Dogwood brings together everyday British Columbians to reclaim decision-making power over the air, land & water they depend on.
Change is the only constant in the world. That’s not just an old aphorism; it’s actually a law of physics. The second law of thermodynamics states that the entropy, or disorder in any isolated system, always increases. In other words, nothing ever stays the same.

Dogwood is no exception—we also are always changing. We are constantly trying to find innovative ways to accomplish our goals. Better, cheaper, more effective ways to tell our story, to connect with like-minded supporters, to leverage change and hold politicians accountable, and to connect people with points of power.

We just completed year three in our organization-wide quest to become the most innovative and effective engagement organizing NGO in Canada. We’ve broken new ground, but there’s still a lot of room for improvement. Every year Dogwood sets ambitious goals to help supporters like you create the just, equitable and sustainable communities they dream about. Every year we pull out all the stops in trying to achieve these audacious goals. Last year was no exception.

The 2015 election
This time last year the pro-tanker Conservative Party commanded a majority in Ottawa, with 21 out of 36 seats in B.C. coloured Tory blue and six new ridings being added to the map that would have gone Conservative in the previous election. Enbridge was sitting on a promise that Enbridge’s Northern Gateway project “will not be built.”

The Conservatives finally dropped the writ on August 2, 2015, kicking off a marathon 11-week campaign. The early election call was designed to curtail the influence of third-party advertisers, in particular unions that had lined up millions of dollars’ worth of anti-Harper TV ads. Luckily Dogwood is not reliant on traditional advertising to get our message out, so we were free to talk to voters our way. As the campaign progressed we held seven live candidate debates, put up lawn signs and billboards, ran targeted radio and web ads, and signed up voters by clipboard and mobile phone at 475 local events.

Every day for 78 days we wondered what dirty tricks the governing party might pull to stay in power: More fraudulent robocalls? Hidden election spending? Voter suppression? Meanwhile, the battle raged between Green, Liberal and NDP partisans, each accusing the next of splitting the vote and bettering Stephen Harper’s chances of being re-elected.

We put our heads down and focused on two things: securing commitments on our key issues from candidates and getting our supporters out to the polls to make their choice. On both counts we were highly successful.

At a campaign stop in Esquimalt in August, Justin Trudeau told Dogwood on video that the National Energy Board wasn’t going to approve Kinder Morgan’s oil tanker project after the election: “…we’re going to change the government. And that process needs to be redone.” With the Greens and NDP already in agreement, that left the Conservatives isolated in their pro-tanker position. Further, Trudeau reiterated his promise that Enbridge’s Northern Gateway project “will not be built.”

We communicated the candidates’ positions by e-mail to 179,683 B.C. supporters throughout the campaign. As advance polling dates approached, 854 of our volunteers hit the phones. We had 42,551 live calls with voters to talk them through the identification requirements. Starting the evening before election day, we sent 35,288 text message reminders over the course of 24 hours.

When the election finally arrived, turnout in B.C. surged from 60.4 to 70.4 per cent, outpacing Alberta, Ontario and Quebec. 471,397 more voters in the province cast a ballot in 2015 compared to 2011. Together we elected the country’s most eclectic mix of MPs, including 17 Liberals, 14 New Democrats, 10 Conservatives and one Green. In the B.C. ridings where Dogwood teams did not work, average turnout was 69.25 per cent and the decline in Conservative vote share was 12.87 per cent. In the ridings where Dogwood teams did work, average turnout was 71.64 per cent and the pro-tanker party saw its vote decline by an average of 22.9 per cent.

Outside of B.C. the Conservative party experienced a net loss of just 85,669 votes compared to the previous election. But here in B.C. the collapse was dire: a net loss of 149,075 votes, or 64 per cent of the national total. In the 19 ridings where Dogwood worked in the election, Conservative candidates lost 82,257 votes—nearly as many as in the rest of the country put together.

Ensuring that Prime Minister Trudeau keeps his pipeline promises will form the basis of Dogwood’s new five-year strategic plan, along with stopping Fraser Surrey Docks’ proposal to build a new coal terminal on the Fraser River to export dirty thermal coal to burn in China.

BY WILL HORTER
Director of Strategy Report

To continue to move from ‘Good to Great’ we need to periodically reboot ourselves.
Our new campaign: Ban Big Money
We are also excited to launch a new approach addressing the democratic deficit in British Columbia. Our province is the Wild West of political money. We are among the last province to allow unlimited corporate and union donations, including from donors outside our borders. Dogwood knows organized people, properly focused, will trump organized money—but the more cash our opponents pump into British Columbia to buy access and influence, the harder it is to overcome.

Dogwood’s new Ban Big Money campaign will enhance the power of individual British Columbian voters while simultaneously diminishing the power of our primary adversaries: fossil fuel corporations. It’s time to end big money and special interests’ influences over B.C. politicians. The lack of effective electoral finance laws has corroded political accountability and radically undermined the trust necessary to sustain a healthy representative democracy.

Internal changes
After the election, Dogwood took a hard look at our systems, structure and individual responsibilities, and decided a major restructuring was needed. It was long overdue. We had delayed major restructuring until after the election to ensure we were operating using tried and true systems, however bottlenecked and silo-ed we had become.

As Dogwood’s organizing program grew from an afterthought tacked onto our outreach program to the founding pillar of the organization and the driver of our political power, we needed to modify our governance and communications systems to decentralize power and create more autonomy for local teams.

We made six big changes to bolster Dogwood’s ongoing evolution:
1. I stepped down as Executive Director and took on a new role as Strategy Director.
2. We created a new Executive Team of five directors, which took over responsibility for day-to-day operations and longer-term strategic decisions at Dogwood.
3. We reorganized the core functions of the organization into two streams: Organizing (under Laura’s direction) and a combined Communications and Campaigns program (under Kai’s direction).
4. We created a new role, Director of Human Resources, with Alisha joining the Executive Team along with Laura, Kai, Matt and I.
5. We assigned every core function within Dogwood to a specialized team, designating a functional team leader and assigning staff.
6. To encourage cross-pollination, each staff member was assigned to multiple functional teams based on their skills and experience.

Change is inevitable or else stagnation sets in. Dogwood has accomplished great things over the past few years, but sometimes our previous structure impeded those efforts. To continue to move from ‘Good to Great’ we need to periodically reboot ourselves. This is one of those times. Thank you for your support.
Beyond Coal

Goals: Ensure the Fraser Surrey Docks-Texada Island coal transhipment proposal never moves forward; prevent pro-coal candidates from winning in the federal election; and lay the groundwork for longer-term strategies to undermine existing and future thermal coal and crude oil export projects.

Where we’re been

For another year, Dogwood and our colleagues at Power Past Coal have succeeded in helping communities all along the West Coast block more coal from being dug out of the earth, transported through our communities or burned in Asian power plants. A win-win-win for our province, our health and the global climate.

Here in British Columbia, we have successfully delayed the proposed coal port at Fraser Surrey Docks for another 12 months. Although the market for dirty thermal coal has gone into a deepening death spiral, for some hard to fathom reason Fraser Surrey Docks thermal coal has gone into a deepening death spiral, for another 12 months. Although the market for dirty thermal coal has gone into a deepening death spiral, for Fraser Surrey Docks and the Port of Vancouver this reality. We pushed ahead with public, grassroots action based on Liberal campaign promises before testing the ability of a local community and new activist MP to successfully push a local agenda in a new government facing multiple urgent international, national and regional challenges.

Despite the success of the campaign in motivating grassroots action from citizens and local government to protect our air, land and water against U.S. thermal coal, to date it has largely been a regional issue in the Lower Mainland. Particularly after the federal election where coal exports figured as an issue in only a handful of directly-affected ridings, we had to come to terms with the fact that getting Beyond Coal to scale outside the region would take a lot of resources.

The Port of Vancouver’s swift end run to approve the amended permit in the face of local action on Fraser Surrey Docks after the election drove home this reality. We pushed ahead with public, grassroots action based on Liberal campaign promises before testing the ability of a local community and new activist MP to successfully push a local agenda in a new government facing multiple urgent international, national and regional challenges.

Beyond Coal

In Dogwood’s new five year strategic plan (taking us to 2021), we decided the best way to get at the root of the fossil fuel export problem is to change the way export decisions are made. That’s why over the next few years the Beyond Coal campaign will increasingly focus on democratizing the Port Authority to ensure local people impacted by major port decisions have power over the future of their communities.

We will need to find a campaign that can galvanize British Columbians to reclaim democracy and protect our air, land and water.
Goals: Defeat vulnerable pro-tanker candidates in 20 B.C. ridings. Reverse the federal government’s approval of Enbridge Northern Gateway, effectively killing the project. Degrade and delay Kinder Morgan’s Trans Mountain expansion proposal, positioning the project for defeat in 2016–2017.

A decade in, our biggest battles are yet to come

Dogwood’s No Tankers campaign launched in Spring 2007, which means we’re now entering the tenth year of our fight against toxic, sinking bitumen shipments on the B.C. coast. Since those humble beginnings on the steps of the Victoria legislature, we’ve built a province-wide grassroots movement. B.C. voters have not only succeeded in holding the line against new oil tanker projects, we’ve also won every political contest in which this issue was on the ballot.

At the same time the market case for new pipelines to the West Coast has unravelled, oil prices have fallen below the cost of extracting most oil sands bitumen from the ground. With Canada now a signatory to the Paris Agreement and our new Prime Minister vocally in favour of a 1.5-degree global warming target, expanding the oil sands would seem incompatible with the direction of future energy markets. Yet heavy-oil producers are campaigning harder than ever for new pipelines, and politicians seem closer than ever to saying ‘yes’.

What’s driving this relentless push for bitumen tankers on the West Coast? It’s partly the ‘end-times’ mentality of the oil industry and its financial backers who have sunk too much capital into the oil sands to admit defeat. We also cannot disregard the strategic interests of the People’s Republic of China, which has put renewed pressure on the Trudeau government to approve pipelines as a precursor to a new bilateral trade agreement.

The current situation is worrisome. The oil industry has learned from past mistakes and is finding more efficient ways to advance its political agenda. With Harper gone, public animosity toward fossil fuel infrastructure is softening. The new Liberal government is determined to succeed where Harper failed and has plenty of political capital to spend getting pipelines built. Meanwhile, the premiers of B.C. and Alberta are working hard to ‘get to yes,’ removing obstacles at the provincial level.

Political accountability in general has weakened since the federal election as the new government has poached top journalists to staff its PR departments. The Trudeau honeymoon shows no signs of abating. Here in B.C., the weakness of the Official Opposition has allowed Premier Clark to operate with impunity. Morale within the environmental movement has been damaged by fallout over the controversial Alberta Climate Leadership Plan deal. And most of all, the public and our supporters are fatigued by this never-ending debate over pipelines.

We should be within inches of victory. Instead, we’re facing our toughest battle yet.

BY KAI NAGATA

No Tankers Campaign

We Vote No

KINDER MORGAN
2015-2016: a year of short-lived hope
The defeat of the pro-tanker Conservative Party in the 2015 election should have heralded a new era in Canada’s long battle over pipelines. After all, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau promised during the campaign that Kinder Morgan was going to be headed back to the drawing board, while Enbridge’s Northern Gateway project “will not be built”.

After the election the new Liberal government made all the right moves, including a mandate letter to the Transport Minister directing him to implement a North Coast oil tanker ban that should have killed the Enbridge proposal on the spot.

In January, the B.C. Supreme Court issued another landmark ruling in favour of a First Nation, this time the Gitga’at who had challenged the province’s decision to relinquish pipeline reviews to the federal government. The judge found the province did indeed owe consultation and accommodation to affected First Nations, quite apart from any federal process. The ruling added another layer of complexity to pipeline approvals and validated Dogwood’s focus on the province as a decision-maker with real power.

A few days later, the National Energy Board began hearing final oral arguments on the Kinder Morgan pipeline and oil tanker project in Burnaby. Despite Trudeau’s promise, the rubber-stamp review initiated under Harper continued unchanged. Our supporters turned out every day in the pouring rain to draw attention to the farcical process: members of the public were not even allowed inside, and the board rejected key scientific evidence on the grounds it would be “prejudicial” to the proponent.

Under pressure in B.C. ridings and the national media, the Liberals announced a new supplemental pipeline review process that would follow the NEB report, punting the final cabinet decision to December 2016. We celebrated, knowing that any delay would mean a pipeline to the ocean and even the profitability of extracting bitumen, it has had the perverse effect of increasing sympathy for oil companies and Alberta as a jurisdiction. Rather than take the opportunity to move away from a boom-and-bust sunset industry, the federal government appears intent on expanding oil sands production, and pipelines, as a sort of populist make-work project.

Leaked emails from Liberal campaign co-chair Dan Gagnier to his lobbying client, TransCanada, showed that even before the election, top party brass were colluding with pipeline companies to move projects ahead quickly under the new federal government. Then there’s the Alberta Climate Plan, which was supposed to signal the oil industry’s glory days were behind it. Instead, the introduction of a carbon tax has been used as a bargaining chip to build more pipelines. Indeed several of Canada’s big environmental groups reportedly agreed to drop their campaigns against a minimum of one pipeline in order for industry to agree to the climate plan. The story, which has never been fully rebutted, has sown no end of discord and distrust among grassroots pipeline opponents.

More tentacles stretch between Communist Party officials in Beijing and a coterie of Liberal advisors and former cabinet ministers lobbying hard for the Trudeau government to sign a trade pact with China that would lift restrictions on foreign ownership of energy companies — and guarantee a pipeline to the West Coast. After 10 years of hot-and-cold relations with Prime Minister Stephen Harper, the Chinese regime is clearly excited to have a Trudeau back at 24 Sussex.

Whatever happens, as we’ve come to say at Dogwood these decisions are too important to leave up to politicians.

Hard Lessons
In retrospect there were warning signs that things were not going according to plan.
The crash in oil prices is an instructive example: while it wiped out the business case for pipelines to the ocean and even the profitability of extracting bitumen, it has had the perverse effect of increasing sympathy for oil companies and Alberta as a jurisdiction. Rather than take the opportunity to move away from a boom-and-bust sunset industry, the federal government appears intent on expanding oil sands production, and pipelines, as a sort of populist make-work project.

Leaked emails from Liberal campaign co-chair Dan Gagnier to his lobbying client, TransCanada, showed that even before the election, top party brass were colluding with pipeline companies to move projects ahead quickly under the new federal government. Then there’s the Alberta Climate Plan, which was supposed to signal the oil industry’s glory days were behind it. Instead, the introduction of a carbon tax has been used as a bargaining chip to build more pipelines. Indeed several of Canada’s big environmental groups reportedly agreed to drop their campaigns against a minimum of one pipeline in order for industry to agree to the climate plan. The story, which has never been fully rebutted, has sown no end of discord and distrust among grassroots pipeline opponents.

More tentacles stretch between Communist Party officials in Beijing and a coterie of Liberal advisors and former cabinet ministers lobbying hard for the Trudeau government to sign a trade pact with China that would lift restrictions on foreign ownership of energy companies — and guarantee a pipeline to the West Coast. After 10 years of hot-and-cold relations with Prime Minister Stephen Harper, the Chinese regime is clearly excited to have a Trudeau back at 24 Sussex.

Whatever happens, as we’ve come to say at Dogwood these decisions are too important to leave up to politicians.

Where we’re headed
The federal government is due to render its final decision on the Kinder Morgan project just before Christmas 2016. At this point, all indications point to a ‘yes’. Next, the file will come back to the B.C. Environmental Assessment Office and then Premier Clark, who will decide whether the project has met her five conditions for heavy oil transport. Clark controls about 60 provincial permits required for the company to complete construction.

The next provincial election is in May 2017, which would suggest the best move for Clark is to find a way to punt the decision until after voters go to the polls. If she wins another mandate, which appears likely, the path will open up for her to strike a deal with Alberta and the feds. Whether it is Kinder Morgan or Enbridge that moves forward first, it’s hard to envision a scenario in the next four years in which the federal and provincial governments don’t align behind a West Coast oil tanker project.

At that point there will be three tactical options, none of which are mutually exclusive: First Nations legal challenges, civil disobedience, and direct democracy. We’re best positioned to pursue the latter. Protests and court challenges may slow or halt individual projects, but to achieve our deeper goal of a just, equitable and sustainable society we are going to have to transform politics in British Columbia. To a point, that requires engaging with the existing system — encouraging participation in nomination races, leadership contests and elections to choose candidates from all parties that are on-side with the values of the majority in B.C. But no matter who is in office, and especially between elections, we need other tools to hold them accountable for the decisions we’ll have to live with for decades.

Broadly speaking, we see a need for more direct democracy as the traditional institutions of representative democracy flounder. That means being in a position to launch and win citizens’ initiatives, recall campaigns and referenda — on oil tankers if necessary, but also on other pressing issues that politicians refuse to address.
Organizing

Goal: Have active organizing teams in 60 provincial ridings and mobilize enough voters to affect federal election outcomes in six federal ridings.

Where we’ve been

This was a very big year for Dogwood’s still young organizing program. We continued to integrate our campaigns in the field and recalibrated our sights from rapid preparation for a citizens’ initiative on oil tankers to mobilizing the biggest third party Get Out the Vote effort in Canadian history during the federal election.

Our reach got bigger and deeper as we continued to staff up and expand teams across the province. We now have six organizers on staff and, over the course of the year, added more than 30 active volunteer teams. We got a head start on building our base of support with election vote pledges over the summer and fall of 2015 with the additional help of eight interns through the Canada Summer Jobs program.

Dogwood also invested heavily in digital and training systems to reach more voters in swing ridings with phone surveys, and adapted an online calling system allowing 854 volunteers and mobilize enough voters to affect federal election outcomes in six federal ridings.

After debriefing and evaluating our election effort, Dogwood entered into an entirely new process for developing our next five-year strategic plan. Our organizing teams played a crucial role in this, convening 18 “listening circle” meetings where 175 Dogwood supporters worked in teams for new campaigns that we could take on to change our province over the next five years. Ideas from those sessions were translated into proposals for new campaigns which Dogwood’s executive team, staff and board considered as we charted our strategy together in February and March of this year.

These recent months have been a time of great change at Dogwood as we contemplate the next phase of our work, including some big staff transitions.

Celine Trojand, Dogwood’s first Director of Organizing and the founder of our organizing program, oversaw most of the work described in this report. However, I’m the one writing about it because Celine decided to move on to other amazing pursuits in February this year and I accepted the privilege of taking over her role after nearly three years as director of Dogwood’s Beyond Coal campaign.

Hard lessons

Knowing how important this election was to our supporters — and for the future of B.C. — we anticipated that this could be a key moment to grow our ranks of volunteer organizers and build new teams in places we did not have the resources to build before.

What we found was elections are a time to mobilize, but not the easiest way to build new teams. Lots of volunteers stepped up to be part of the big effort and existing Dogwood teams developed new leadership skills and abilities, but with limited resources and so much to do during this critical mobilization period, we weren’t able to support expansion into new areas to build new teams.

Where we’re headed

We are excited by the addition of Ban Big Money and Port Reform to our existing No Tankers and Beyond Coal campaigns. With an ambitious new vision for the next five years, Dogwood’s organizing program is taking a more front and center place in the organization.

Indeed, the key insight of our new strategic plan is that we must be prepared to change the balance of power in our province and seize the tools of democracy when and if politicians fail us on fossil fuel megaprojects and climate action.

That’s why our organizing program will continue to build steadily one conversation, one local leader and existing Dogwood teams developed new leadership teams — to prepare the grassroots infrastructure and citizen power necessary to win on all our campaigns, whether in permit battles, in the legislature or at the ballot box.

In the coming year before the provincial election, we intend to expand our organizing network into 45 ridings while building our base of support to tipping point levels in key areas across the province. We are developing a solid plan to ‘Get Out the Vote’ in May 2017 and the infrastructure to ensure any government elected official will Ban Big Money, reject oil tanker and thermal coal proposals, and take meaningful climate action, or face an organized backlash from British Columbians in a citizens’ initiative.

Hard lessons

Knowing how important this election was to our supporters — and for the future of B.C. — we anticipated that this could be a key moment to grow our ranks of volunteer organizers and build new teams in places we did not have the resources to build before.
Where we’ve been
This was a successful fundraising year. Dogwood met or exceeded our revenue targets in all categories, and we continued to increase the funding from British Columbians concerned about the future of their communities.

The 2015 federal election was a big opportunity for change, and Dogwood donors seized it by providing the resources we needed to conduct the largest 3rd party ‘Get Out the Vote’ campaign in Canadian history. Our Vote BC efforts inspired a spike of donations which we poured back into our non-partisan work to return MPs to Ottawa that would stand up for the coast. Nineteen of the 20 pro-tanker and coal candidates were defeated in the ridings we targeted.

Gifts from individual Canadians continue to drive our success. In 2015–16 we received 7,059 separate donations and had 2,398 monthly donors. We continue to rely less on grants and more on grassroots donations with non-grant revenues accounting for 59 per cent of our total. No single source represented more than seven per cent of revenue, assuring our independence.

Hard lessons
After every feast comes a famine. Our fundraising efforts struggled towards the end of the year as many of our loyal donors had given all they could during the election period. However, the continued growth in our monthly donations got us through a short dry spell. There also seems to have been a bit of a Trudeau honeymoon period where supporters might have mistakenly thought the No Tankers campaign could wind down as the newly elected Prime Minister would act decisively to reject both Kinder Morgan and Enbridge’s bids for a west coast pipeline and oil tanker terminal.

Where we’re headed
Dogwood will continue to prioritize funding directly from British Columbians. We are seeking to diversify and expand our sources of revenue in the coming year. While we hope to attract some new foundation support for our new Ban Big Money campaigns, our priority will continue to be growing our individual donor base. This year we are hoping to jump start our major donor program.

In the end, 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 of volunteers. This means that every dollar we spend is multiplied several times over in terms of an effective presence on the ground in communities across B.C.

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

Summary of Revenues and Expenditures
Year Ended March 31, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>$922,447</td>
<td>$575,359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Contributions</td>
<td>$925,396</td>
<td>$818,103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fee for Service</td>
<td>$350,427</td>
<td>$159,306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$43,176</td>
<td>$22,589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
<td>$2,242,446</td>
<td>$1,875,357</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Expenditures**        |            |            |
| Overhead                | $261,340   | $227,787   |
| Communications/Campaigns| $779,196   | $385,342   |
| Special Events          | $23,972    | $31,134    |
| Travel                  | $21,523    | $31,813    |
| Human Resources         | $1,036,853 | $892,964   |
| **Total Expenditures**  | $2,122,884 | $1,569,040 |

| Excess of Revenue Over Expenditures | $119,562 | $6,317 |

Expenses

Beyond Coal 20%
No Tankers 20%
Operations 10%
Fundraising 17%
Organizing 33%

Revenue

Grants 41%
Individual Contributions 41%
Fee for Service 16%
Other 2%