

An Overview of Dogwood Fundraising

For any questions, problems or concerns you can contact Don Gordon, Development Manager at 250-370-9930 x 28 don@dogwoodinitiative.org or Alisha Brown, Supporter services at 250 370 9930 x 30 alishah@dogwoodinitiative.org

When we get complaints about our fundraising it is often about the frequency with which we ask. We also get taken to task for asking in simple terms rather than giving the big picture. Another common thread is that the whole operation ought to be run by volunteers and that all staff salaries are just a waste of money. Perhaps the biggest complaint is that so many organizations seem to have their hands out and how is a donor to choose. To varying degrees these are all valid concerns and I hope to share with you some understanding of how we raise money and why we do it the way we do.

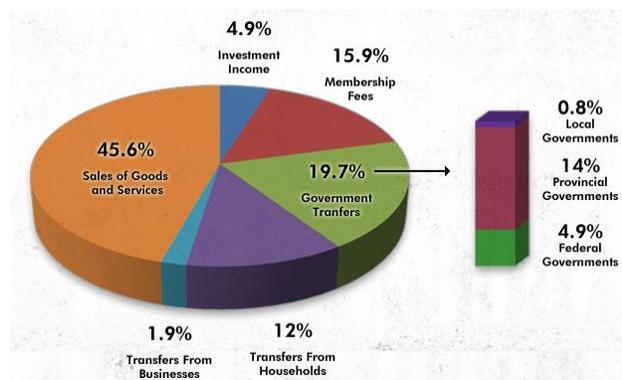
At present Dogwood Initiative is raising about \$1.2 million a year, which seems like a lot of money because it is, and yet it is a fraction on what Enbridge, Kinder Morgan and the Feds spend on advertising alone. In fact the combined budgets of all the various organizations and groups active in the pipeline and tankers struggle are dwarfed by the money arrayed against us by Big Oil. We can't hope to match Enbridge in an "air war" of advertising and that is why your work organizing people power community by community is so important.

Dogwood Initiative – How is it funded?

Background¹:

Canada's NonProfit sector is the 2nd largest in the world, there are ~170,000 nonprofits and charities in Canada. Two million people are employed by these organizations representing 11.1% of the economically active population. The sector represents \$106 billion or 8.1% of GDP.

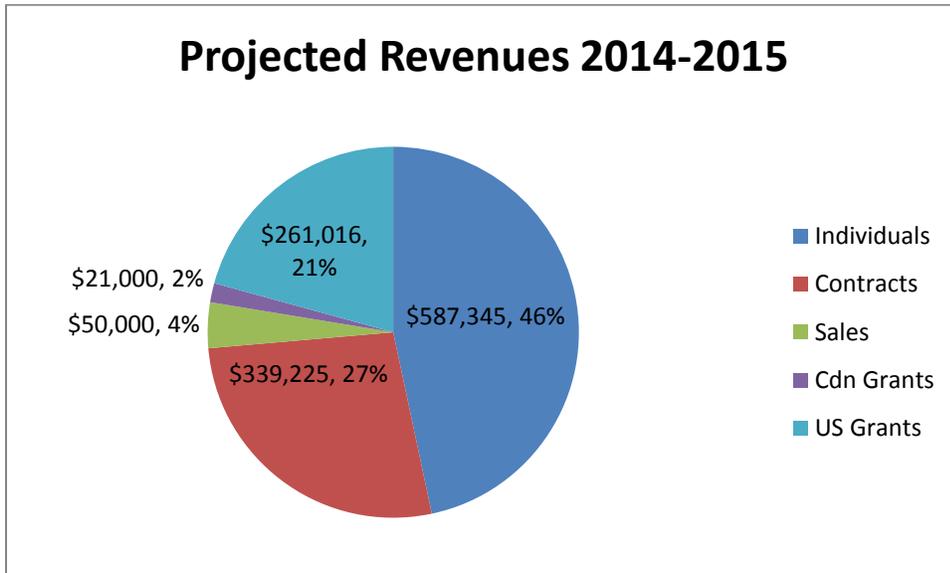
Funding Sources for Charities and Nonprofits²



¹ Imagine Canada www.imaginecanada.ca

² Statistics Canada. Satellite Account of Non-profit Institutions and Volunteering (2009)

Dogwood Funding



Discussion:

The biggest single source of revenue for Dogwood is donations from individuals. In 2013, more than 8,000 individual gifts were received. Although we are fortunate to have a few large donors this mostly represents ordinary Canadians chipping in \$20, \$50 or \$100. Very few organizations manage to raise such a high proportion of their revenue from individuals and this is a testament to how strongly people feel about protecting the coast.

Not surprisingly, Dogwood does not receive government or corporate funding.

Some media commentators and the federal government have accused the No Tankers movement of being foreign funded. Dogwood does benefit from generous support from a few US foundations. These foundations are mostly based in Seattle and they are legitimately concerned that oil spills won't respect borders. An oil spill from Northern Gateway would affect Alaska and a spill in the Salish Sea would foul the U.S. waters of Puget Sound and Juan de Fuca Strait. Our view is that our U.S. funders have as much at stake as we do. When the U.S. developed the Alaskan pipeline Canada demanded safeguards and protection for Canadian waters, which was granted – we owe the same consideration in return.

Oil companies are spending millions and millions on advertising alone in an attempt to buy social license for their reckless tanker and pipeline projects. These funds come from their investors: Chinese state-owned oil companies trying to force through pipelines against the public interest. This is where the real foreign interference in Canadian affairs is taking place.

Solicitations for Individual Gifts

With 8,000 people making gifts you can imagine that we have to ask a lot. I can understand why some people think that is all we ever do. In reality about 1 in every 6 mass emails we send is a fundraiser with the others being calls to action, reports and news. What we try to do is keep the narrative themes consistent across all channels so that our asks make sense in the context of what we've already told people we are doing. We also strive to report back so that everyone knows how the money was spent.

In addition to email we also solicit by mail and over the phone. Folks have been predicting the death of direct mail fundraising for a long time now but it keeps on chugging and has proven to be a reliable source of revenue. Telefundraising is perhaps the most controversial because everyone says they hate it and yet it is surprisingly effective. I don't really have any explanation for this but it works and we keep using it.

Personal choice and privacy are serious concerns of ours. Some people want only mail, others only email; some only want to hear about actions and to never be solicited. We can customize supporter contact to match people's preferences, *but only if we know about it*. In many ways we like complaints as it gives us a chance to make it right. The subscription management options in our database allow us to respect people's wishes but obviously our first preference will always be to send to people on every channel until we know what they prefer.

Monthly Donations

We are doing everything we can to encourage people to donate monthly. Personally, this is how I choose to make all my donations as the little bit each month seems pretty painless but by the end of the year I've made a bigger gift than I would as a onetime gift. Monthly gifts provide a regular and predictable source of revenue that really helps with cashflow management. November and December are the biggest months for individual giving and other months of the year, especially the summer, can be very dry. Monthly gifts do not require constant solicitation and that reduces fundraising costs substantially. In the coming year we expect our 1,000+/- monthly donors will contribute about \$200,000 towards the campaigns, which is our biggest source of revenue from any one source.