



ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2017



An aerial photograph of a large, forested island in a deep blue lake. The island is covered in dense green trees and has some rocky outcrops. In the background, there are more islands and a range of mountains under a clear sky. A small boat is visible on the water in the lower left, leaving a white wake.

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

# Campaigns & Communications

This was a breakthrough year for Dogwood's campaigns, with a major victory in the fight against oil tanker expansion. After a decade-long struggle, the Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline through the Great Bear Rainforest is now officially cancelled. Meanwhile, our campaigns on thermal coal and democratic reform are poised for big wins in the next 12 months.

The year began with a rebuild and retooling of Dogwood's communications department. After I took over as director, Christina Smethurst returned from maternity leave to anchor our supporter outreach team and manage a full organizational rebrand, including a switch to a new website. Arie Ross brought the Beyond Coal program into the fold, unifying our three campaigns.

Lisa Sammartino joined us to work on democratic reform, starting with the Ban Big Money campaign. She also took leadership of our digital communications, including social media and the new dogwoodbc.ca. Sophie Harrison came on board in September as our new No Tankers campaigner, leading the charge on Kinder Morgan.

Together with veteran communications hand Charles Campbell, our newly-unified team was able to respond more rapidly to developments on each campaign. This was also the year we started taking online video more seriously, experimenting with different types of messaging in preparation for a major push during the 2017 election.

We faced some setbacks, in particular at the federal level. None of us were prepared for how cynical the incoming Trudeau administration would prove to be, or how easily they would throw our province under the bus. Despite these nasty surprises, I'm confident we have the team and the tools we need to play David to the oil industry's Goliath, shaping history in B.C. for the better.

— Kai Nagata

## No Tankers

Betraying his promise to re-do the "broken" National Energy Board, Justin Trudeau's Ministerial Panel came to B.C. in the summer of 2016. While criticizing this slapdash review, Dogwood supporters packed the hearings from Kamloops to Victoria. Together, we sent the panel 9,501 original letters — nearly half the total comments received nationally.

In October a Texas-owned tugboat pushing an empty oil barge hit a reef near Bella Bella and sank. More than 100,000 litres of diesel fuel and engine lubricants leaked into a key seafood harvesting area of the Heiltsuk Nation. Our team answered the call, helping to amplify the story on the ground and fundraise for an eventual lawsuit.

Despite this tragic accident, and the ineffective spill response that followed, the oil industry's relentless lobbying convinced Ottawa politicians to push ahead with a major expansion of oil tanker traffic on the B.C. coast. In November, Trudeau approved the Kinder Morgan project, ignoring not only Indigenous consent, but also the unresolved questions in his own Panel's report.

In January, Premier Christy Clark joined the pro-tanker team — after taking more than \$771,168 in corporate donations from Kinder Morgan and its oil patch backers. This brought our Ban Big Money and No Tankers campaigns together, setting up an epic battle in the B.C. election.

With all the action this year, we barely had time to celebrate a major victory. The death of Enbridge Northern Gateway has set the stage for a legislated North Coast tanker ban. Once half the coast is permanently closed to oil tanker expansion, we can focus all our efforts on turning the tide against Kinder Morgan.

— Sophie Harrison

## Beyond Coal

2016–17 was all about setting up key narratives in the provincial election.

Our "Defend our Farmland" campaign tapped into anxieties over the Port of Vancouver's plans to remove land from the Agricultural

Land Reserve and dredge one of the world's most important salmon bearing rivers, the Fraser, to allow bigger ships carrying coal and other fossil fuels to plow through. This turned into a major news story in the Lower Mainland, making the Massey Bridge boondoggle a potent regional issue ahead of the spring vote.

Meanwhile, the election of Donald Trump coupled with key victories against coal projects in Washington increased the pressure on B.C. to transport thermal coal rejected by American ports. We knew we had to push our province harder to stop this dirty coal in its tracks.

In March 2017, we reframed the story as U.S. coal getting a free ride through B.C. ports, tapping into values shared by BC Liberal voters.

We called for a levy on thermal coal exports to ensure all coal pays its fair share, accounting for the local and global impacts of the product. We brought the idea to candidates from every provincial party, setting the stage for the Premier's unprecedented move to ban thermal coal in the 2017 election campaign.

— Arie Ross

**We're winning, and we're doing it in a way that makes British Columbians stronger, more connected and better equipped for the challenges to come.**

## Democracy

When we launched the Ban Big money campaign in April 2016, B.C.'s ruling politicians literally laughed at the idea that voters would even care. And now here we are, on the other side of an election with not one, but all three parties promising to Ban Big Money as soon as the legislature reconvenes.

Over the past year we've been vigilantly researching and breaking major stories that have shaped how British Columbians see policy decisions in B.C. We caught a U.S. trophy hunting Super PAC funneling money to the BC Liberals to keep the grizzly hunt open, shone a spotlight on the cabinet ministers who personally benefit from the out-of-control real estate market and uncovered \$771,168 in oil patch donations apparently intended to buy permits for the Kinder Morgan pipeline. This story was featured by the New York Times as part of an incredulous exposé on B.C.'s "Wild West" system of political corruption.

Because of this work, Premier Clark was forced to drop her \$50,000 fundraising bonus from the party. The RCMP launched an official investigation into donations from lobbyists. And we cheered as Ban Big Money became the number one issue framing the provincial election.

— Lisa Sammartino



## Conclusion

In a world that seems increasingly unstable, people are highly attuned to anything that threatens their sense of “home”. We often read about negative manifestations of this impulse: the nativism expressed in the Brexit campaign, the racism of the Trump campaign, even the white-nationalist militias forming in the U.S. and Canada. But there’s a way to feed that basic human longing that is constructive: that gives people true agency, true security, true resiliency.

B.C. is demonstrating that by organizing around a shared love of place, we can make progress on conservation, Indigenous reconciliation and democratic renewal, all at the same time. It’s that fierce drive to defend our home that has led to B.C. being described as “the graveyard of the pipelines”. It is forging new relationships between north and south, First Nations and settler communities, and upending the political predictions of pundits and pollsters alike.

We’re winning, and we’re doing it in a way that makes British Columbians stronger, more connected and better equipped for the challenges to come.

It is hard to describe the joy that comes from putting together a strategic plan and then watching it take shape in the world. Thanks to the dedicated work of the whole Dogwood team, we are actually ahead of schedule on our five-year plan. As we look to 2017–2018, I’m excited to lock in campaign finance legislation, choke out thermal coal and fend off the Kinder Morgan expansion. Next up: helping young people organize to lower the voting age.

— Kai Nagata



# Organizing

## Where we've been

In the fourth year of Dogwood's organizing program we strengthened our core, saw steady growth and made a major pivot to start preparing for a citizens' initiative campaign to stop Kinder Morgan.

We started the year with a new strategic plan, gained momentum in the field with the launch of our Ban Big Money campaign, mobilized hundreds of supporters to the federal government's Kinder Morgan review panel and pivoted our teams to start preparing for a citizens' initiative after both the federal and provincial governments broke their promises to British Columbians and approved the Kinder Morgan tanker and pipeline proposal.

As of March 31, we had five full-time organizers and one part-time remote organizer on staff. Dogwood's organizing network covered 44 provincial ridings, including ongoing organizing partnerships with One Cowichan and West Kootenay Eco-Society. Dogwood organizers were supporting 36 teams at various stages of development. Some were just forming, many were full-fledged teams, and a few in the South Island region have reached the transformation phase where they split into even more autonomous teams. As part of this growth, our organizers have incubated new teams in Chilliwack, Nanaimo, Parksville, Port Moody, Whistler and at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby.

Together, with a growing number of canvass and phone volunteers who work on their own in far-flung communities across the province, our field work brought in 14,699 new petition signatures for our No Tankers, Ban Big Money and Beyond Coal campaigns. Teams had also had 58 meetings with elected officials and candidates over the course of the year, and these will continue to be prioritized as we move from our provincial election Get Out the Vote campaign to holding new government officials accountable.

A few specific accomplishments are worth noting to

demonstrate the breadth of our organizing work this past year:

- Dogwood's Courtenay-Comox team undertook a pilot regional campaign focused on municipal climate adaptation policy. While the results were mixed and the policy is still mired in a council committee, the campaign sustained and strengthened the team and its commitment to Dogwood in a time when it might have otherwise drifted. While our organization's focus continues to be on issues that affect British Columbians province-wide, this pilot showed the potential for local and regional action in the future.



- South Island volunteer regional organizer Kathryn Cass piloted Dogwood's first successful adopt-a-riding project and built a new team in Nanaimo. Since its formation, Kathryn has recruited and trained four leaders and coordinators, and the team consistently sees participation from 20–30 members.

- Thanks to our increased staff capacity, our first entirely remote team has blossomed in Chilliwack. Testing tactics for digital recruitment

and remote coaching, we found a team leader who has successfully recruited other Dogwood prospects in her area to form the new team.

- Together with Dogwood's communications and campaigns team, we signed up 432 official initiative canvassers and held dozens of information sessions about the initiative strategy with supporters and volunteers on Vancouver Island and in the Lower Mainland. And though as I write this I know the initiative campaign is on hold, at the time we're learning invaluable lessons about the strengths and challenges we would be facing running an initiative. The experience will only make us stronger as Dogwood moves forward.

## Hard lessons

It was hard to sustain our teams and organizing activity early in 2016 with the popularity of our new federal government along with a long period of strategic planning at Dogwood that had us looking internally for several months.

Mid-way through the year, as we continued to fall behind on growing our base of support in the field, we realized that building teams is the most fundamental goal of Dogwood's organizing program. While we can't build strong teams without canvassing, it was the quality of the team, not the number of canvassing signatures, that mattered most at the end of the day.

It was tough to learn we cannot count on the promises our governments make to British Columbians. When Dogwood established its new strategic plan, we sought to slowly build up our organizing teams over the next four years. We didn't think we'd have to run a citizens' initiative campaign on Kinder Morgan. But then in December, with federal and provincial approval of the project, it became clear we were going to have to speed that up and leverage the strength we had in the coming year.

In a few short months, Dogwood signed up almost 400 people to become official citizens' initiative canvassers. We had a solid plan and a lot of leaders across British Columbia ready to take on this daunting task. Our organizing network is more prepared than any past initiative campaign — even the successful

Fight HST campaign. At the time of this writing, we've now called off plans to run an initiative campaign thanks to the stunning results of the provincial election. But the process to prepare for the campaign taught us invaluable lessons and gave us the hands-on experience we'll need in the future that we couldn't have gotten any other way.





## Where we're headed

In January, the organizing program — along with the rest of Dogwood — recalibrated around the structure and volume of work that will be required to win a citizens' initiative petition campaign on Kinder Morgan in the coming year. We were set to run a cutting-edge Get Out the Vote campaign during the provincial election in May with a plan to mobilize our supporters to the polls and train volunteers on skills that could be maximized in a citizens' initiative campaign — or in any democratic advocacy campaign if the election resulted in a change of government.

We now know the outcome of the election is favourable to a win against Kinder Morgan, but as of March 31 we were full steam ahead on growing capacity, with priority going first to signing up as many new official canvassers as we could while also mobilizing volunteers to get out the vote for the provincial election.

Organizing was all hands on deck coming out of 2016. We knew if we were going to win a citizens' initiative, we needed to spread Dogwood teams further across the province, build on the strength of existing teams and lean on the rest of Dogwood's staff for support. We had a lot of plates spinning, but like a well-oiled machine, we were moving along at break-neck speed and felt confident we would be successful.

People-power is what our organization is built on, and it's how we plan to continue to push the B.C. government toward a more sustainable future, free from the threat of big oil, U.S. coal and corrupt political donations. Thank you to all of the supporters and volunteers who make up the Dogwood community!

— Laura Benson

# Fundraising

## Where we've been

This was another successful year for fundraising. Our revenue was down slightly from the federal election year of 2015, but we had anticipated that and Dogwood met or exceeded our revenue targets in all categories.

Gifts from individual Canadians continue to drive our success. In 2016–17 we received more than 10,000 individual donations. The big story for Dogwood continues to be the generosity of our more than 2,500 monthly members. Their monthly gifts allow us to respond quickly and nimbly to emerging campaign opportunities.

While the majority of Dogwood's annual revenue comes from individual donors, we'd like to recognize the funding we receive from grants and contracts with the following groups and organizations: Mountain Equipment Co-op, Vancouver City Savings Credit Union, Popular Change Association, HRSDC — Canada Summer Jobs, Patagonia, Climate Solutions, Timken Sturgis Foundation, Regroup Gathering Society, Tides Foundation USA, Winky Foundation, Brainerd Foundation, Bullitt Foundation, Moore Foundation, Wilburforce Foundation, West Wind Foundation, and Salal Foundation. Thank you so much for your continued support of Dogwood's work!

We were all reminded of what is at risk when the Nathan E. Stewart sunk near Bella Bella, spilling more than 100,000 litres of fuel. The Heiltsuk people were hard-hit by this disaster that closed their fisheries. In solidarity with the Heiltsuk, Dogwood shared their appeal for help with our supporters who responded magnificently, pushing their campaign beyond its goal. It was the most money Dogwooders had ever contributed in a single weekend and it all went directly to the community most impacted by the spill.

## Hard lessons

The Trudeau honeymoon, during which many people thought he would act decisively to reject both Kinder Morgan and Enbridge, continued to plague our fundraising campaigns through the early months of the year. Once he announced his cabinet's approval of Kinder Morgan, Dogwood enjoyed its best end of year campaign ever. This served to remind us we don't make the wind, we can only trim our sails; the success of our fundraising is directly proportional to the public interest in our campaigns.

## 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. We are going to grow our major donor program and identify some new institutional partners.

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 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.

— Don Gordon



# Financial Summary

## Summary of Revenues and Expenditures

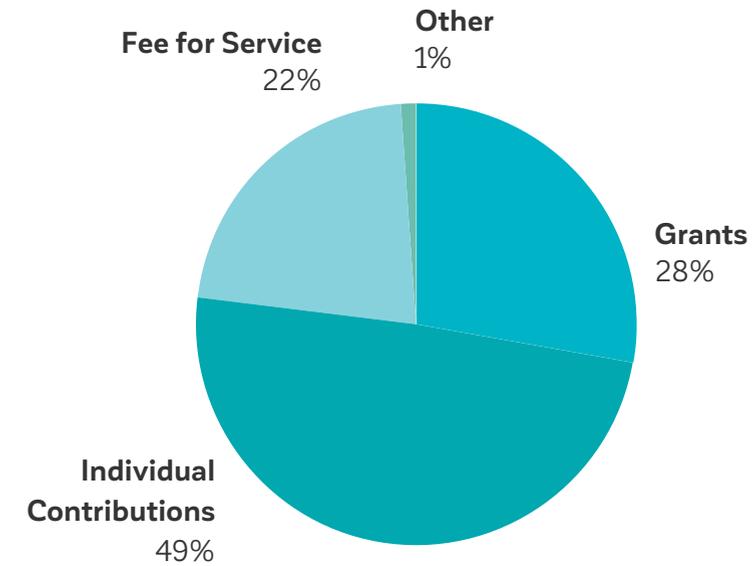
Year Ended March 31, 2017

	2016/17	2015/16
<b>Revenue</b>		
Grants	\$452,899	\$922,447
Individual Contributions	\$811,454	\$926,396
Fee for Service	\$359,189	\$350,427
Other	\$18,391	\$42,148
	<b>\$1,641,933</b>	<b>\$2,241,688</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>		
Overhead	\$160,547	\$162,654
Communications/Campaigns	\$392,788	\$835,922
Special Events	\$4,642	\$8,791
Travel	\$15,427	\$21,523
Human Resources	\$999,670	\$1,036,853
Amortization of Assets	\$52,202	\$57,141
	<b>\$1,625,276</b>	<b>\$2,122,884</b>
<b>Excess of Revenue Over Expenditures</b>	<b>\$16,657</b>	<b>\$118,804</b>

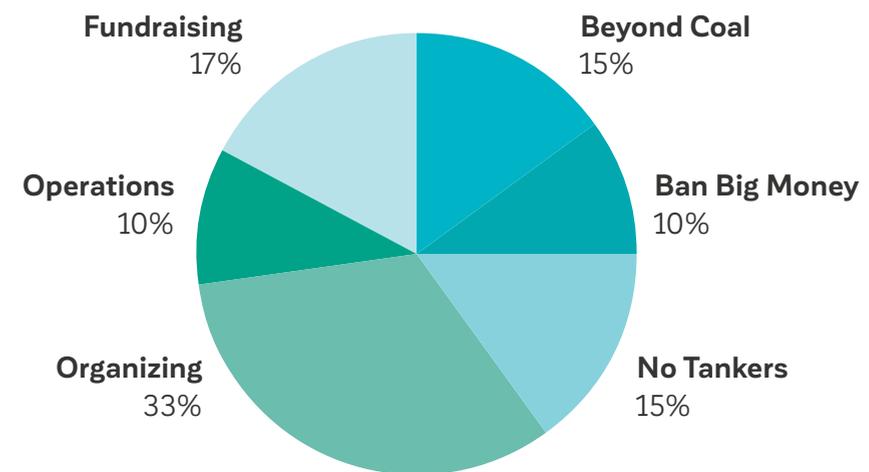
## Thank you

Thanks to our 9,210 donors and 2,446 monthly donors — you make Dogwood possible!

## Revenue



## Expenses





[dogwoodbc.ca](http://dogwoodbc.ca)

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