



RE SOURCES

Meeting ~ the ~ Moment

2021 Impact Report

We live and work on the ancestral homelands of the Coast Salish Peoples, including Lummi Nation and Nooksack Tribe, who have lived in the region from time immemorial. We acknowledge the Tribes' treaty rights, as well as our responsibility to uphold them, and we are grateful for the Tribes' enduring care and protection of the lands and waterways. (Photo: Brett Baunton / Wild Nooksack)

² This year, we adapted – while keeping our core goals.

A global pandemic. A reckoning with white supremacy and systemic racism. Economic and political upheaval. Millions of kids out of school. Air choked with wildfire smoke and an oil train derailment in our backyard. Climate change exacerbating all of these tensions and more.

It's easy to think of 2020 as the year we'd like to forget. Yet we've learned two unforgettable lessons:

- 1) There's no going back. The time is now, right now, to transition from systems driven by waste, extraction and exploitation to those predicated on restoration, resilience and justice.*
- 2) Our communities in Northwest Washington are capable of rallying together in remarkable ways.*

Thanks to supporters like you, we at RE Sources adapted to meet the moment in 2020 while keeping our core goals in front of us: protecting our local and regional ecosystems and natural resources, engaging youth in building a resilient future, keeping our work grounded in community well-being and equity, and solving climate challenges. We are charting a way forward. We have the tools and information to realize our vision of an equitable, vibrant, and prosperous Northwest Washington. What we need now is a groundswell of local advocates willing to use their time, passion and talents to reclaim their power, build political will, and better protect this unique place and every person who calls it home. We need you!

Across the globe and down the street, we're seeing the costs of inaction on climate change. And yet, after nearly 40 years of defending common-sense, bedrock environmental protections and solutions at RE Sources, we see the tides turning. Northwest Washington is poised to be a hub for innovative policy and action in the climate crisis era. Take heart in knowing your work with us is propelling a green recovery – and get excited about what we can accomplish together in the year ahead.



— Shannon Wright
Executive Director, RE Sources

You make the change.

3



Photo: David Inscho

RE Sources is the leading organization in Northwest Washington serving as the region's environmental watchdog, policy driver, relentless advocate, organizer and champion of real solutions. Whether you want to make a difference in this region through advocacy at the local and state levels, grassroots organizing, environmental education, hands-on community science, or tackling waste through material reuse, RE Sources leverages our on-the-ground experience, expertise and relationships to amplify your impact.

For 40 years, we've challenged the status quo from a place of love. We've dreamed up bold ways to make our home a better place and then mobilized neighbors, friends, and fellow rabble-rousers to transform dreams into reality — from our roots pushing for municipal recycling, to a store dedicated to material reuse, to a hard line on unchecked fossil fuel expansion, we've made things happen.

Today, with a seasoned staff, strong allies and a passionate volunteer network, we catalyze your support into tangible and lasting protections for the ecosystems and people of the Salish Sea.

When you invest in RE Sources, you invest in your own health, the health of your neighbors and the health of the natural world that nourishes us in mind, body and soul. As a RE Sources ally, you help:

- Protect our shorelines, ecosystems of eelgrass, herring, salmon and orca at the heart of this region's identity.
- Hold polluters accountable, support Tribal treaty rights, and address inequities.
- Ensure swimmable, drinkable, fishable waters and healthy air in our region.
- Act on climate by creating buildings and neighborhoods that are reliably, affordably and efficiently powered by electricity from renewable sources.
- Promote an ethic of stewardship, conservation and reuse.
- Invest in our community's youth, the generations with the most at stake in a changing climate.
- Commit to this region's vitality, where your life's story unfolds, where our power to effect change is greatest.

Thank you.

Protecting the Salish Sea

The Salish Sea hosts ecosystems unique to the world. Unfortunately a host of threats, from climate change to risky fossil fuel transport to pollution, are driving these waters and their wildlife to the brink. In response, we're galvanizing dedicated community members to conduct research, defend critical habitat and advance protections that will give our iconic Salish Sea and its habitants a fighting chance.

In 2020, our North Sound Stewards program mobilized community scientists to put in hundreds of volunteer hours gathering data on marine life and shoreline habitat, even though COVID lockdowns required us to limit volunteer events.

During the Trump era, we defended against dangerous rollbacks to the Clean Water Act by joining with other environmental groups, regional Tribes and fishing organizations on a legal challenge.

We watchdogged emerging threats to our region by providing critical expert testimony on proposed environmental rules and projects that could significantly impact the natural resources and waters that feed the Salish Sea. 🐋

Photo: Joan Poor

8

Virtual community science webinars held, including the annual Cherry Point Science Forum

38

Community scientists mobilized to gather data on marine life and shoreline habitat

The Salish Sea hosts ecosystems and supports communities unique to the world. Unfortunately a host of threats, from climate change to risky fossil fuel transport to pollution, are driving these waters and their wildlife to the brink.



“

I had the opportunity to bring my 8-year-old son along to gather water samples. It was a memorable opportunity being able to share this experience with him and show him what scientists can do to help keep the environment clean and people safe.”

— Kristin Wilmes

North Sound Stewards Community Science Volunteer

44

Sign-on letters or comments submitted to prevent pollution and protect the Salish Sea

4

Virtual workshops on issues facing local waterways

⁶ Freshwater Restoration

Flowing waters pulse with life across Northwest Washington.

While it may seem abundant on more than a few soggy days, our water supply is becoming more uneven as climate change intensifies droughts and floods in the region. Water quality is imperiled by toxic water runoff and plastic pollution. Whatcom County is now home to three of the ten least-swimmable marine beaches in the state, and population growth will only make matters worse unless we change course.

RE Sources watchdogged our waterways, with pollution patrols in the area between the Skagit River and creeks in north Whatcom County, documenting threats and providing the data to hold polluters accountable.

We launched a map of local trash hotspots, a dynamic tool for targeted community action and a real-time resource for community members planning their own cleanups including the Sehome High School Environmental Club in Bellingham.

In response to calls from the Nooksack Tribe and Lummi Nation, we mobilized 600 supporters to urge Governor Inslee and the Department of Ecology to protect salmon runs, Tribal treaty rights, endangered

2.4K

Pounds of trash removed from beaches and rivers

600

Supporters speaking up for Nooksack adjudication

36

Pollution patrols of local waterways

& Pollution Prevention



“

We're encouraging the Washington Department of Ecology to take into consideration the disproportionate number of toxic sites located in communities of color, and prioritize sites located in highly impacted communities for financial assistance for cleanups.”

— Eleanor Hines, North Sound Baykeeper and Lead Scientist

orca, and access to water in a changing climate by funding a legal review of water rights (known as an adjudication) in the Nooksack River.

We worked to protect and restore critical habitats through small, socially-distanced volunteer cleanups.

We spearheaded decisive action on toxic pollution that harms people and the planet. RE Sources' North Sound Baykeeper Eleanor Hines represented Bellingham Bay stakeholders in the Department of Ecology's process to update the 31-year-old Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA), which governs the cleanup of sites that have been contaminated by hazardous substances. We're pushing for the updated MTCA rule to incorporate environmental justice and climate change in a way that will actually reduce the burden of these contaminated sites on impacted communities.

RE Sources galvanized Whatcom County residents to take action on local toxic site cleanups. Funded by the Department of Ecology, we created four virtual self-guided tours of contaminated toxic cleanup sites: The Bellingham Waterfront, the South State Street Gas Plant site at Boulevard Park, the Sea K Fish Cleanup Site in Blaine, and the Harris Avenue Shipyard in Fairhaven. Community members visited the tour maps over 12,000 times to learn about the clean up processes and make their concerns heard. 🌱

Our North Sound Baykeeper team of experts, led by Eleanor Hines, is charged with protecting and restoring marine and nearshore habitats of the central Salish Sea, collaborating with other local groups and volunteers, and advising government agencies. As one of 300 Waterkeeper groups worldwide, the North Sound Baykeeper trains community scientists, organizes cleanups and advocates for science-based policies. Photo: Brett Baunton, Wild Nooksack



Climate Action



In a year of questioning whether the systems we're upholding are working, we stood firm against fossil fuel expansion and took a hard look at our built environment. The natural gas burned for heat and power in our homes, offices, schools, and other buildings, is heating the climate and contributing to respiratory disease. In fact, buildings are the fastest-growing source of climate-heating emissions in Washington — which increased 50% since 1990.

We launched a campaign to transition away from dangerous fracked gas and towards 100% clean, all-electric new buildings in Bellingham and across Washington, in conjunction with other stakeholders.

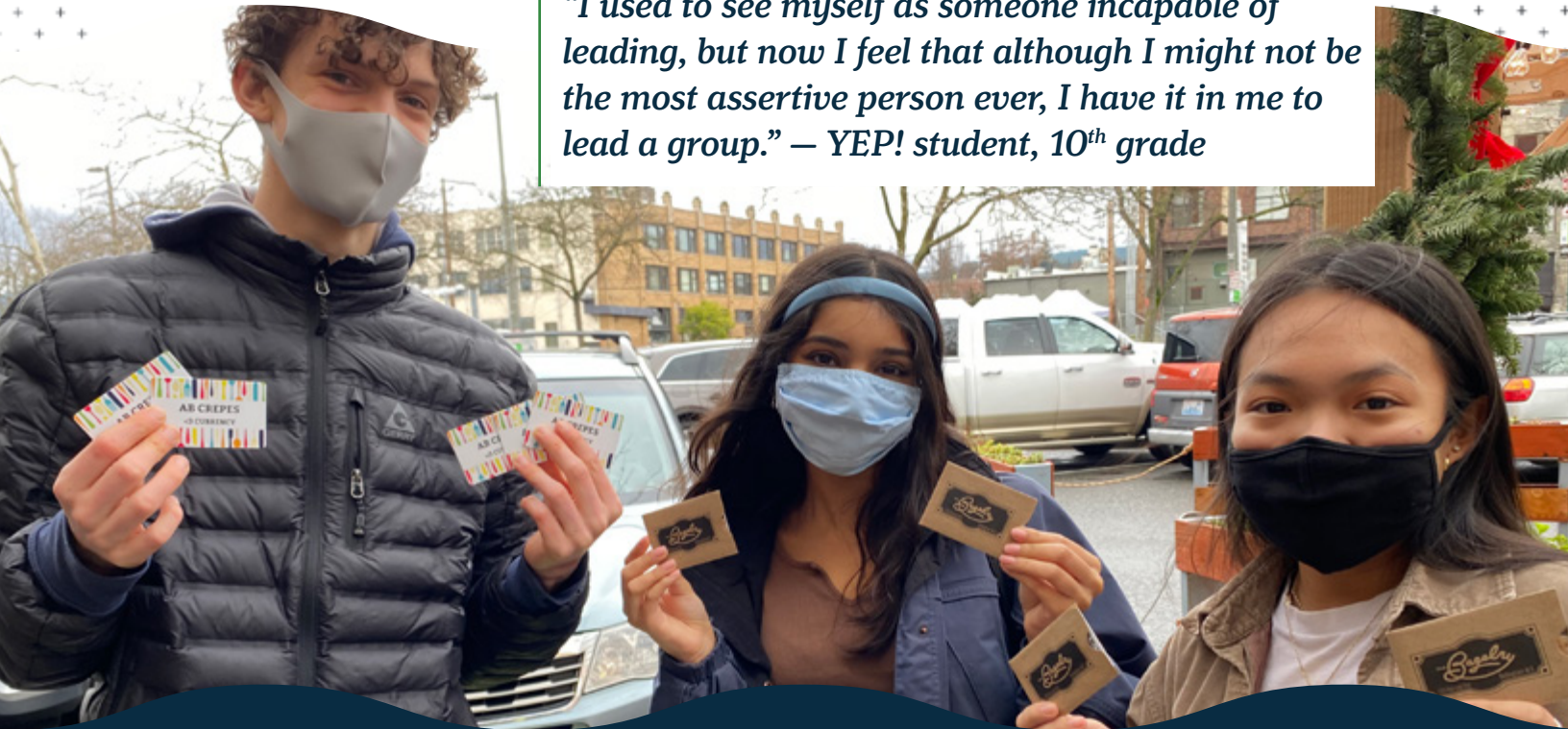
RE Sources held the line on risky fossil fuel expansions at Cherry Point while mobilizing for permanent protections for our communities — protections we expect to be adopted in the summer of 2021.

We successfully advocated for the passage of the Bellingham Transportation Fund. This fund will support non-motorized transportation, public transit, and transportation projects through 2030 outlined in the city's Climate Action Plan.

We helped represent Northwest Washington's interests as members of the Climate Alliance for Jobs and Clean Energy as well as the BlueGreen Alliance. These coalitions keep us connected with frontline communities and ensure that we push for a Just Transition from fossil fuels to clean energy. 🌱

Sustainable Schools

“I used to see myself as someone incapable of leading, but now I feel that although I might not be the most assertive person ever, I have it in me to lead a group.” – YEP! student, 10th grade



In a year of disruption and isolation for our kids, our Sustainable Schools team acted nimbly to provide online support resources for educators, students and parents.

Our Youth for the Environment and People (YEP!) program doubled the number of participating high school students, expanding to 30 students who engaged, learned and acted upon local environmental justice issues. Together, these students built community by giving upcycled bags filled with food and supplies to Northwest Youth Services. They also developed a website with COVID safety resources and educational materials on the disproportionate harm the pandemic has had on some communities.

In collaboration with local partners, RE Sources led the way in equipping 36 Whatcom teachers with the tools they need to teach climate science to hundreds of students as part of a statewide initiative called ClimeTime. 🌱

33

Online lessons and activities for kids learning from home

30

YEP! Students learning about environmental justice issues

36

Whatcom Co. teachers equipped with tools to teach climate science

Thriving Communities



By spring of 2020, it became clear that rallying around our community meant innovating on the fly and responding to the needs of frontline workers, particularly medical workers and farmworkers.

We partnered with Bellingham Makerspace to provide supplies and volunteers to create over 500 protective gowns amid PPE shortages.

RE Sources collaborated with Community to Community Development to push for employer distribution of pandemic protections for farmworkers, a group who faced a heightened risk of contracting COVID-19.

We helped push a slate of critical bills into law and participated in lobby days in Olympia. Our volunteers also sent over 2,700 comments in support of these bills.

When COVID-19 forced families to stay home, the salvage crew at The RE Store picked up over 489,426 pounds of reusable material from homes and businesses around Whatcom County.

2.8M

*Pounds of material
diverted from the landfill
by The RE Store*

400

*Supporters urging raised
pandemic protections for
farmworkers*

500⁺

*Protective gowns
produced for
medical workers*

& The RE Store

*“I used to be just the janitor and no one saw me, but now I think I could maybe be the boss”
— Veronica, Jobs Training graduate*

Like the rest of the retail sector, The RE Store was hit hard by the pandemic. In spite of a months-long closure and reduced capacity, staff worked harder than ever to process record amounts of donated material.

We developed an online store, established a reputation as one of the safest places in the county for in-person shopping, and supported local businesses as they built safety shields to allow for social distancing.

When COVID forced families to stay home, The RE Store’s salvage crew stepped up its pickup service of reusable material from homes and businesses around Whatcom County. The RE Store also worked closely with our partners at manufacturing companies this summer as they saw increased operations (and more waste byproduct), ultimately diverting 143,055 pounds of manufacturing waste.

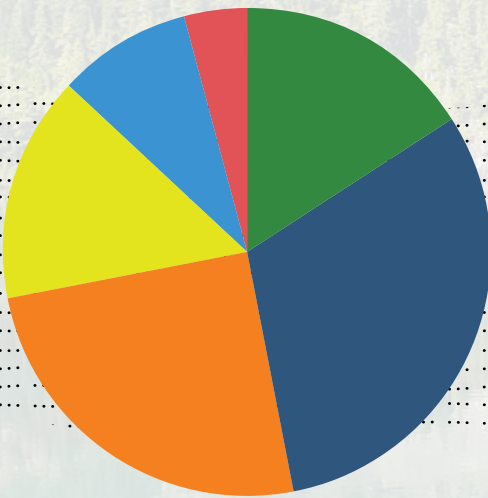
Our Revision Division home furnishing brand garnered national attention when we received Top Score recognition in the 2020 Wood Furniture Scorecard produced by the National Wildlife Federation and the Sustainable Furnishings Council. 🌱



The RE Store continued its commitment to local employment and marginalized workers by reinstating its Community Jobs Training Program in November 2020. This year we’re launching a new training module — one aimed at providing the skills needed to obtain in-demand jobs in the manufacturing industry.

Financial Report

RE Sources navigated the turbulent financial waters of 2020 and emerged with a strong start to 2021. We cut and controlled costs, improving profitability and operational efficiency in the process. After an extended closure, The RE Store's income exceeded revised budget amounts by nearly 20 percent. We pursued COVID relief monies and secured PPP funding. Grant and contract income proved resilient, and several foundation funders unrestricted grant dollars giving us the flexibility to allocate monies where the need was greatest. We are grateful that amid their own financial uncertainty, RE Sources donors remained generous.

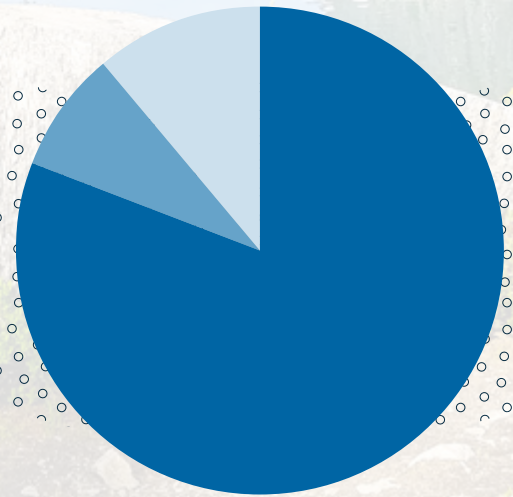


Revenue

- 31% RE Store Sales/Services
- 25% Foundation/Trust Grants
- 16% CARES Act (PPP Funding)
- 15% Individual Donations
- 9% Government Grants & Contracts
- 4% Special Events

Expenses

- 81% Programs
- 11% Development
- 8% Admin Support



Our work is rooted in this region, the place where your stories unfold, where our power to effect change is greatest. You make our work to promote sustainable communities and protect the health of Northwest Washington's people and ecosystems possible.

Photo: Buff Black

Join Us.

2309 Meridian St, Bellingham WA

re-sources.org | re-store.org

Find us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter & LinkedIn

Text RESOURCES to 40649

 **RE SOURCES**

 **THE RESTORE**

 WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE MEMBER