



 **Dogwood**

20
18

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

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



Dogwood

Message from the Chair 2017–18

It has been my privilege to serve on Dogwood's Board of Directors since 2006, and as Chair since 2013. When I reflect upon the arc of Dogwood's campaigns, I realize that together we have held back projects that would have locked in huge carbon emissions for generations. In doing so, we have bought some more time to address climate justice.

This past year has seen big changes in the world, our nation, our province and within Dogwood itself. In this annual report, you will learn of the campaign and program highlights in the words of our dedicated staff. As chair of Dogwood, I want to share with you the steps we are taking to make the organization representative of, and responsible to, the communities we serve.

Several years ago we adopted a distributed organizing model that has built real grassroots political power capable of influencing governments and policy. This power is based upon the involvement of hundreds of volunteers working in their own communities. It quickly became clear that our traditional hierarchical governance structure was out of step with our new reality and so we moved to a much more horizontal structure replacing our executive director with an executive team and further devolving authority for different aspects of our operations to the staff most directly involved. This has made us more responsive to our grassroots, drawn more perspectives into decision-making and cultivated young leaders.

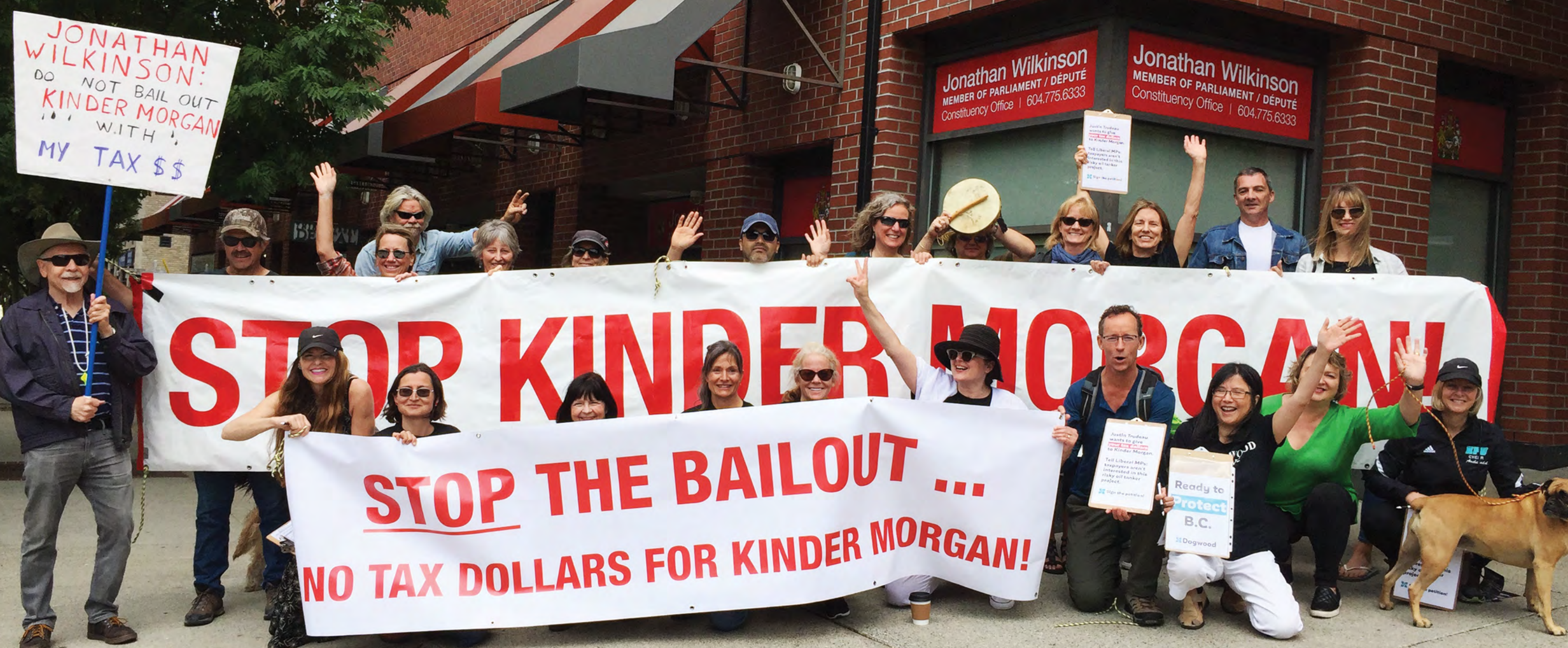
In late 2017, Will Horter, our founding Executive Director, moved on from Dogwood. We are sincerely grateful for Will's many years of service. One of the greatest measures of a leader is the quality of leadership he or she leaves behind, and the strength of our organization today is a testament to Will's tireless pursuit of excellence.

As Dogwood's volunteer base has grown, it brought into focus that our organization is not as diverse as the province we want to serve. Some of our younger staff and volunteers challenged us to address this and we have committed ourselves to the development of a justice, equity, diversity and inclusion statement (JEDI statement) that will be used to guide decision-making, planning, hiring and recruitment. We recognize that there are many inequities within our own organization, our movement and our society at large, and that our adoption of JEDI principles will be the beginning of a journey. I invite you all to continue this journey with us as we work towards a just and sustainable future and I thank you for all the many ways your support has made our work possible.

— Jennie Milligan

"Together we have held back projects that would have locked in huge carbon emissions for generations."





Communications

Our fiscal year began as the writ dropped on the wildest provincial election in B.C. history, and ended with Members of Parliament blockading the Kinder Morgan tank farm in Burnaby. We filed — and withdrew — our first initiative petition, helped crank up voter turnout in pivotal ridings, and secured historic legislation on campaign financing.

It was a hell of a year.

Together Dogwood's organizers and communications staff helped mobilize tens of thousands of voters to get involved and hold their politicians accountable. As a result the new B.C. government has stuck to its guns on the oil tanker file, buying time for financial pressure and litigation to grind Texas pipeline investors down.

Along the way the team cranked out 90 original blog articles and op-eds, a dozen in-depth podcasts

and 26 videos — racking up 2.5 million views on social media. We broke stories — like when a U.S. trophy hunting Super PAC donated to sway the B.C. election. And we broadcast exclusive images, like the shots of Kinder Morgan's illegal anti-spawning nets, that stirred public outrage and drove our campaigns forward.

— Kai Nagata



Democracy

A year ago B.C. was still the Wild West of campaign finance. Any corporate tycoon, numbered company or multinational anywhere in the world could donate unlimited money to B.C. politicians, distorting the electoral process and undermining the faith of ordinary people in their democracy.

Today that regime is gone, not only at the provincial level, but municipal too. The loss of millions in campaign cash from real estate developers and oil companies is opening up space for a new generation of political leadership. And the culture is shifting — from cynicism or passive acceptance to a new watchdog mentality — as citizens hold their leaders to a higher standard. The playing field is tipping away from wealthy elites in favour of organized local people.

Dogwood can't take sole credit for these developments, but we're proud of the reach and impact of our *Ban Big Money* campaign, which shook up the 2017 election and set the stage for tough new laws. And we continue to push for a broader corruption inquiry, so British Columbians can finally learn just how deep the democratic rot managed to go.

In the coming year we look forward to channelling this appetite for change into the provincial referendum on electoral reform. And we plan to deepen our engagement with young people, getting the next generation of voters fired up to make a difference in their community.

— Lisa Sammartino



No Tankers

As election day in B.C. drew closer, Dogwood worked with key allies to draft the *Community Health and Safety Review Act*, a bill that would maximize provincial jurisdiction over heavy oil transport. We applied for an initiative petition with Elections BC — so if a pro-tanker government won the election, we’d be ready to go. Instead the new government vowed to use “every tool in the toolbox” to stop Kinder Morgan. Satisfied, Dogwood withdrew the petition.

The year was largely a battle to keep this promise front and centre for the new government, to ensure the BC NDP couldn’t back down — despite enormous pressure from both the Alberta and federal governments. In the end, the government stood their ground in defence of B.C. communities. The backlash was enormous, but the company blamed the resulting political uncertainty for its inability to move forward with the Trans Mountain pipeline and oil tanker expansion.

As 2018 got underway, those risks were compounded by looming decisions on a raft of legal challenges, as well as a fresh wave of Indigenous-led actions. At the end of the fiscal year Dogwood helped our allies mobilize the largest-yet march on Burnaby Mountain, in support of Kwekwecnewtxw — a cedar structure built on the Kinder Morgan right-of-way in a revival of the Coast Salish watch house tradition.

— Sophie Harrison

Beyond Coal

The battle against thermal coal exports on the West Coast hit a turning point in 2017, as the State of Washington blocked a massive coal terminal proposed for Longview, on the Columbia River. The slow death of the Millennium Bulk facility comes after a string of victories stateside that have earned our region nicknames like “Blockadia” and “the Thin Green Line.”

With the loss of those export options, U.S. coal shipments through B.C. climbed after several years of decline. And proponents of the Fraser Surrey Docks expansion proposal won a brief reprieve, when a lawsuit brought by local coal opponents was dismissed by a Canadian judge. But those groups are now appealing, and in the meantime Fraser Surrey Docks has opted not to move forward with a crucial air quality permit application. The long-term prognosis for the industry is grim.

If the Fraser Surrey Docks project doesn’t show signs of life soon, it’s safe to say plans for new coal terminals on the West Coast are dead. Trump may dig coal, but if there’s nowhere to load it onto boats, this filthy industry’s days are numbered.

— Arie Ross



Conclusion

With climactic battles drawing closer on our legacy campaigns, the team is hard at work preparing for what comes next. Our mission — to put decision-making power back in the hands of local people — is really just beginning. To achieve our mountaintop goals we’ll need to spend less time fighting bad projects, and more time locking in the cultural and legislative changes that help truly shift power to the grassroots.

As the climate crisis accelerates and political institutions falter, B.C. has a unique opportunity to build a different kind of future. That’s because the vast majority of our landbase doesn’t belong to the Crown. Instead, Indigenous nations will be in the driver’s seat. That’s good news for all British Columbians, because the old colonial economy is failing us. With more local

control of air, land and water — and deeper collaboration between neighbours — we can build communities strong enough to weather what comes next.

The world is changing, and so is Dogwood. Over the next year, watch for new faces, new projects, alliances and campaigns. We’ll be leaning into tough conversations around reconciliation. We’ll be taking our climate work to the next level. And as always, we’ll be looking for the gaps in Goliath’s armour. We may pick a few fights that seem unwinnable. But then again, that’s what they said about Enbridge, the 2017 election — and campaign finance reform.

— Kai Nagata



"With more local control of air, land and water — and deeper collaboration between neighbours — we can build communities strong enough to weather what comes next."

Organizing

Where we've been

This past year we dreamed big, prepared to take a leap of faith and brought our teams, leaders and volunteers with us through a journey of radical adaptation to unprecedented changes in the conditions that affect our work.

We held strong in the field, always focusing on our core organizing practices — conversations, relationships, team structure, leadership development — so that, united, Dogwood is a force of many ready to face the storm. We learned a lot and deepened many relationships.

In April 2017 we were deep into a plan to launch and run an initiative petition to stop Kinder Morgan. We were ramping up outreach and recruitment with our volunteer teams in the Lower Mainland and on the Island, while also training and recruiting folks to Get Out The Vote phonebanks for the provincial election.



We signed up 511 initiative canvassers; at the same time 281 election volunteers talked to 13,579 voters. Province-wide, Dogwood and other members of the Organizing for Change alliance increased turnout of environmental voters by 7 per cent.

After the surprise result of the provincial election in May, and an excruciating period of uncertainty before

a new minority government solidified, it was no longer necessary to carry out the initiative plan — which would have been the largest and most ambitious field mobilization Dogwood had ever attempted.

Instead, we had a new NDP government supported by three Green MLAs. Dogwood's organizing network became a foundation of strength in exactly the places we needed to hold politicians accountable.

Volunteer teams got to work. They met with representatives, called and texted Dogwood supporters and patched them through to MLA offices, and canvassed in their communities through the summer and fall. Over the course of the year, Dogwood organizers and volunteers had 70 meetings with elected officials, made thousands of phone calls, sent thousands of text messages and collected more than 11,000 petition signatures.

The power of this grassroots action got British Columbia to a win on Ban Big Money — and pushed the provincial government to act on its promises to fight Kinder Morgan.

The mainstay of Dogwood's organizing network is our local teams. We also partner with local groups who organize and align with Dogwood's values, and we mobilize volunteers anywhere we can at key moments. Over the course of the last year, Dogwood volunteers and partner groups were active in 58 provincial ridings and we ended the year with 22 local teams at various stages of development (some just forming, some rebuilding, some teams merging together, some teams fully developed and stable over several years).

Overall, through an unprecedented year of change and democratic action, Dogwood's organizing program has held steady in the places we've been in the field the longest — Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland.

What we learned

Dogwood organizers and volunteers learned a ton over the past year.

- We learned to use new tools like Hustle to mobilize supporters by text message, and Callhub to phone supporters and patch them through to an MLA's office.
- We learned to tell our stories better, weaving inspiring profiles of our volunteers into social media posts, videos, blogs and emails.
- We learned to collaborate better with our colleagues and allies.
- A lot of the best stuff that happens in the field — like a new team forming, a person stepping into leadership, riding teams merging or splitting to maximize effectiveness — cannot be planned for. We are learning to have the flexibility and skill to recognize and seize these opportunities for magic to happen.

We also learned from our mistakes and missteps.

- We learned that trying to recruit people to a theoretical initiative campaign *and* a Get Out the Vote campaign at the same time is super confusing — and probably suppressed results for both efforts.
- We already knew this, but we learned again that we can only expand our organizing network if we invest in staff organizers that can support local recruitment and team-building.
- We were reminded that the more time we have to spend mobilizing, the less time there is to build and grow the strength of teams through the slow relationship-building of long-term organizing.



Where we're going

In the year ahead we intend to keep our core organizing network strong in the field, hopefully cementing victories against the proposed Fraser Surrey Docks coal port — and the Trans Mountain pipeline and oil tanker project.

Our volunteers will put their expert skills to work once again mobilizing participation in the overhaul of B.C.'s environmental assessment laws. We will also encourage Dogwood supporters to participate in a referendum on a new voting system later this year. If the opportunity is ripe, we will start outreach and recruitment to mount a broader push against public fossil fuel subsidies.

We will continue to invest in relationships to recruit new volunteers, deepen the commitment and leadership on our teams, sustain partnerships with other organizations and support people across the province who are ready to put democracy into action.

This year we will invest in training our volunteers, and the next generation of young leaders through Dogwood's first ever Youth Summit. We will keep finding new ways to help people connect with each other and take action, like peer-to-peer texting through Hustle. And we will weave together the personal and political connections that slowly pull power away from corporations and special interests — and hand it back to everyday British Columbians.

— Laura Benson



Fundraising

As a fundraiser you live in hope of someone walking through the door to deposit a big fat cheque. Dogwood does have a handful of very generous individual donors, but the real story is the thousands of small gifts that support our campaigns. We get a lot of heartfelt messages attached to those gifts that remind us of the trust and hope our supporters place in us. When an elderly supporter on a small fixed income still manages to make a gift, it reminds us of the urgency of our collective fight.

In addition to the nearly 10,000 individual gifts we receive each year we have more than 2,400 monthly donors and it is the steady income from those donors that allows us to respond quickly to emerging campaign opportunities. I can't imagine what we would do without our monthly supporters.

We were elated by the response this year to our appeal to buy video gear. Thanks to our donors Dogwood has been able to produce broadcast-quality videos ever since, racking up millions of views online. We continue to experiment with new ways to crowd-fund using social media and texts, allowing us to tap into the next generation of philanthropists.

This year we received a substantial bequest from the estate of a supporter. Sadly, this person died in the prime of life but was able to create a legacy through his generous support of Dogwood and other groups. When most people think of gifts through their will they are thinking of hospitals, churches or universities — but in these turbulent times, more people have been looking to leave a legacy of activism.

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.

To all of our donors, large and small, 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

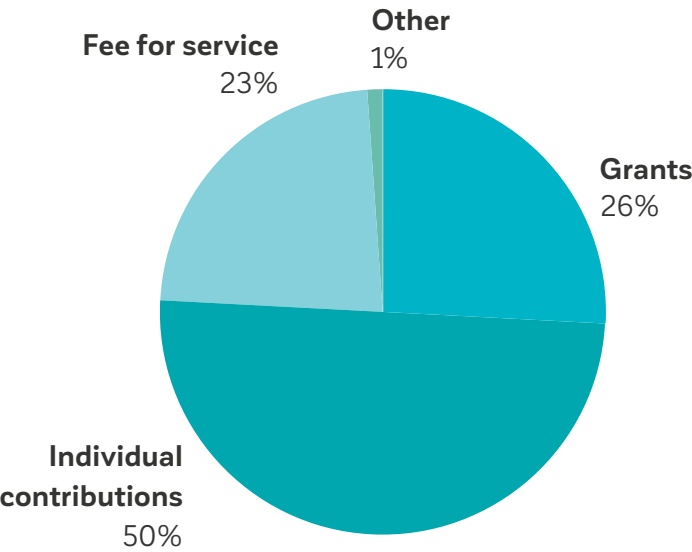
Year ended March 31, 2018

	2017/18	2016/17
Revenue		
Grants	\$495,011	\$452,899
Individual contributions	\$1,042,259	\$811,454
Fee for service	\$319,341	\$359,189
Other	\$64,762	\$18,391
	\$ 1,921,373	\$1,641,933
Expenditures		
Overhead	\$168,708	\$160,547
Communications/campaigns	\$368,048	\$392,788
Special events	\$4,767	\$4,642
Travel	\$13,848	\$15,427
Human resources	\$1,286,848	\$999,670
Amortization of assets	\$70,155	\$52,202
	\$1,912,374	\$1,625,276
Excess of revenue over expenditures	\$8,999	\$16,657

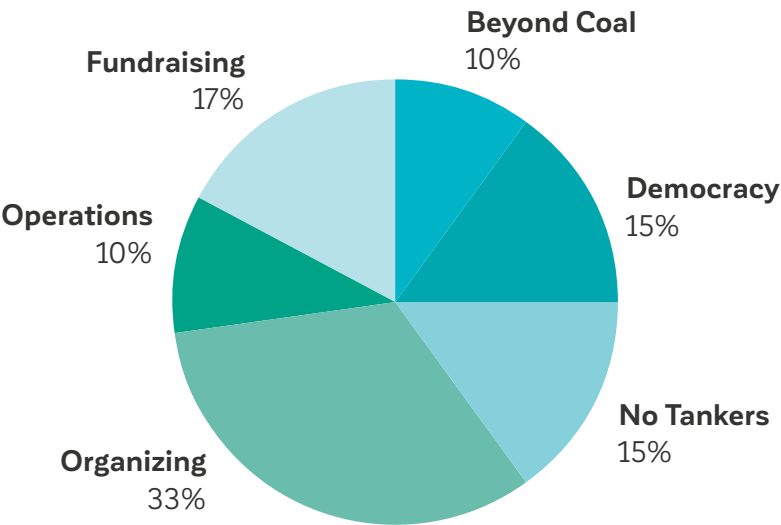
Thank you

Thanks to our 9,210 donors and 2,417 monthly donors — you make Dogwood possible!

Revenue



Expenses





dogwoodbc.ca

Main office

864 Queens Ave.
Victoria, BC

☎ 250-370-9930

📠 250-370-9990

Vancouver office

312 Main St, 2nd Floor
Vancouver, BC

☎ 604-688-3578