



**Ecology Action Centre**

# **Annual Report 2020/21**

photo: Simon Ryder-Burbidge

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTORS

In the spring of 2020, our world changed in monumental ways. The COVID-19 crisis led to a societal disruption unlike anything we've seen for generations. Impacts of the pandemic placed further strain on communities already grappling with the pre-existing crises of rising inequity, climate change, and biodiversity destruction.

But in this moment of uncertainty, we have witnessed some truly amazing things. We all found new ways of connecting and collaborating with each other. We stood up to demand more from our leaders as people came together across the country and around the world to organize and take care of their communities.

This report covers EAC's work during the 2020-2021 fiscal year—the twelve months leading up to our 50th anniversary as an organization. While our work evolved to meet the challenges of life under COVID-19, we reflected on the past 50 years of successes, failures, experimentation, and the countless individuals and groups who have joined us on our journey. And as we look back, we're also envisioning our future and the next half-century of environmental action in Mi'kam'ki.

As always, there is a great deal to celebrate this year. Our transportation programming pivoted in response to public health measures, offering hundreds of people access to bikes and cycling

resources through our Pedal Through the Pandemic initiative and the Pop-Up Bike Hub. After years of dedicated advocacy, we saw the Nova Scotia government finally commit to a phase-out of coal, setting us up to become the country's first carbon-neutral province. Because of the swift action of thousands of our supporters, we celebrated three back-to-back wins for the Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes Wilderness Area. After a truly unprecedented year, these are just a handful of the many wins for our communities, climate, land and oceans that are celebrated in this report.

None of this work would have been possible without the help of our community. We are grateful for the steadfast support of our members, and the work of the countless groups and individuals across the province, the country and the world who join us in our fight for a better future. We also want to thank our amazing employees and volunteers, whose passion, dedication and resiliency have truly made the last 50 years of action possible.

As we look to the future, we know there is much work to be done. We're mobilizing our communities to participate in the long-awaited consultations for the Sustainable Development Goals Act. We'll continue our fight against the expansion of offshore oil and gas in Atlantic Canada and keep pushing for a just transition for workers in the industry. We'll keep evolving and expanding our programming to be able to reach more people and keep fighting for a future that protects our communities, our province and our planet.

As our 50th anniversary celebrations ramp up throughout the rest of 2021, we are excited by our collective future and the amazing work we can accomplish together. This year has taught us many things. But more than anything it has shown us that when humanity is faced with an existential threat, we are resilient, and it is our connections to one another that will forge better pathways forward.

In gratitude and solidarity,  
**EAC's board and staff directors**

photo: Simon Ryder-Burbidge

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We led two successful hikes in the Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes Wilderness Area and hikes for individual political leaders at Sandy Lake Regional Park, where a coalition of groups is advocating for park expansion.



As a part of our Pedal Through the Pandemic program, Welcoming Wheels and Bike Again (Halifax and Yarmouth) collectively provided 226 bikes and 130 accessory packs to newcomers, community members and youth.



The Pop-Up Bike Hub tuned up/fixated over 299 bikes in 8 different communities including Clayton Park, Mulgrave Park, Lakeside and six Mi'kmaq communities.



We developed partnerships with government scientists that will see the citizen science eelgrass data that was collected by EAC supporters in 2020 used to help map eelgrass meadows at locations throughout the province and evaluate their health.



Our Energy Team hosted six instalments of our ongoing Better Building Speaker Series, helping to promote deep energy retrofit techniques and technologies to property owners and building professionals in Mi'kma'ki/Nova Scotia.



The EAC's volunteer Urban Development Advocacy Team launched a webpage to help community members learn about secondary and backyard suites as an opportunity to offer more gentle density, affordable, accessible and age-friendly housing options in HRM.



As part of Our HRM Alliance, our Built Environment Team co-hosted the HRM Mayoral Candidates Forum and the District 11 Backlands debate to highlight the Halifax Green Network and municipal climate action.



We celebrated the adoption of the Halifax Food Charter by Halifax Regional Council and launched the JustFOOD Action Plan, which aims to create "made in Halifax" solutions to food insecurity.



We created an infographic on coastal climate change in Mi'kma'ki/Nova Scotia and continued work on developing resources for coastal property owners to navigate the potential risks of coastal climate change.



Our Transportation Team developed online resources for Making Tracks: Pedestrian Safety and six bike safety videos in English, French, Arabic and Mi'kmaq. We also offered online courses for Urban Cycling to 60 adults and Youth Active Transportation Leadership to more than 40 students.



We launched our Mobilizing for a Just & Sustainable Future webinar series, and held webinars on various aspects of our work for Earth Day and Biodiversity Day, with hundreds of attendees.



This year we engaged over 31,000 Nova Scotian students through our annual active transportation events, including International Walk to School Month and Winter Walk Month.



We began work with the seven coastal communities of Gros Morne in western Newfoundland to create a community-led marine network plan that will identify zones for sustainable economic development in fisheries and tourism as well as zones for research, recreation and protection.



We released an HRM Election Guide and candidate survey to help Haligonians match their votes with their values.



We hosted webinars on coastal climate change adaptation, including a session on Living Shorelines and another on the Coastal Protection Act.



# POLICY ADVOCACY

We continued to advocate for the NS government to implement the recommendations from the Lahey Report on Forestry Practices and mobilized Nova Scotians to participate in public consultations on the province's new Forestry Management Guide, which outlines the silviculture prescriptions and timber harvest methods allowed on Crown land.



We continued working with NS Environment staff to ensure the Coastal Protection Act regulations are strong and effective.



After many years of EAC advocacy, we celebrated the provincial government's new commitment to phase out coal by 2030, and become Canada's first carbon-neutral province. We will continue to put pressure on government to honour this commitment with meaningful action including a just transition for workers in the sector.



We celebrated the unanimous support from HRM Council for bylaw amendments that will enable secondary and backyard suites across the municipality.



We commissioned and released the Electric Vehicle Adoption Study 2020-2030. The report examines the potential for increased electric vehicle use in Mi'kma'ki/Nova Scotia and assesses the impact of provincial policy options on market adoption of EVs. The report had a direct influence on the implementation of EV incentives in Nova Scotia.



We commissioned a report by East Coast Environmental Law to analyze Eastern Canadian and New England laws for barriers and opportunities in achieving a reliable, affordable and cleaner electricity system. This helps inform key electricity policymaking and advocate for a faster clean transition in the region.



We engaged in Halifax's Regional Plan review, which offers a major opportunity to protect the Halifax Green Network and build complete communities across HRM. Through a formal submission to the Regional Plan review as part of Our HRM Alliance, we presented our top priorities for changes to the Regional Plan.



Along with our partners in SeaChoice, we launched the Certification, Verification or Fabrication report, which examines the prevalence, verifiability and quality of environmental claims regarding seafood in the Canadian marketplace.



We celebrated the long-awaited provincial plastic bag ban, which went into effect in October. EAC recognizes this as a crucial step, but we know more needs to be done to address single-use plastic waste.



We continued to advocate to protect our oceans. Canada has now committed to protecting 30% of our oceans by 2030 and enacting strong standards that prohibit harmful industrial activities like oil and gas and bottom trawling. Canada also joined the Global Ocean Alliance of 48 countries now calling for worldwide effort toward the 30% by 2030 goal.



EAC surveyed each of the three candidates running for the provincial Liberal Party leadership and released the results publicly. The survey was an opportunity for candidates to pledge their support for some of the major environmental issues affecting our province.



We continued advocating for endangered North Atlantic Right whales. We are pleased that there was no weakening of protection measures and happy to finally see DFO establish a technical working group of experts to help respond and adapt throughout the right whale season - something we've been advocating for the last three years.



Following the federal announcement of a \$400 million investment in active transportation infrastructure, we participated in nation-wide consultations to help inform the new National Active Transportation Strategy, where we were a key stakeholder for the Atlantic Region.



We worked with the Green Budget Coalition to release detailed recommendations for federal investments in a green recovery from the pandemic, featuring building energy efficiency retrofits, clean transportation, nature-based climate solutions, and protected areas.



The Canadian government has begun to update the common names for seafood sold in Canada based on recommendations from our SeaChoice report called "Fish List Wish List: A case for updating the Canadian government's guidance for common names on seafood."



photo: Simon Ryder-Burbidge

# MOBILIZING FOR CHANGE

We saw three back-to-back wins for the Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes Regional Wilderness Area, after thousands of Nova Scotians mobilized to demand action from HRM Council. Thanks to the dedication and swift action of our supporters, the long-promised park is closer than ever to becoming a reality.



We celebrated Cermaq Canada's announcement that it will abandon plans for the expansion of open net-pen salmon farming in Mi'kma'ki/Nova Scotia. For the past year, EAC has worked with community partners, fishing associations, municipal leaders, and marine stewards across the province to send a strong message to Cermaq and our elected officials.



Along with our partners at Ecojustice, Sierra Club Canada and WWF Canada, we challenged a deeply flawed impact assessment for offshore oil and gas projects in Atlantic Canada. The assessment stands to fast-track expansion of the industry at the expense of critical marine ecosystems and the stability of our climate.



We worked with individuals in coastal communities on a wide variety of development issues such as wetland infilling, rock walls below the high-water mark, undersized lots and water lot infilling.



We launched a successful awareness campaign about mainland moose to bring attention to this endangered species.



In collaboration with FUTURES/forward artist Yasmine Hassen and Wonder'neath Arts Society, we facilitated Art for Social Change: Weaving Together Just Livelihoods. This art-making workshop series explored themes like just futures, deep time, decolonization, climate justice, and practices of reclamation.



Along with our community partners we continued to advocate for the protection of Owls Head Park after it was secretly de-listed as a proposed provincial park in a backroom deal with developers.



In collaboration with environmental groups across Canada, EAC helped mobilize the public to demand a green and just recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, with hundreds of thousands of messages sent to decision makers and over 1,000 signatures in support of EAC's own green and just recovery statement.



We partnered with groups across the Atlantic region to push for common energy agendas and built support for the Atlantic Loop – an interconnected regional transmission system which will enable clean energy to flow in the region.



The Urban Development Advocacy Team contributed input to three proposed major developments, made a submission to the NS Affordable Housing Commission, and contributed feedback to Halifax's Centre Plan highlighting environmental built environment issues.



We co-hosted virtual information sessions on NS's Traffic Safety Act and the need to strengthen policies for walking and wheeling with over 100 stakeholders attending. This engagement formed the basis for our report to government on the Act.



Along with 20+ other organizations and community groups, we mobilized thousands of Nova Scotians to take action against a misinformation campaign organized by the province's forestry industry lobby group, Forests Nova Scotia, regarding the new Biodiversity Act. Despite the loss of key enforcement mechanisms from the Act, there remains much to be celebrated in its passage into law.



In partnership with the HRM and the Halifax Food Policy Alliance, we hosted the first online workshops for community members to discuss and develop the JustFOOD Action Plan for the Halifax Region and create actions that can strengthen our local food systems.



We mobilized Nova Scotians to participate in consultations for twelve of the province's proposed new provincial parks and wilderness areas.



photo: Simon Ryder-Burbidge

# FINANCIALS

## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

Year Ended March 31

REVENUE	2021	2020
Project revenue	1,407,149	1,974,106
Admin (contribution fr projects)	173,587	196,173
Capital contribution	36,632	38,616
Donations	296,527	183,851
Fundraising events	21,194	32,734
Government funding	201,163	-
Interest on savings & misc	13,133	17,849
Memberships	578,080	630,329
Operating expense recoveries	42,399	61,166
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>2,769,864</b>	<b>3,134,824</b>

EXPENSES	2021	2020
Project expenses	1,407,149	1,974,106
Bad debt	130	
Bank, credit card & payroll fees	24,799	29,253
Communications	8,122	9,533
Database and computer support	17,367	9,185
Depreciation	37,522	40,837
Equipment lease	2,215	5,050
Fundraising events	9,853	21,487
Insurance	12,267	12,549
Magazine (Ecology & Action)	4,614	18,951
Membership materials	198	2,321
Miscellaneous	8,811	9,724
Office	22,589	22,504
Power, water, telephone	12,547	11,323
Professional fees & consulting	65,904	23,109
Property financing	10,574	16,126
Property taxes & maintenance	15,999	19,570
Staff wages & benefits	711,675	801,896
Subscriptions & memberships	13,457	18,173
Travel	1,265	5,736
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>2,387,057</b>	<b>3,051,433</b>

<b>EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>	<b>382,807</b>	<b>83,391</b>
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## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

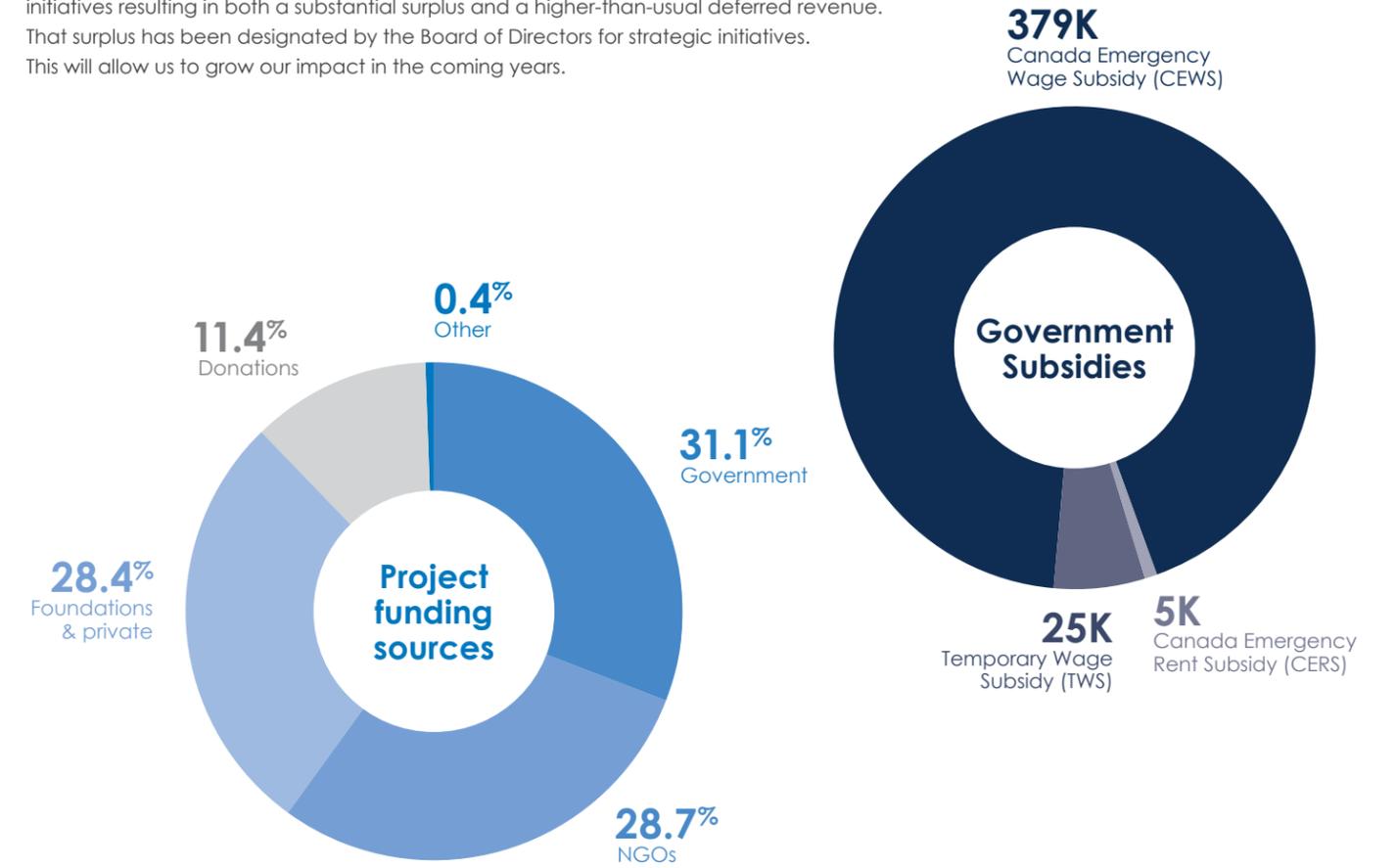
Year Ended March 31

ASSETS	2021	2020
<b>Current</b>		
Cash & cash equivalents	1,973,259	1,153,974
Receivables	338,877	196,408
Prepays	17,571	10,852
	<b>2,329,707</b>	<b>1,361,234</b>
<b>Long-term</b>		
Property & equipment	<b>857,332</b>	<b>892,731</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,187,039</b>	<b>2,253,965</b>

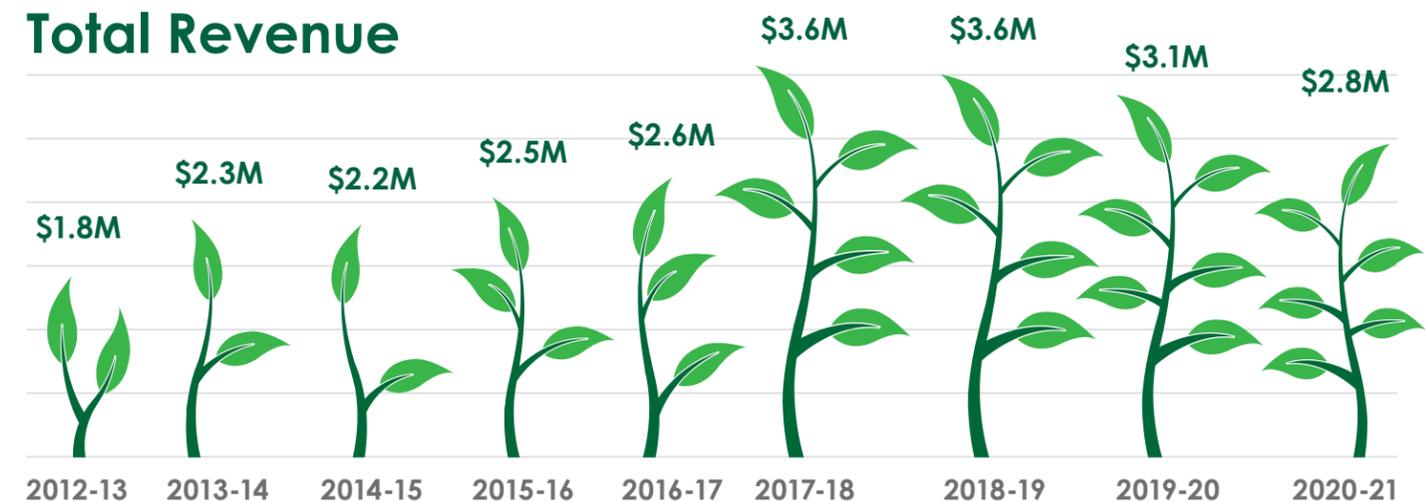
LIABILITIES	2021	2020
<b>Current</b>		
Payables & accruals	164,985	34,051
Deferred project revenue	1,667,985	1,197,821
Current portion of mortgage payable	18,684	17,888
	<b>1,851,654</b>	<b>1,249,760</b>
<b>Long-term</b>		
Deferred capital contributions	340,718	377,350
Mortgage payable	333,341	348,336
	<b>674,059</b>	<b>725,686</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>		
Operating surplus (deficit)	(85,078)	(69,646)
Investment in capital assets	164,589	149,157
Emergency Fund	133,008	133,008
Strategic Fund	382,807	66,000
Fern Lane Fund	66,000	-
	<b>661,326</b>	<b>278,519</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,187,039</b>	<b>2,253,965</b>

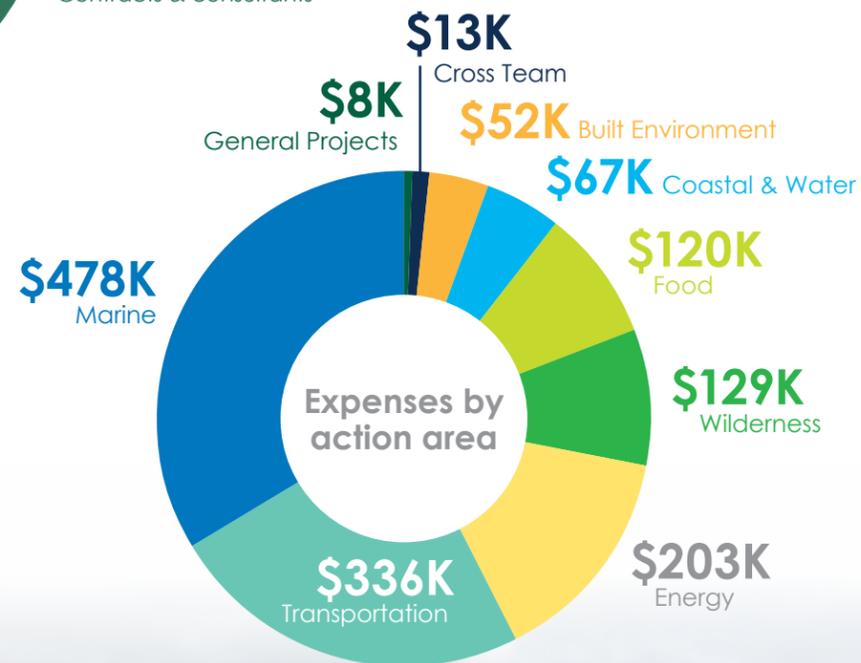
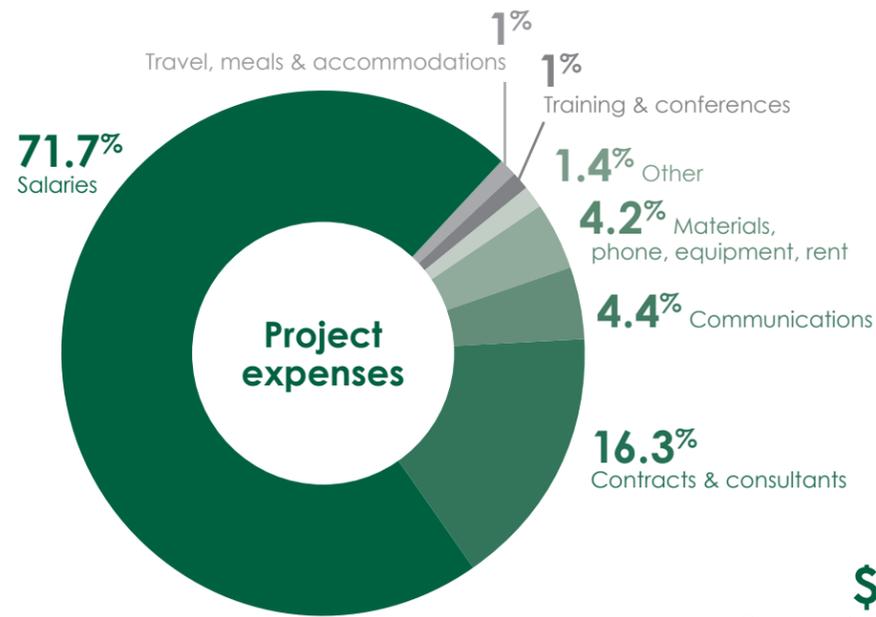
This summary of financial information has been extracted from the Ecology Action Centre's audited financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2021. These statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (ASNPO). The audit was completed by Grant Thornton LLP. Audited financial statements are available to view online at [ecologyaction.ca/annual-report](http://ecologyaction.ca/annual-report).

The pandemic made this a very unusual and challenging year, and this is reflected in our finances. Reductions in revenue (over prior fiscal) allowed us to qualify for \$409,044 of Canada Emergency Subsidies. These funds allowed us to retain and re-employ staff and dedicate efforts to the many adaptations required by the COVID-19 health emergency while still continuing our environmental work. Although not apparent in the bottom line, the year was characterized by a high level of financial uncertainty and staff overload. This reduced spending and curtailed new initiatives resulting in both a substantial surplus and a higher-than-usual deferred revenue. That surplus has been designated by the Board of Directors for strategic initiatives. This will allow us to grow our impact in the coming years.



## Total Revenue





# OUR FUNDERS

Generous monetary and in-kind contributions from foundations, organizations, business and individuals have helped the Ecology Action Centre immensely over the past year. You enable us to do the valuable work that we do. Thank you!

## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Downtown Halifax Business Commission  
Echo Foundation  
Individual Donors

## COASTAL & WATER

Davis Foundation  
Echo Foundation  
Ken and Debbie Rubin Public Interest Advocacy Fund  
Saint Mary's University  
Stewardship Centre for British Columbia  
Individual Donors

## ENERGY & CLIMATE

EfficiencyOne  
Environment Funders Canada  
Faith and the Common Good  
George F. Wade Foundation  
Ivey Foundation  
Nova Scotia Department of Energy and Mines  
Patagonia  
Sitka Foundation  
Individual Donors

## FOOD

Community Food Centres Canada – Good Food Access Fund  
Danielle Moore Spring of Hope Foundation  
Halifax Regional Municipality  
Individual Donors

## MARINE

Canadian Coastal Research Society  
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society  
Danielle Moore Spring of Hope Foundation  
Environmental Funders Canada  
Nature Canada  
Province of Nova Scotia – Student Summer Skills Incentive  
Patagonia  
Shark Conservation Fund  
The David and Lucille Packard Foundation  
The Donner Canadian Foundation  
The Wyss Foundation  
Individual Donors

## TRANSPORTATION

Clean Foundation  
Government of Canada – Canada Summer Jobs  
Halifax Cycling Coalition  
Halifax Regional Municipality  
Mi'kmawey Green Communities Program  
Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselling Association  
Nova Scotia Communities, Culture and Heritage  
Nova Scotia Transportation and Active Transit  
Trotter Family Foundation  
Individual Donors

## WILDERNESS

Echo Foundation  
Nature Canada  
The Marguerite Hubbard Charitable Foundation  
The Schad Foundation  
Individual Donors



photo: Simon Ryder-Burbidge



## SUSTAINABILITY ALLIES

- Assante Wealth Management - Hydrostone
- Authentic Seacoast Company
- Vancity Community Investment Bank
- Down East Cleaning Products
- Garrison Brewing Company
- Helping Nature Heal
- Innovative Real Estate
- Just Us! Coffee Roasters Co-op
- Laughing Whale Coffee
- Mountain Equipment Co-op
- TrueFaux Films

# OUR BOARD

**John Crace** – Co-Chair

**Anne Marie Dalton** – Co-Chair

**Ayorinde Makanjuola** – Treasurer

**Christina Macdonald** – Secretary

**Rhiannon Davies** – Member at Large

**Michael Sime** – Member at Large

**Anne Winters** – Member at Large

**Dawn Burstall** (Joined: October 2020) – Member at Large

**Alyda Faber** (Joined: February 2020) – Member at Large

**E. Grant MacDonald** (Joined: May 2020) – Member at Large

**Virginia Olsen** (Joined: October 2020) – Member at Large

**Denis Leclaire** (End: May 2020)

**Hudson Shotwell** (End: June 2020)

**Jamie Baxter** (End: April 2020)





Ecology  
Action  
Centre

2705 Fern Lane  
Halifax, NS | B3K 4L3  
[ecologyaction.ca](http://ecologyaction.ca)

P. 902-429-2202  
F. 902-405-3716