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ANNUAL REPORT

March 2022–March 2023



***Dogwood brings people together  
to transform our democracy,  
uphold Indigenous rights and  
defend the climate, land and  
water that sustain life in B.C.***







## Chair's Comment

After what felt like two long years of hibernation, it was exciting to see a new version of Dogwood take shape and hit the ground running this year.

First, I want to congratulate Dogwood volunteers and staff on partnering with peer organizations to launch the Frack Free BC coalition. Your debut demonstration at Government House in December was a perfect moment of activism, making sure David Eby's new cabinet will have fracking and climate change top of mind.

Second, I am grateful to the WSÁNEĆ leadership council, elders and members for inviting us to SK̓TAK̓ to learn about WSÁNEĆ history and language, and to begin a relationship that allows Dogwooders to support WSÁNEĆ goals and become more connected to the land we live on. I hope this becomes a model for other relationships we build in the coming years.

Third, I would like to welcome our newest board members: Cassidy Crowe and Ernie Chow. I encourage you to learn more about these folks' fascinating stories on our website, and I am excited to have so much talent and experience leading us forward.

At the same time, I must recognize and thank the folks who are saying goodbye this year, in particular

Cheryl Cameron, our longtime Director of Organizing, and Jennie Milligan — our board chair for seven years and a member of the board of directors for a record 16 years! Cheryl and Jennie, thank you both so much for your passion and hard work.

On the subject of departures, I too am passing the baton this year. It has been my pleasure to work with you all as we continue our journey to decolonize, democratize and decarbonize B.C. Please join me in welcoming Ingrid Kastens as our new Board Chair. Ingrid brings a wealth of experience from the public service and will continue that spirit of service in her work with Dogwood!

Looking ahead, I am proud to say we are on strong footing. We have a well-considered strategy that is winning us partnerships with peer organizations, Indigenous allies and new funders. We finished this year in a very strong financial position after several challenging years. And, importantly, Dogwood enjoys a tenacious and evolving leadership that reflects more and more the people we aim to serve. Thank you all for contributing to our shared success!

Yours,  
Jess Dempsey, Board Chair Ex Officio

## Strategy

### Democratize

In June 2022, John Horgan announced he would be stepping down as Premier of B.C., setting the stage for a leadership race that would decide the future direction of our province.

Dogwood and our climate justice allies asked the question: who would challenge the status quo? Who would stand up to the powerful lobbyists of the oil & gas industry, and help launch a real climate plan to take B.C. off the path to disaster?

Longtime ally and climate justice advocate Anjali Appadurai stepped into the ring on August 10. Her inspiring platform generated real excitement from grassroots supporters, and prompted a wave of new people joining the NDP to support her vision.

What looked like a boring coronation for David Eby suddenly turned into a race against the clock for climate justice. Dogwood volunteers stepped up to phone, text and email our own supporters, encouraging them to join the NDP if they wanted to participate in the process to pick the next premier.

Ultimately, the Appadurai campaign reported signing up thousands more members than Eby's, sparking a panic at the executive level of the BC NDP. In an effort to protect Eby as their preferred candidate to take over the premier's office, they retroactively changed their own party rules for leadership races to exclude participation by third parties like Dogwood (but kept that rule change secret). Then the party tried to purge its own membership list by calling new members to question their intentions, claiming they were investigating what they believed was a "green" coup.

All the invasive phone calls proved was that the new members were genuine — many of them were even returning members of the NDP who had quit in disgust over John Horgan's anti-environment policies but chose to rejoin to support Appadurai's message of hope.

Out of options, the NDP's executives held a closed door meeting in October 2022 where it was decided to use Dogwood's and others' participation in the democratic process as an excuse to disqualify Anjali Appadurai's candidacy. After announcing a leadership race that brought renewed interest in the party and thousands of new, motivated grassroots members to the team, the NDP never even held a vote. Instead, they acclaimed David Eby who immediately promised to continue John Horgan's legacy.

Horgan, in turn, was hired by Teck Coal (following in the footsteps of his predecessor Glen Clark). Teck lobbied Horgan's government for years while he was the premier, and Horgan even admitted he was negotiating the terms of his new job at Teck while he was voting in the legislature as an MLA.

***Dogwood's work in support of a democratic process shone a light on specific shortcomings in our political party system***

One postscript to this story: young people organizing to lower the voting age as part of the Vote16 movement supported Appadurai because her platform included them. People as young as 12 are permitted to join the NDP and vote in leadership races for premier, so it's curious why the government won't let them vote for MLAs. After being acclaimed as premier David Eby appointed Niki Sharma as Attorney General, in charge of legislative reforms like lowering the voting age. She has flat out refused to meet with Vote16 campaigners, closing the door on expanding voting rights in B.C.



## Decolonize

In July 2022, Wet'suwet'en and Gitxsan organizers hosted the Peace & Unity Summit in Smithers in response to police violence against peaceful land defenders. Dogwood staff helped support the summit and share it with supporters via livestream. The unique event forged renewed strength and relationships among host and visiting nations, and made a strong impression on allies who joined from across the province.

In August, Dogwood was invited to attend the ǾETXIŁĆ gathering on SKƧAKƧ (Mayne Island) alongside Mayne community members and scholars to learn from W̱SÁNEĆ elders and community members about SKƧAKƧ, its history and proper place names; and, to witness cross-cultural community organizing in service of W̱SÁNEĆ reestablishing their presence on SKƧAKƧ.

W̱SÁNEĆ have since pointed Dogwood staff and volunteers towards cultural events and opportunities to volunteer on invasive species control projects on W̱SÁNEĆ land. These are meaningful ways for volunteers to connect with the land and give back in the spirit of reconciliation.

Dogwood has also hosted W̱SÁNEĆ webinars in a series geared towards learning about W̱SÁNEĆ territory and language, and also to channel more volunteers towards projects on the land. In addition, Dogwood's organizing team hosts Decolonize

discussion groups on an ongoing basis, starting with the work of filling in crucial gaps in our collective settler memory of our history.

In December 2022, we celebrated the anniversary of the historic Gitxsan / Wet'suwet'en victory in the watershed Delgamuukw-Gisday'wa Supreme Court case. Delgamuukw shows that there is a path forward on reconciliation. But Indigenous people continue to have to fight hard to uphold these legal victories, and it will take ongoing work from settler communities to hold our governments to their commitments.

## Decarbonize

### Beyond Gas

After years of campaigning by Dogwood and allies, 2022 saw the B.C. government announce an end to the deep well royalty credit, B.C.'s largest handout to oil and gas companies. While we celebrated the win, with the same breath the Minister responsible announced a new subsidy for producers — one step forward and two steps back. In response, we pivoted to a new strategy to take aim directly at stopping gas extraction.

This campaign became more crucial and challenging with the devastating invasion of Ukraine. Always quick to smell a good deal, oil and gas companies used the war as an excuse to spike prices, delivering some of their largest profits in history.

Back at home, Enbridge and TC Energy revived their plans for new pipelines across northern B.C. These pipelines had been approved by the Christy Clark government, and would send billions of cubic feet of gas across unceded Indigenous territory to terminals on the coast, just like the Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline would have done for bitumen. In response, Dogwood supporters sent 6,000 letters to the government, activist "zombies" swarmed Minister Heyman's office in Vancouver, and Indigenous communities sent warning letters to Enbridge. After all that pressure, the company

**Dogwood's organizing team hosts Decolonize discussion groups on an ongoing basis, starting with the work of filling in crucial gaps in our collective settler memory of our history**



withdrew its application — a big win, but we remain vigilant.

We also supported local monitoring on the Coastal GasLink pipeline, which revealed disturbing damage to salmon streams. Drone footage and photography by local monitors was shared widely by news outlets like The Narwhal and The Tyee, and 10,000 of our supporters demanded stop work orders on the project. Prodded into action, government regulators finally got out of the office and temporarily halted work at some of the worst sites.

The RCMP's C-IRG unit has been a major factor in pushing through both CGL and TMX construction. Allies launched an "Abolish C-IRG" campaign in March 2023, and Dogwood is a proud signatory.

We can't move B.C. Beyond Gas alone, so we are redoubling our efforts to work in collaboration with allied organizations. In May, we teamed up with allies to project the words 'Clean Gas is a Dirty Lie' onto Canada Place during an oil and gas industry annual conference, and confronted Energy Minister

Bruce Ralston after he gave a keynote speech. In December, the Frack Free BC alliance was officially launched with a protest outside the swearing-in ceremony for David Eby's new cabinet. In March, 100 teams blanketed communities with posters and banners calling for an end to fracking.

To build durable public support for an end to fracking, we need to build grassroots power. In 2022, we trained volunteers with new deep canvassing skills to help shift the narrative around "clean" "natural" gas, and teams have been building their capacity for outreach in suburban areas such as Langford and Surrey. Our new Surrey community organizer, Dinjot, has been successfully building bridges with new constituencies and groups that are deeply rooted in the community. Whether it's leading a garden project with relief group Khalsa Aid, tabling at local events or meeting with community leaders, Dinjot and the budding Surrey volunteer team are connecting the dots between fossil fuel expansion in B.C. and the impacts of climate disasters here and all over the world.





Victoria volunteers have been pushing back against Fortis at the local school board, and Okanagan residents asked for our help to fight a local FortisBC pipeline expansion, which included a small speaking tour.

We have also been pushing the B.C. government to ban fracked gas in new buildings, as gas in our homes is a hazard to our climate goals and human health. This promises to develop into a much bigger battle with FortisBC in the coming year.

### Trans Mountain

There is no bigger threat to the Salish Sea, southern resident orcas or Fraser salmon runs than the Trans Mountain bitumen pipeline and tanker terminal. Yet our federal government continues to pour tens of billions of public dollars into this boondoggle, and sic the RCMP on peaceful opponents.

In April 2022 we mobilized to support the Tsleil-Waututh Sacred Trust rally targeting both the TMX

project and the banks that fund it. More than 5,000 supporters sent letters to bank CEOs warning them not to fund the project. But loan guarantees from the Trudeau government make this a no-risk payday for Bay Street, so the money keeps flowing.

With the costs of climate damage climbing and communities across Canada begging for investment in hospitals, housing and public transit, instead we are spending more than \$30 billion on a massive subsidy for oil companies — costs we will never recoup.

One silver lining is that the public is finally waking up to the gross mismanagement and money wasted on the Trudeau pipeline. It will be a major part of this government's legacy, with consequences that resonate for decades. And after all that, oil shippers now complain the Trans Mountain route is too expensive, and are looking for alternate routes. So the Salish Sea could yet be spared the full onslaught of new oil tanker traffic.

## Reflecting on Intentions

At the core of Dogwood's work is the belief that the people who call these lands home should have more say in deciding our shared future than corporations simply seeking profit. This requires us to confront historic and ongoing land theft and violence against Indigenous people. And it commits us to building inclusive, reciprocal relationships with people across B.C. to challenge corporate power, and defend our communities and the ecosystems we depend on.



**At the core of Dogwood's work is the belief that the people who call these lands home should have more say in deciding our shared future than corporations simply seeking profit**









## Structure, Culture and Governance

Late in August we worked with UVic professors and the W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council (WLC), as well as local organizers on Mayne Island, to pull together an exploratory gathering on SḴTAḴ to learn about W̱SÁNEĆ territory, and how we can help WLC's projects and priorities. This gathering prompted Dogwood staff and volunteers to volunteer on a number of occasions in the fall and winter to help remove invasive species on W̱SÁNEĆ territory, and helped launch a limited series of very successful online learning sessions featuring W̱SÁNEĆ leaders and community members.

On top of our work with the W̱SÁNEĆ, our monthly decolonize discussion group continued and settled into a 'book club' style format with most participants returning each month to discuss new readings. This is providing a deeper offering to a small committed group, but we have identified a gap for a more entry level offering to a wider and changing group of supporters.

Throughout the year we continued with our Burnout Prevent Project, an initiative that aimed to support a culture of care and wellness, and address factors linked to workplace stress, overwork and burnout. The project was led by two outside consultants who quickly unearthed helpful themes that require ongoing attention to build a healthy workplace and improve organizational culture. However, the work stalled mid-way through and was not landing for most staff. Accordingly, both the Executive Team and Labour Management Committee agreed to redirect the project toward a new structural idea instead: a four-day work week. Our consultants did research and provided a report for consideration at our February board and staff retreat. The result was Dogwood piloting a four-day work week project in 2023. A final assessment will take place at the end of the year to decide if we'll continue the four-day work week schedule.

## Finances and Fundraising

We weathered the stormy seas of record inflation, labour unrest, and post-pandemic reopening with extremely strong results thanks both to the generosity of our supporters and the hard work of our campaign teams which captured the attention of new and important institutional funders.

We exceeded our target of \$1.5 million this year by focusing on teamwork, relationships and project management. For the first time in many years, there was no turnover on our team. With Dogwood staff feeling confident and comfortable in their roles, we were able to focus more effectively on building stronger relationships with our donors and funders. Attention to detail in managing projects also improved our capacity to deliver strong results, and work with third parties and contractors to help keep the fundraising machine going.

Moving forward, the team would like to focus more on training, with the goal of becoming better at using the digital tools we already have. We also invested in new tactics this year to increase our revenue, with strong initial results. Our partnership with Orgmatch has helped us grow our grants portfolio which provides a backbone of funding to ensure our long-term viability.

But the real foundation of Dogwood's work is our circle of more than 2,000 monthly donors, who collectively contributed nearly \$500,000 last year — \$10, \$15, and \$20 at a time.

Without generous people investing in our future and sustaining our work, we would surely be lost. To grow that essential cohort of monthly donors, we invested in new capacity: the Dogwood Canvass Team. Ashton, Calum and Reteka are knocking on doors throughout Victoria to talk about Dogwood's important campaign work and invite people to support us by becoming monthly donors. Together, they have

won thousands of new supporters and several hundred dollars of new revenue each month. If you see them in the neighbourhood, say hi!

## Reflecting on Intentions

Because it is our main interface with the capitalist system, fundraising can be a challenging aspect of our work to bring into alignment with the principles of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion. Still, as a team we check in monthly to see how all aspects of our operations impact our ability to deliver on those principles and how we can improve our processes accordingly.

One of the key challenges this year has been creating a safe and inclusive workplace for the new canvassing team. Because their job involves talking to strangers on doorsteps in the community, we know that a certain number of those interactions are going to be negative. We're working together with the team and community experts to figure out how to make canvassing a more invigorating experience. We'll share what we learn so that other canvassing organizations can look after their workers, too.

**The real foundation of Dogwood's work is our circle of more than 2,000 monthly donors, who collectively contributed nearly \$500,000 last year**



# Financial summary

## Summary of revenues and expenditures

Year ended March 31, 2023

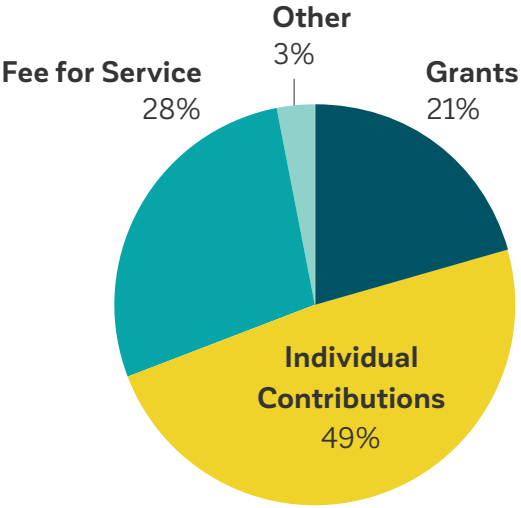
	2022-23
<b>Revenue</b>	
Grants	\$338,431
Individual Contributions	\$802,879
Fee for Service	\$459,718
Other	\$43,499
	<b>\$1,644,527</b>

<b>Expenses</b>	
Overhead	\$276,255
Communications/Campaigns	\$248,966
Special Events	\$29,210
Travel	\$4,975
Human Resources	\$849,541
Amortization of Assets	\$25,505
	<b>\$1,434,452</b>

Operating Income (Loss)	\$210,075
Gain (Loss) on foreign exchange	\$26,497
Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy	\$0
Equity Income	\$10,087

<b>Excess of Revenue over Expenditures</b>	<b>\$246,659</b>
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## Revenue







**Dogwood**

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Victoria, B.C.

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**Vancouver office**

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Vancouver, B.C.

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