democracy! We found out that a phone call from one our field team members can result in a 14 per cent increase in voter turn out. We currently have over 12,000 people who have told us they would be willing to collect pledges, knock on doors, make phone calls and organize around a citizens' initiative or an important election.

### Hard lessons

The highs don't come without some lows. We struggled in some communities where our teams didn't take, overpowered by local concerns or a failure on our part to adequately support new teams growing increasingly farther afield. We struggled with burn out and exorbitant expectations around our systems.

Last year after the federal decision on Enbridge, the number of people stepping up to organize and the formation of new teams shattered our expectations, yet finding the strength to persevere day-in and day-out has been more difficult and gruelling. Our hardest lessons this year are how to maintain resiliency throughout the expanding and contracting pace of our campaign work. It's simply unrealistic to expect field teams to be racing from goal to goal or from peak to valley without rest.

### Where we're headed

Despite hard-learned lessons, our teams continue to expand in breadth and depth. We've added five



new provincial organizers and a digital organizer to our core team. This summer we will be working with eight summer interns. Our team is composed of some of the highest capacity individuals I've ever worked with.

We're exploring the edges of our resiliency and learning together. We've somehow found a community of brave learners — people who fail or succeed with equal enthusiasm. We're a community that is grounded in what we love, what we are defending and what we dream about for our province and our shared political and ecological landscapes. Our team is slowly becoming a large extended family, one that is committed to the long term — and to each other.

Summer 2015 will focus on building strength in the lead up to the federal election. Each team will be taking some time to rest and recharge before the writ is dropped.

When election season starts, our community

teams will own their turf. They will be taking responsibility for turning out their friends, family and neighbours. Our work in the federal election will be a truly grassroots effort supported by systems and data. Anyone in the province, no matter where they are, will have an opportunity to turn out the vote in their community.

This winter after the federal election, our field teams will turn inward to debrief, recalibrate and renew. We will reflect on the relationships we have built with our supporters, our organizers, our province and each other. Whatever the outcome of the 2015 federal election, we will have our work cut out for us to keep our elected officials accountable and to reimagine and reshape our democratic process. Whatever we set our sights on next, I look forward to including all of you, our supporters and community, in devising a strategy that will continue to shape the future of our province and our place within it.

BY DON GORDON

# Fund Raising



## Goal: Establish a plan and the infrastructure to meet fundraising goal of \$1,540,092.87

### Where we've been

Dogwood Initiative's revenues increased in 2014–2015 by 12 per cent overall. This was led by a 17 per cent increase in the number of donors who made at least one gift within the year. Of our 6,570 donors, 2,000 are making monthly contributions. We continue to rely less on grants and more on grass-roots donations with non-grant revenues accounting for 60 per cent of our total. No single source represented more than 7 per cent of revenue — assuring our independence.

We witnessed incredible spending on advertising by oil and pipeline companies. Kinder Morgan flooded the airwaves and social media during the 2014 B.C. election, with Elections BC turning a blind eye. Adding insult to injury, the millions spent on advertising is deducted as a business expense and reduces their taxes. Advocacy organizations like

Dogwood can't issue tax receipts and environmental charities that do are under attack from Ottawa. It is far from a level playing field and yet we're winning.

The real story isn't how much money we raise — it's what we do with it. Dogwood's handful of staff support the efforts of hundreds and hundreds of volunteers. In effect, this means every dollar we spend is multiplied several times over in terms of an effective presence on the ground and in communities across B.C.

Thank you from everyone at Dogwood Initiative. We can do nothing without you, and everything with with you.

### Where we're going

Monthly donations from individuals will continue to be our main priority for growth, as these donations yield higher returns, a more regular income and virtually no administrative costs. Our goal is to become so relevant and inspiring to British Columbians that more people become monthly supporters, allowing us to pay our core expenses without seeking grants.

**"Dogwood understands that community is the heart of change. I joined to make an impact, and I'm staying because I've made friends. Seeing such positive, engaged, everyday people gives me hope for the future"**

— Celina, Dogwood Organizer in Vancouver



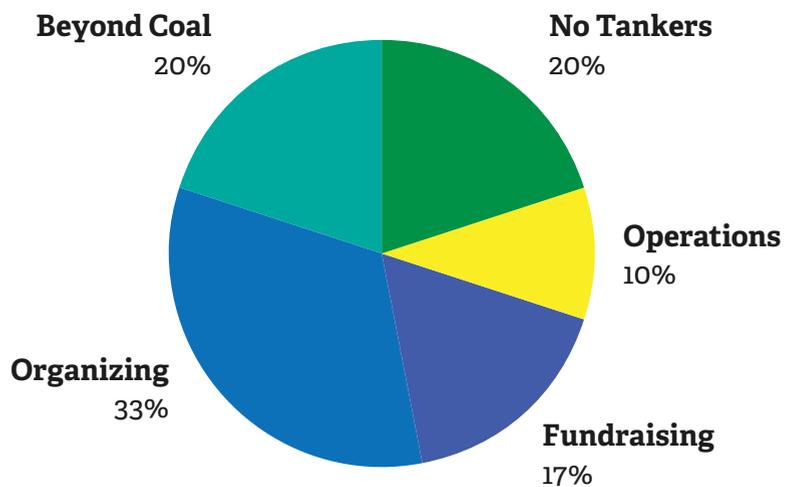
# Financial Summary

## Summary of Revenues and Expenditures

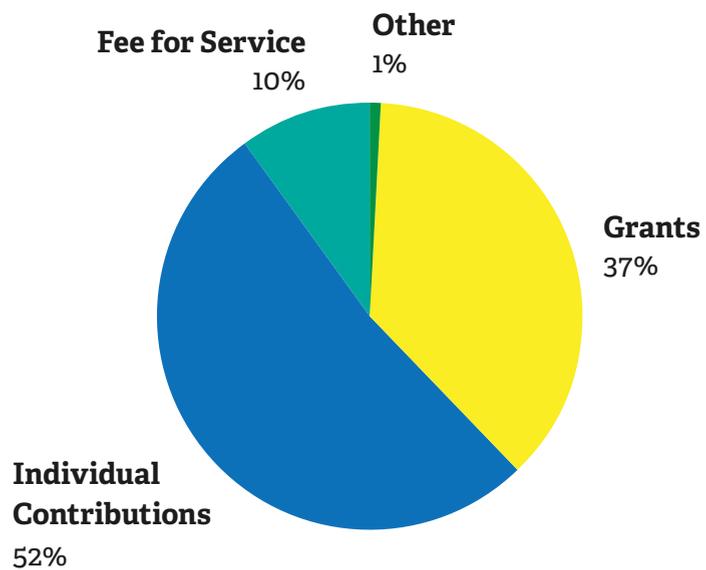
Year Ended March 31, 2015

	<b>2015</b>	2014
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Grants	<b>\$575,359</b>	\$626,388
Individual Contributions	<b>\$818,103</b>	\$547,737
Fee for Service	<b>\$159,306</b>	\$187,608
Other	<b>\$22,589</b>	\$28,538
	<b>\$1,575,357</b>	\$1,390,271
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>		
Overhead	<b>\$227,787</b>	\$132,595
Communications/Campaigns	<b>\$385,342</b>	\$372,316
Special Events	<b>\$31,134</b>	\$12,347
Travel	<b>\$31,813</b>	\$25,154
Human Resources	<b>\$892,964</b>	\$748,439
	<b>\$1,569,040</b>	\$1,290,851
<b>Excess of Revenue Over Expenditures</b>	<b>\$6,317</b>	\$99,420

# Expenses



# Revenue





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*initiative*

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