

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

EDUCATING,
EMPOWERING, AND
ENGAGING OUR
COMMUNITIES FOR
CLEAN AIR AND WATER



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ABOUT Protect PT

Protect PT was founded in 2014, with the goal of protecting our Penn-Trafford community and all Pennsylvanians from the harmful environmental impacts of fossil fuel activity and related infrastructure. We claim our mandate to serve our communities based on the Pennsylvania Constitution, Article 1 Sec. 27, which states:

“THE PEOPLE HAVE A RIGHT TO CLEAN AIR, PURE WATER, AND TO THE PRESERVATION OF THE NATURAL, SCENIC, HISTORIC AND AESTHETIC VALUES OF THE ENVIRONMENT. PENNSYLVANIA’S PUBLIC NATURAL RESOURCES ARE THE COMMON PROPERTY OF ALL THE PEOPLE, INCLUDING GENERATIONS YET TO COME.”

We are a community-based nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring residents’ safety, security, and quality of life by engaging in education and advocacy to protect the economic, environmental, and legal rights of the people in our member communities across Pennsylvania and in downstream regional impact areas.

As an organization, we focus on the three Es: *Engage, Educate, and Empower* to ensure that all citizens can realize the right to clean air, pure water and the preservation of natural resources.

Our most important engagement focus is the legal and regulatory work we perform on behalf of our members and impacted communities to combat the effects of environmental pollution caused by fossil fuel extraction. We also educate citizens on the local and downstream environmental impacts of unconventional oil and gas development projects in our region, which ultimately affect all Pennsylvanians. Through these activities, we empower individuals to stand up for their environmental rights and take action to protect their environment.

As we grow, we plan to continue and expand our work on community mobilization, advocacy, and education to protect our region from unconventional gas development and promote a sustainable and regenerative future for all. We have had several notable successes in our short tenure, but there is still much work to be done. Curtailing the pollution from fossil fuel extractions as well as cleaning up environmental impacts from past activities will keep our staff, members, and foundation partners busy for years to come.

As we continue to work toward ensuring safe, sustainable energy for the future, we will work with energy providers to hold all current and planned programs accountable to the Pennsylvania constitution.

VISION & MISSION

At Protect PT, we envision a world where public health and safety are protected rights and the most vulnerable residents are safe from pollution and its impacts. We believe that every person has the right to live, work and play in a clean, safe environment.

We believe that home is a sacred place and we want all people to feel secure and safe to breathe the air, drink the water, and enjoy their community and its natural resources. As we work to build a more viable communal future, we center the principles of environmental justice by prioritizing the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

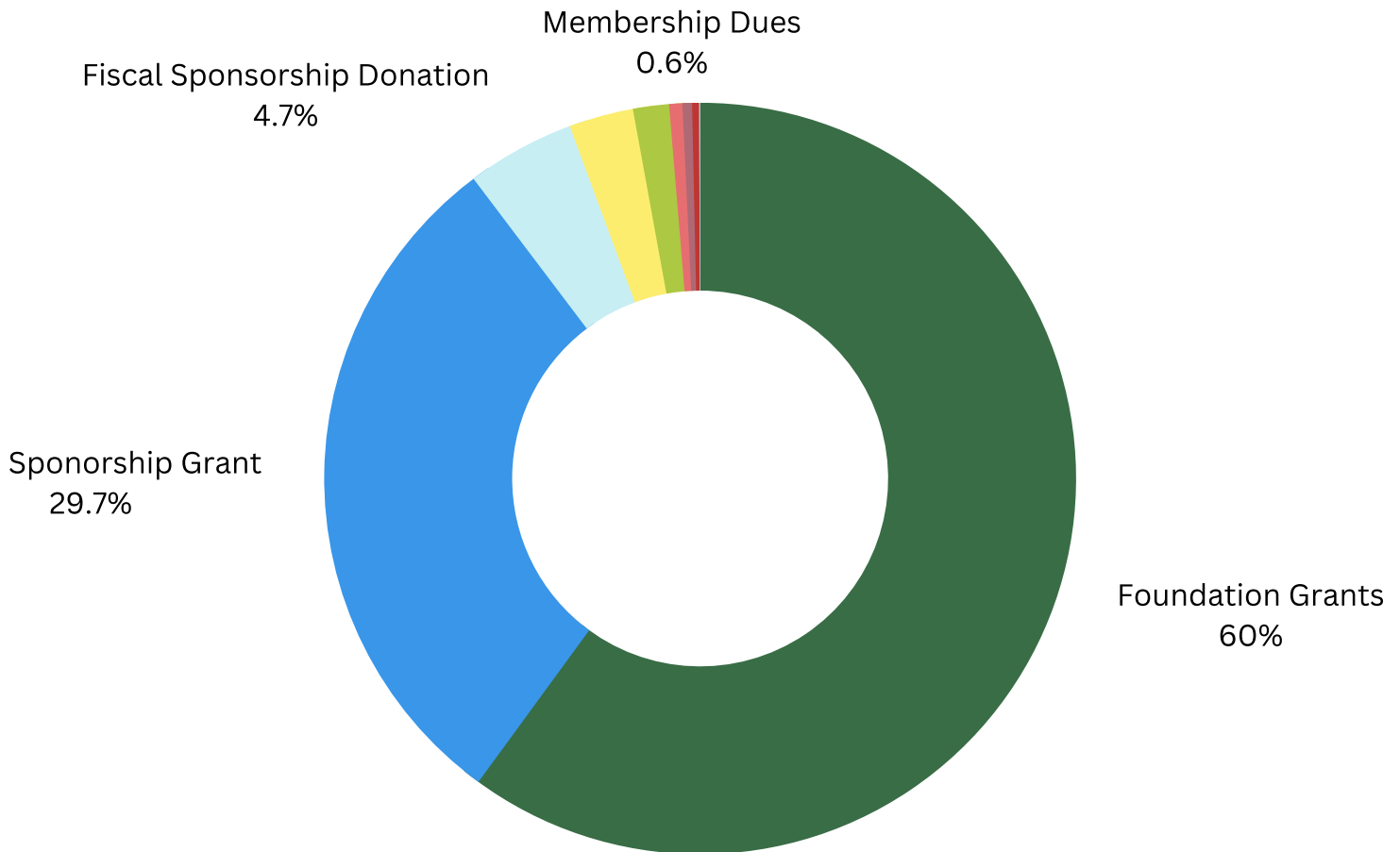
Our mission is to realize the constitutional right to clean air, pure water, and the preservation of natural resources for all Pennsylvanians. We seek to ensure the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic, and aesthetic values of the environment, where natural resources are the common property of all people, for today and generations to come. Because public access to a healthy, natural environment is often segregated by race and class, Protect PT works to expand opportunities for sustainable systems, education, industry, jobs, and projects to all communities in our region.



ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE - ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ) IS THE FAIR TREATMENT AND MEANINGFUL INVOLVEMENT OF ALL PEOPLE REGARDLESS OF RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, OR INCOME WITH RESPECT TO THE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND ENFORCEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS, REGULATIONS, AND POLICIES.

INCOME 2022

Protect PT's 2022 Financials came from public contributions, corporate contributions, and grants.

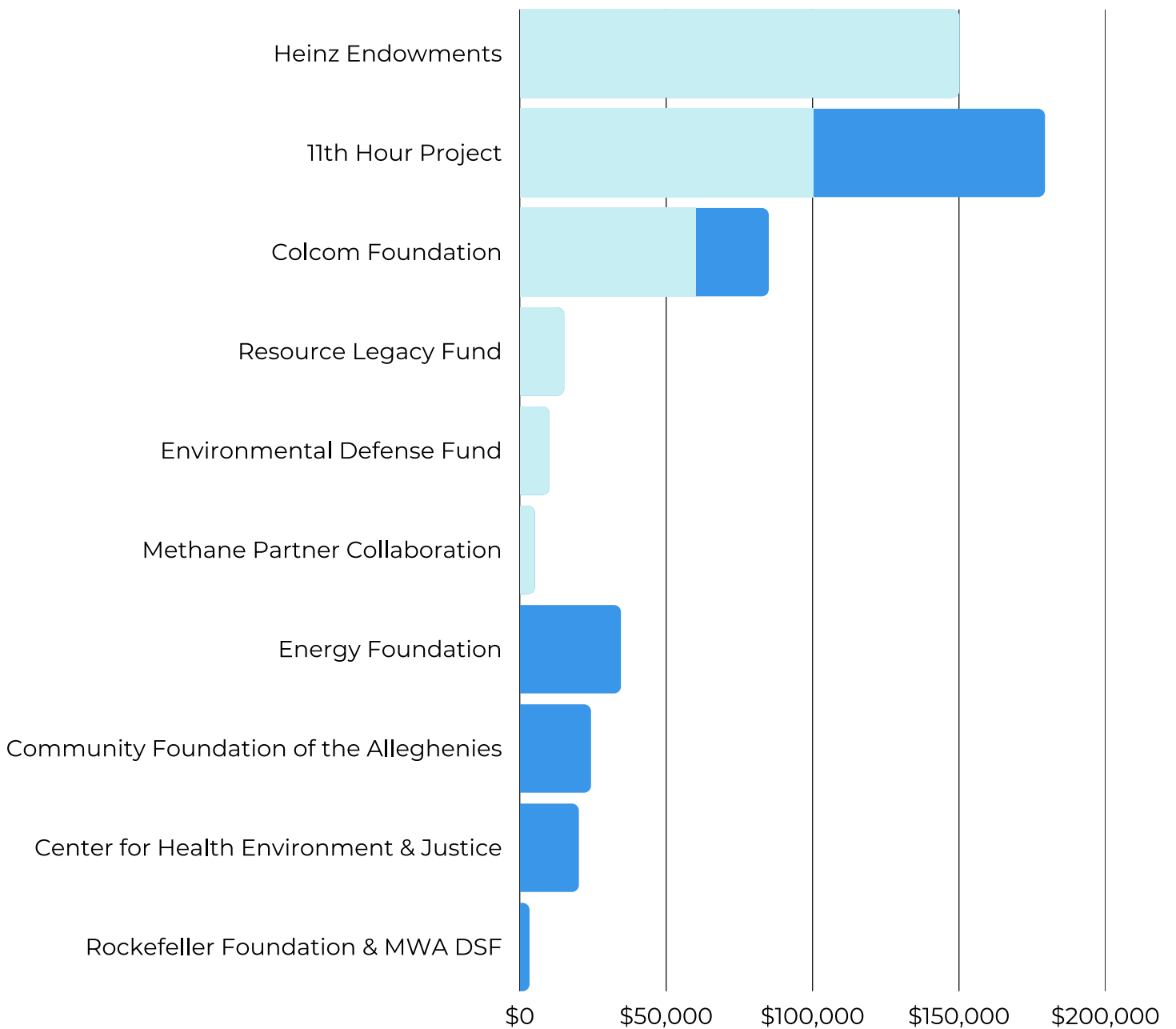
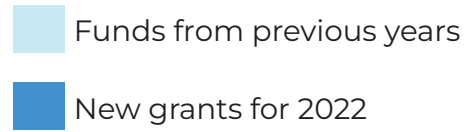


KEY

■ Foundation Grants.....	\$400,000
■ Fiscal Sponsorship Grant.....	\$197,595
■ Fiscal Sponsorship Donation..	\$31,059.79
■ Donated Public Support.....	\$18,467.22
■ Fiscal Sponsored Donations...	\$10,312
■ Membership Dues.....	\$3,767.77
■ Fiscal Sponsor Fees.....	\$2,744.09
■ Fundraising Events.....	\$2,040.36
■ Corporate Contributions.....	\$1,160.39

GRANTS 2022

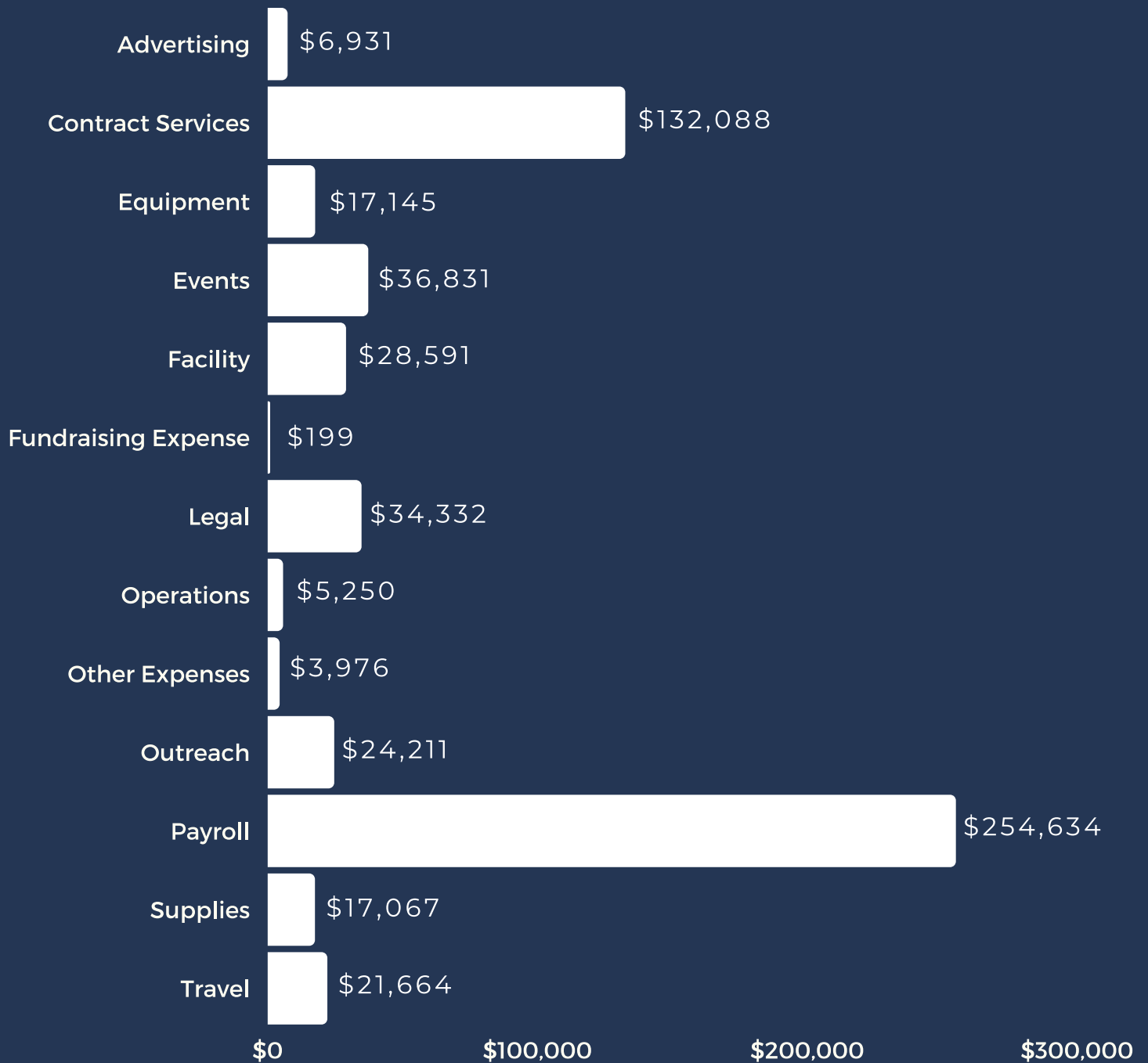
Protect PT's programs and initiatives are funded by a variety of granters that help to make community efforts possible through providing resources.



EXPENSES

2022

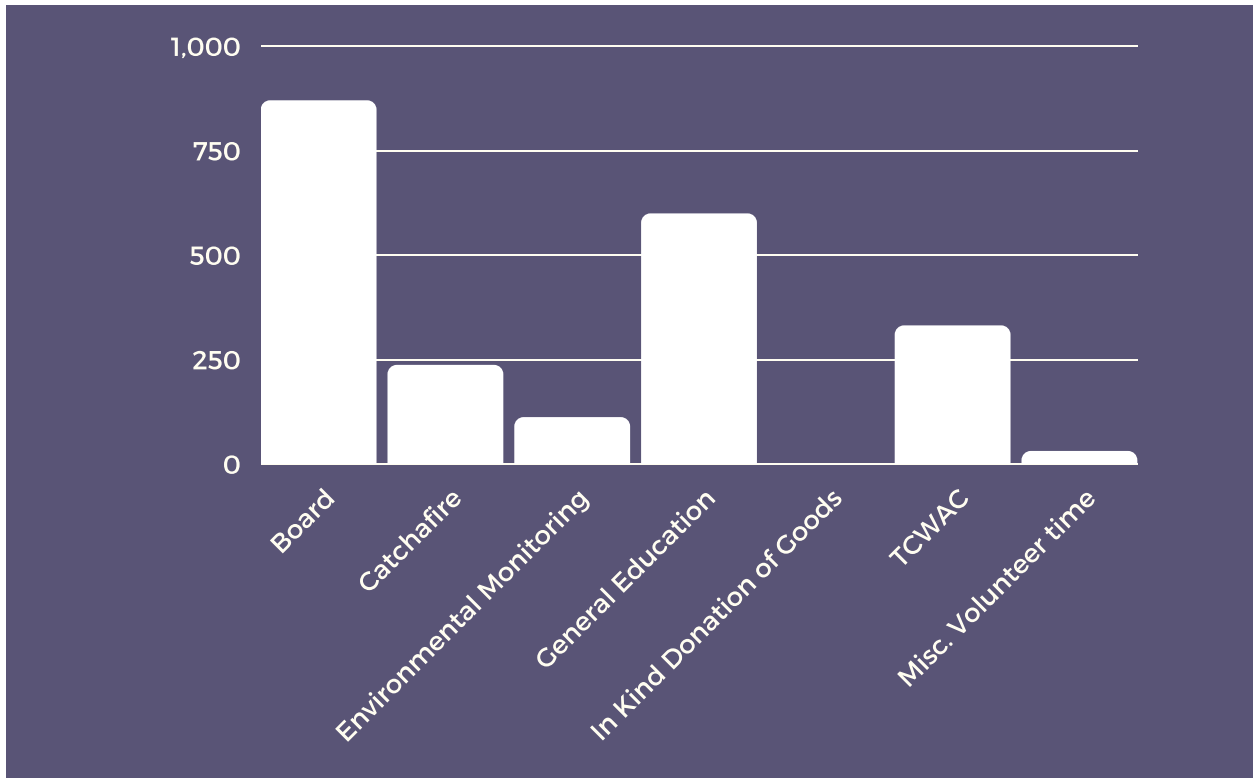
While expenses vary across different initiatives, Protect PT prioritizes funding its people power, the most valuable resource we have in tackling our community-centered goals.



IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

In addition to individual contributions and membership dues, Protect PT receives in-kind donations from volunteers and Catch afire professionals who give their time to capacity-building projects like promotional videos or strategic planning.

VOLUNTEER HOURS

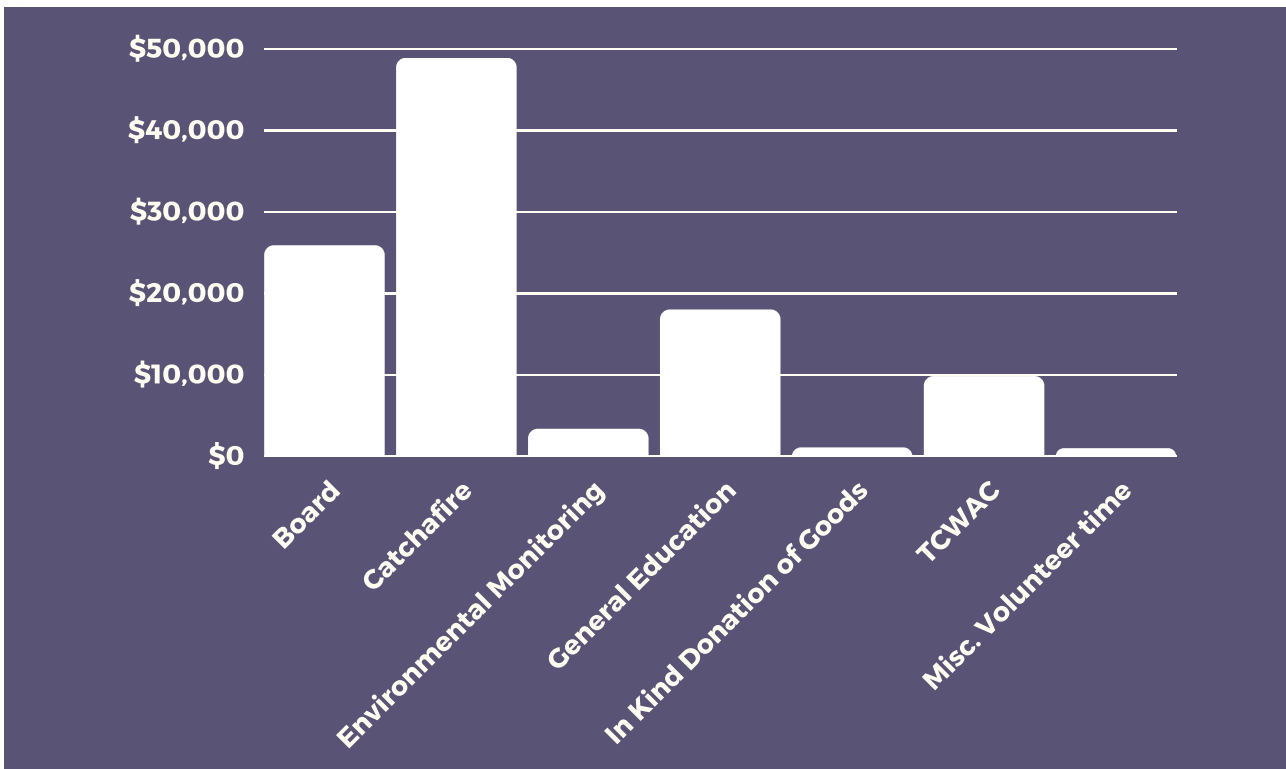


Board.....	869 hours
Catchafire.....	236 hours
Environmental Monitoring.....	111 hours
General Education.....	598 hours
Donation of Goods.....	
TCWAC.....	330 hours
Misc. Time.....	30 hours

IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

In addition to individual contributions and membership dues, Protect PT receives in-kind donations from volunteers and Catch afire professionals who give their time to capacity-building projects like promotional videos or strategic planning.

TOTAL VALUE OF CONTRIBUTIONS OF GOODS AND TIME



Board.....	\$25,810.63
Catchafire.....	\$48,828
Environmental Monitoring.....	\$3,284
General Education.....	\$17,925.08
Donation of Goods.....	\$994.77
TCWAC.....	\$9,752.54
Misc. Time.....	\$898.50

2022 GOALS: PRIORITIZING ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION & LEGAL STRATEGY

Southwestern Pennsylvania is home to an extraordinary overlap of extractive industries. Our community lives on top of the Marcellus and Utica shale, which are being drilled and hydraulically fractured to produce methane and other byproducts often used to make plastic.

Living near over 300 active wells and hundreds more abandoned wells, we are experiencing the impact of direct exposure to emissions from shale gas development, including a host of health issues like respiratory and neurological problems and unusual cancers.

At Protect PT, we achieve our goals by focusing on the three Es: Engage, Educate, and Empower. By engaging our members, partners, and community members, we educate them on the dangers of the industry and ensure that they have reliable information about the actions of the oil and gas corporations and the agencies charged with regulating them. We then empower individuals to advocate for their safety, security, and quality of life by giving them the tools to participate in community planning and zoning hearing board meetings. These actions ensure that our community members no longer feel lost and helpless in the face of corporate power.



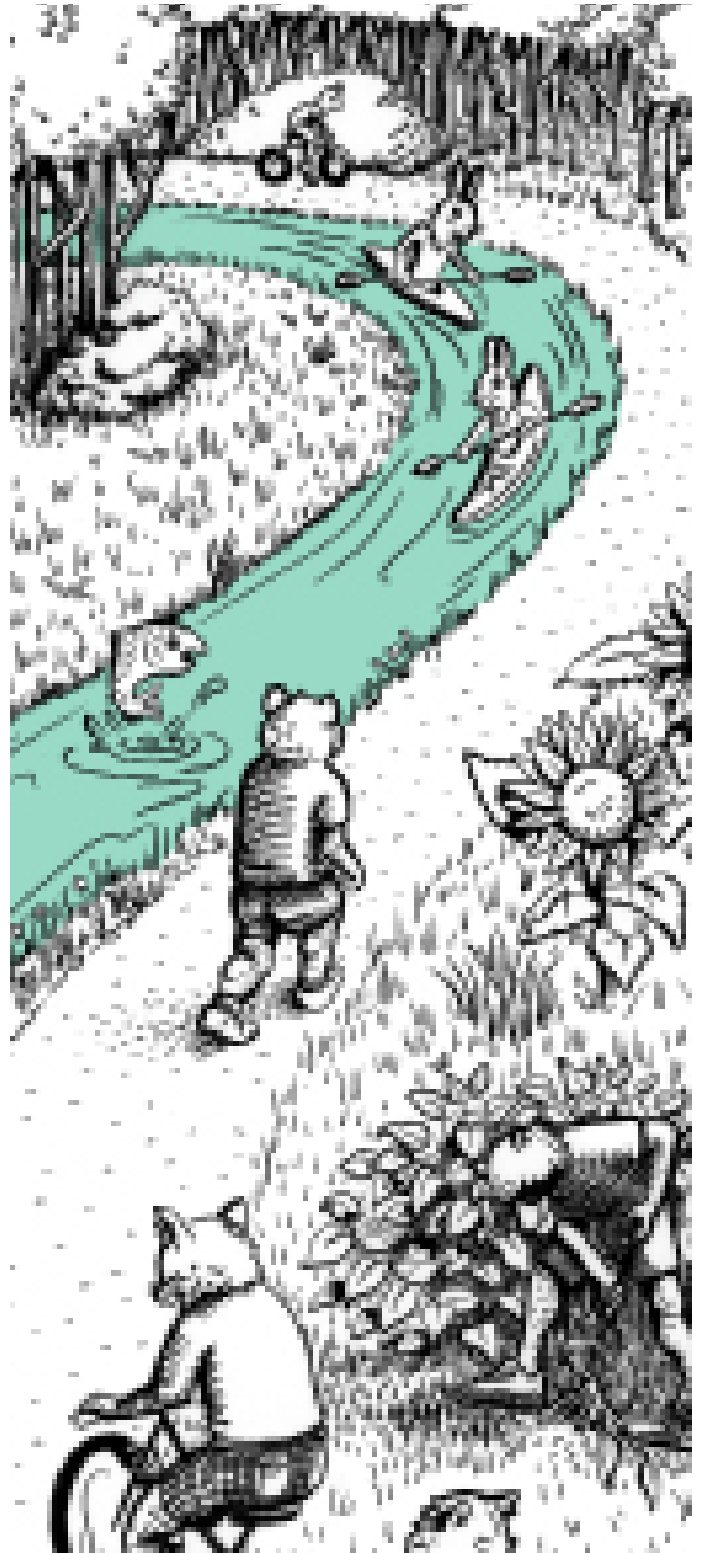
GOAL 1:

FOSSIL FUEL EDUCATION

We seek to address the invasion of fossil fuel development in communities by extending our knowledge and resources to residents. We educate these residents facing fossil fuel extraction and development through our Home Resource Guide Workshops, webinars, and mentorship, offering a strategic template and ways to be successful in their own communities.

2022 was a big year for us in educational programming thanks to our new Community Environmental Education Center and expanded office space. We were able to share our expertise and skills with community stakeholders through education and training by holding four Home Resource Guide workshops on “Living Near Shale Gas” with about 3-6 participants each. We also hosted our very first environmental art event with Meg Lemieur, awardee for Penn Future’s eight annual “Women in Conservation Awards”, in the category “Woman of Environmental Arts”.

In our new space, we hosted organizing events updating the public on information concerning both a gas pipeline and gas drilling locations in Level Green. We had a packed house for each of these events. We also hosted events off-site in Monroeville, Murrysville, Rostraver, and Monessen. We held twelve virtual Community Lunch & Learn Workshops live on YouTube and had a total of 756 views for these events. The most popular topic being “Addressing False Solutions: ORVI Research on Hydrogen & Carbon.



GOAL 2: LEGAL EMPOWERMENT

Legal empowerment is one of the most effective tools in Protect PT's toolbox. It enables us to put the power of the law into people's hands by using legal mechanisms in pursuit of transformative improvements to laws and systems.

One of our organization's most important goals is bringing litigation on behalf of members. This legal empowerment is the primary reason for membership and one of the most effective tools that the organization can wield to hold energy providers and local government decision makers accountable to the constituents' rights under Article 1 Section 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution. This legal advocacy is a key strategy enabling us to fulfill our mission to gain justice for our community, neighbors, and region.

In 2022, we saw a swell of permit applications for oil and gas development in our counties. The majority of these applications are for new well pads. But we have also seen an increase in the number of injection well applications. Until recently, Western Pennsylvania's geological make-up has been considered unsafe for injection wells. Yet, since Ohio can no longer sustain the amount of toxic injections demanded by the industry, the industry is beginning to target PA in spite of the unsafe geological conditions caused by historic mining and extraction practices.

OVER 400 PEOPLE ATTENDED
PROTECT PT'S EDUCATIONAL
PROGRAMS IN 2022

In 2022, we gained a lot of traction and received valuable feedback on our work to hold operators and government agencies accountable to environmental regulations. We evaluated 21 requests for new permits by oil and gas companies, held 6 meetings with public officials and lawmakers, attended 22 public hearings on proposed oil and gas infrastructure and sent 12 comments to regulatory agencies like the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). We also expanded our outreach to residents in local communities by offering advocacy forms on our website where residents could send their own comments to public officials and lawmakers. In 2022, 287 residents interacted with 8 advocacy forms we hosted on our website.

In August, we celebrated a major victory in West Deer Township, a small municipality in Allegheny County. Three years ago, Olympus energy applied to build a fracking well pad in a semi-residential area. A citizens' group, Concerned Residents of West Deer (CROWD), asked for our help. Our Executive Director, Gillian Graber, testified at the Board of Supervisors' zoning hearing, presenting evidence on the threat to public health, safety, and welfare that this well pad posed. The Board listened and denied the permit. Olympus appealed, but we stood firm, and again our voices were heard. In his decision upholding the Board's ruling, Judge Joseph James cited our Director's testimony that "Similar well pads in other municipalities have caused detrimental sound and vibration effects." Because we refused to be intimidated, we defeated Olympus at the grassroots level.

GOAL 3:

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING ENGAGEMENT

Working with environmental scientists, we provide evidence on public health and quality of life impacts by conducting air and noise monitoring studies around fossil fuel development in communities in PA. We use these studies to educate and empower local residents to be able to advocate for stronger local policies. In 2022 we co-hosted two gas imaging camera tours with our partners at EarthWorks resulting in several violations on conventional gas well pads. One of these trips took us to a park in Monroeville, Allegheny County, where we smelled a tremendous odor and were able to catch some footage with our partners. This came at a pivotal time because the Allegheny Council was voting to restrict drilling in parks. We made a short video with our footage and shared it with our friends who presented it at the meeting. The result was a vote to ban drilling in the parks. We visited some of the same facilities both times EarthWorks joined us, resulting in multiple violations for the operators which required them to make repairs.

In 2022, we expanded our Radon Air Monitoring Program (RAMP). Radon is an invisible, odorless radioactive gas that is the number 1 cause of lung cancer in the United States for non-smokers. An estimated 40% of PA homes have radon levels above the Environmental Protection Agency's action guideline. This past year, we conducted 32 radon studies in homes in Westmoreland and Allegheny counties. We also conducted air pollution monitoring at 12 locations, including homes, fossil fuel infrastructure sites, a landfill that has been accepting fracking waste for over a decade, and a coke works that was spewing black soot. We also continued to conduct noise studies in five homes near fossil fuel infrastructure sights.



GOAL 4:

EQUITABLE SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE ACTION

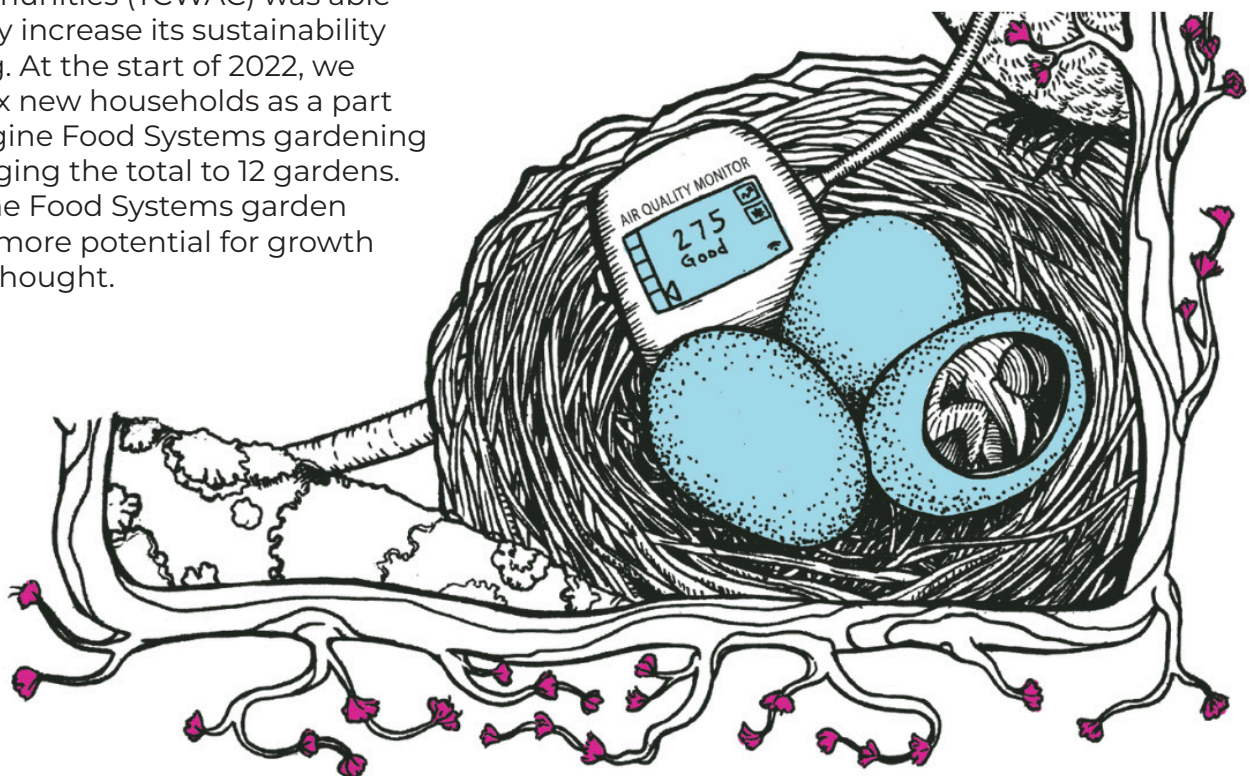
We promote a vibrant and healthy future for Southwest Pennsylvania through grassroots development that addresses economic, social, and environmental sustainability. Protect PT equitably expands access to sustainable practices and projects through a multi-organizational partnership initiative called ReImagine Turtle Creek Watershed and Airshed Communities, which comprises communities in Eastern Allegheny County and western Westmoreland County. These communities are focusing on sustainability tactics for Human Health and Wellness, Land Management, Renewable Energy and Green Infrastructure, Urban Agriculture, and Single-Use Plastics Diversion.

By looking within ourselves and working to improve our relationship with the Earth, we will improve the greater Western PA Watershed and Airshed region.

With dedicated staff and funding, ReImagine Turtle Creek Watershed and Airshed Communities (TCWAC) was able to significantly increase its sustainability programming. At the start of 2022, we brought on six new households as a part of our ReImagine Food Systems gardening program bringing the total to 12 gardens. The ReImagine Food Systems garden program has more potential for growth than initially thought.

ReImagine Turtle Creek's mission is to jump start a transition into a regenerative future. This mission would not be possible without active participation of the Turtle Creek Watershed communities. Our projects center around expanding access to sustainable living beyond wealthy communities. With this goal in mind, we developed programs that expand access to traditionally gate-kept sustainable practices. We aim to address social, economic, and environmental justice through all of our work, particularly in the projects we are undertaking

In August of 2022, a new program called Native Urban Garden Stewardship (NUGS) was launched that hopes to create a bio-diverse network of backyard habitats to benefit humans and wildlife and help heal the local ecosystem. TCWAC hosted 156 people at 14 educational sustainability programs that showcased sustainable projects and practices.

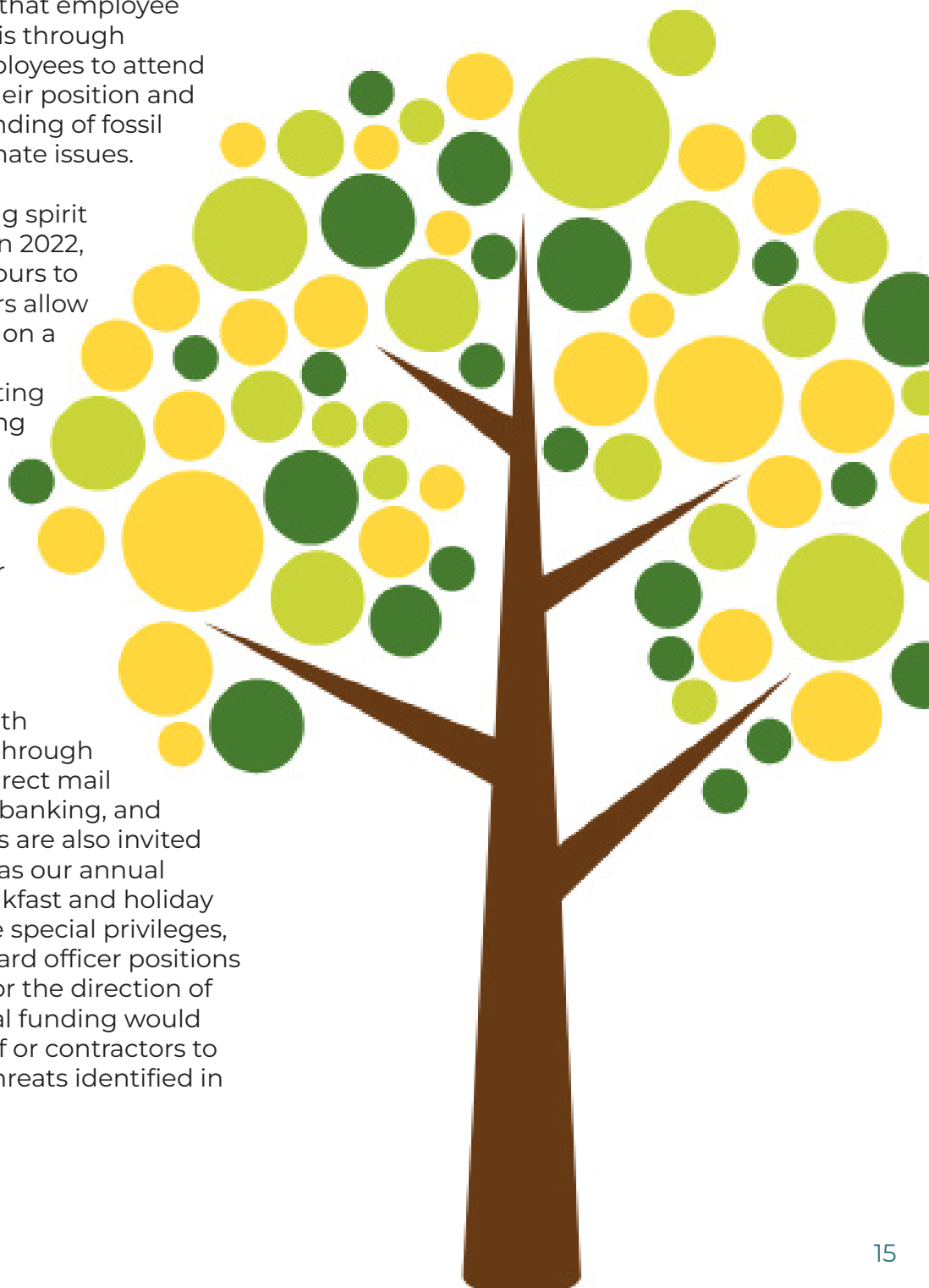


GOAL 5: ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH

Protect PT is small but mighty! Our impact is larger than the size of our staff and budget. Protect PT grew in 2022 from five full-time staff members, one part-time staff member and two paid interns to seven full-time staff members provided with benefits such as the NRA Health Reimbursement. One way that employee development is promoted is through encouragement for all employees to attend training both relevant to their position and to enhance their understanding of fossil fuel, sustainability, and climate issues.

Our volunteers are the living spirit behind Protect PT's work. In 2022, volunteers donated 2,175 hours to the organization. Volunteers allow us to increase our capacity on a number of projects. Their contributions include planting gardens, canvassing, stuffing envelopes, phone banking, helping with events and more! We track all volunteer hours through our In-Kind support tracker using the Pennsylvania volunteer rate and federal travel rate.

We continue to connect with members and supporters through a combination of events, direct mail campaigns, emails, phone banking, and social media. Our members are also invited to join special events such as our annual member appreciation breakfast and holiday parties. Members also have special privileges, including voting on the board officer positions and making suggestions for the direction of the organization. Additional funding would enable us to hire more staff or contractors to address weaknesses and threats identified in the SWOT analysis.



CONCLUSION

The last seven years have taught us that truth is on our side and if we keep pushing forward to find those vulnerabilities of the industry as well as strengthening or work with allies, we will move the needle forward. With our generous foundation partners that allow us the financial stability to keep growing, we have proven we are not small ants for the large fossil fuel industries to squash but that we are mighty and formative opponents that will not back down. We send a clear message to all level of governments that if they do not fulfill their mission to protect us, we will hold them accountable and demand the justice the people in our region deserve.

I imagine that we will need to keep fighting until our elected officials start making the people and natural resources they took an oath to protect their top priority. We can begin to partner with our government and agencies to build a better future. With the right funding and allies, we will find a path forward that promotes climate and environmental justice while improving life for us and our home, the earth.



AS WE ENVISION A WORLD WHERE PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY ARE PROTECTED RIGHTS AND THE MOST VULNERABLE RESIDENTS ARE SAFE FROM POLLUTION AND ITS IMPACT SO WE KNOW GOING FORWARD WE MUST BE PERSISTENT. ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY IS NOT A SPRINT, BUT A MARATHON.

GILLIAN GRABER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Acknowledgments

Protect PT Staff

Gillian Graber: Executive Director, Co-Founder
Cory Clemente: Communications Manager
Jim Cirilano: Community Advocate
Jenna Rindy: Environmental Scientist
Chelsea Buell: Project Coordinator
Shaina Nicassio: Sustainability Program Specialist

Protect PT Board

Lois Drumheller: Board Chair
David Mintz: Vice Chair
Lois Bower-Bjornson: Board Treasurer
Darlene Leslie: Board Member
Darlene Leslie: Board Member
Pat Emich: Board Member
Trisha Wendell: Board Member
Jackie Nixon: Board Member



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