



2023



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

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



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ABOUT Protect PT

Protect PT (Penn-Trafford) is a 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 Westmoreland and Allegheny counties.

Protect PT was established in 2014 as a grassroots community-based nonprofit organization designed to protect our community from the harmful environmental impacts of fossil fuel activity. We are dedicated to ensuring Allegheny and Westmoreland Counties residents' safety, security, and quality of life.

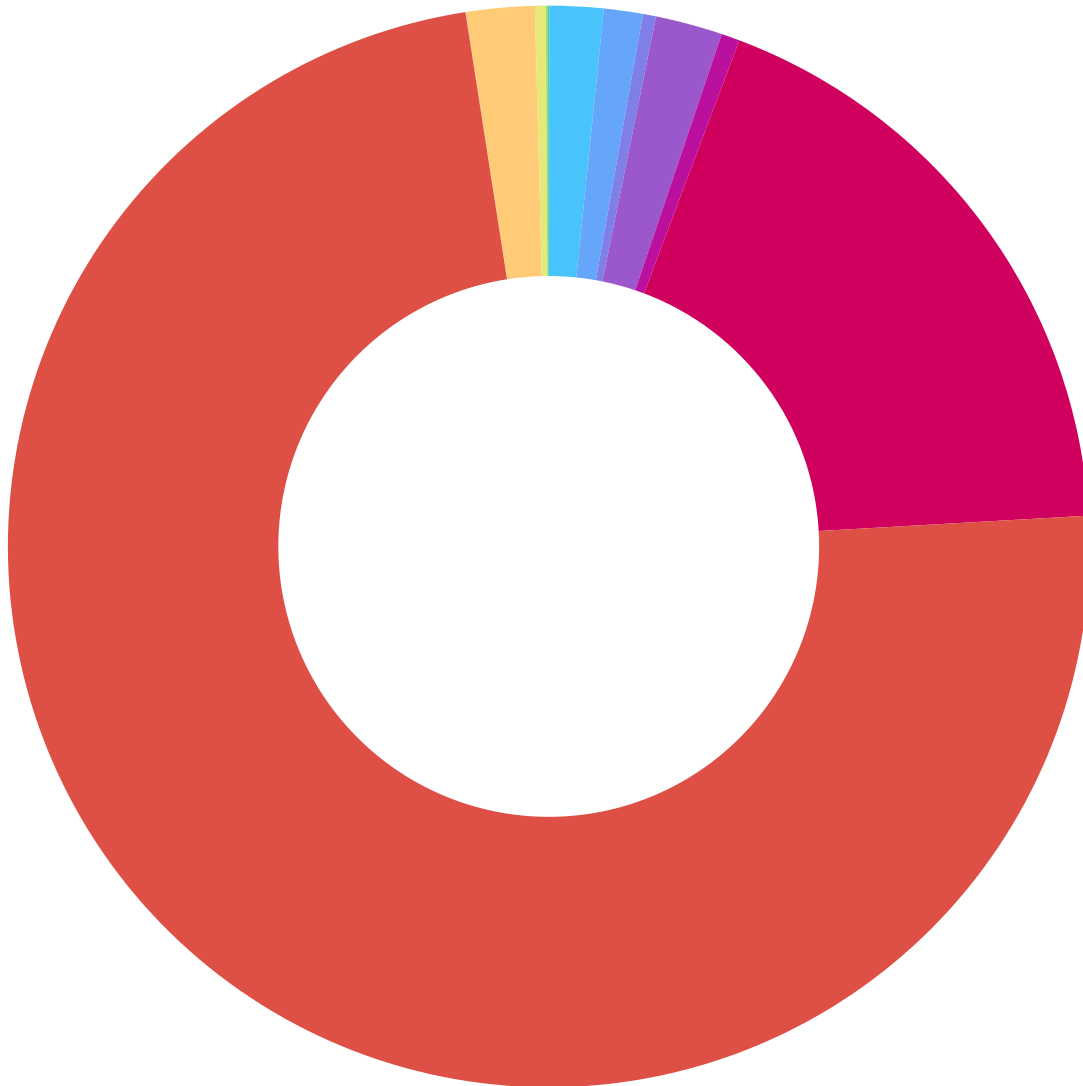
Our work combats the negative environmental impacts of fossil fuel activity and related infrastructure. We claim our mandate to serve our communities based on the Pennsylvania Constitution, Article 1 Sec. 27, which states:

"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."

As an organization, we focus on the three E's: Engage, Educate, and Empower. We Engage, Educate, and Empower local communities regarding citizens' right to clean air, pure water, and the preservation of natural resources.

2023 INCOME

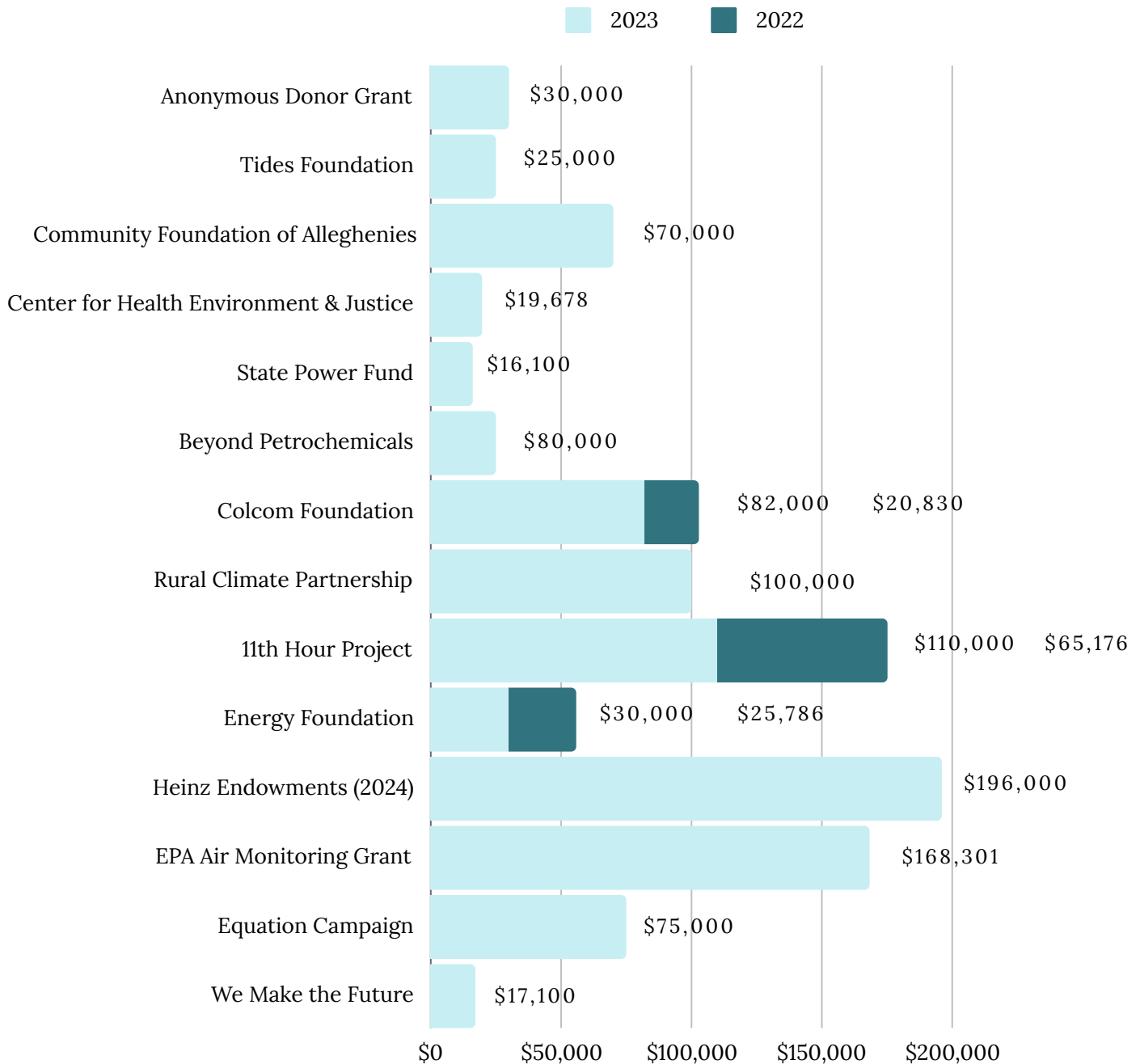
Protect PT's 2023 Financials came from public contributions, corporate contributions, grants, and more.



Corporate Contributions.....	\$190.80
Donated Public Support.....	\$18,467.22
Donations (Individual Contributions).....	\$13,311.43
Donations (Other Organizations).....	\$4514.87
Fiscal Sponsored Donations.....	\$22947.48
Fiscal Sponsorship Fees.....	\$6304.36
Fiscal Sponsorship Grant.....	\$210,566
Foundation Grants.....	\$842,278
Fundraising Events.....	\$187.71
Government Grant Drawdown.....	\$23,362.71
Membership Dues.....	\$3715.80
Sale of Merchandise.....	\$684.79
Small Games of Chance.....	\$281.08

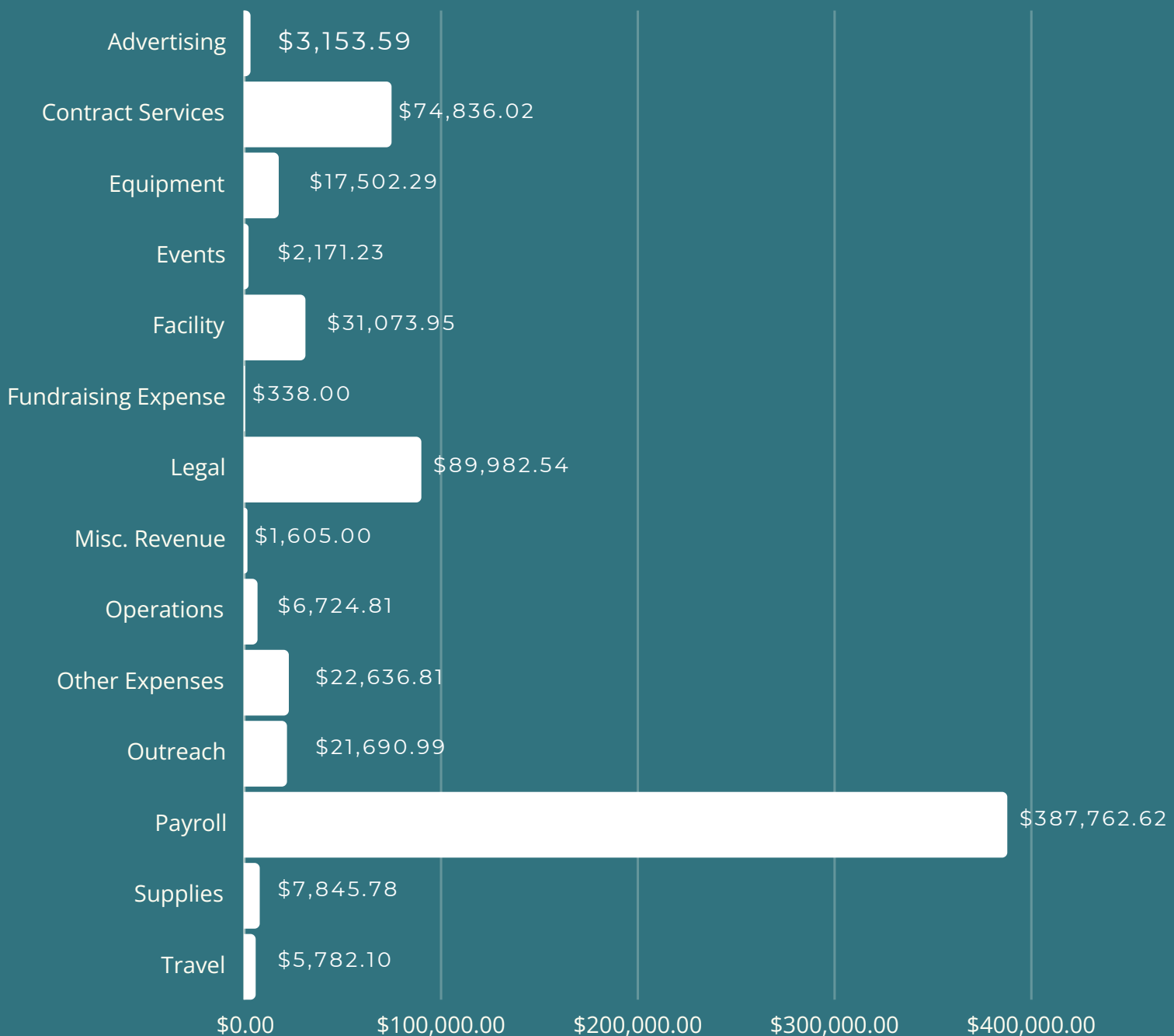
2023 GRANTS

Protect PT's programs and initiatives are funded by a variety of grantors whose resources help to make our community efforts possible.



2023 EXPENSES

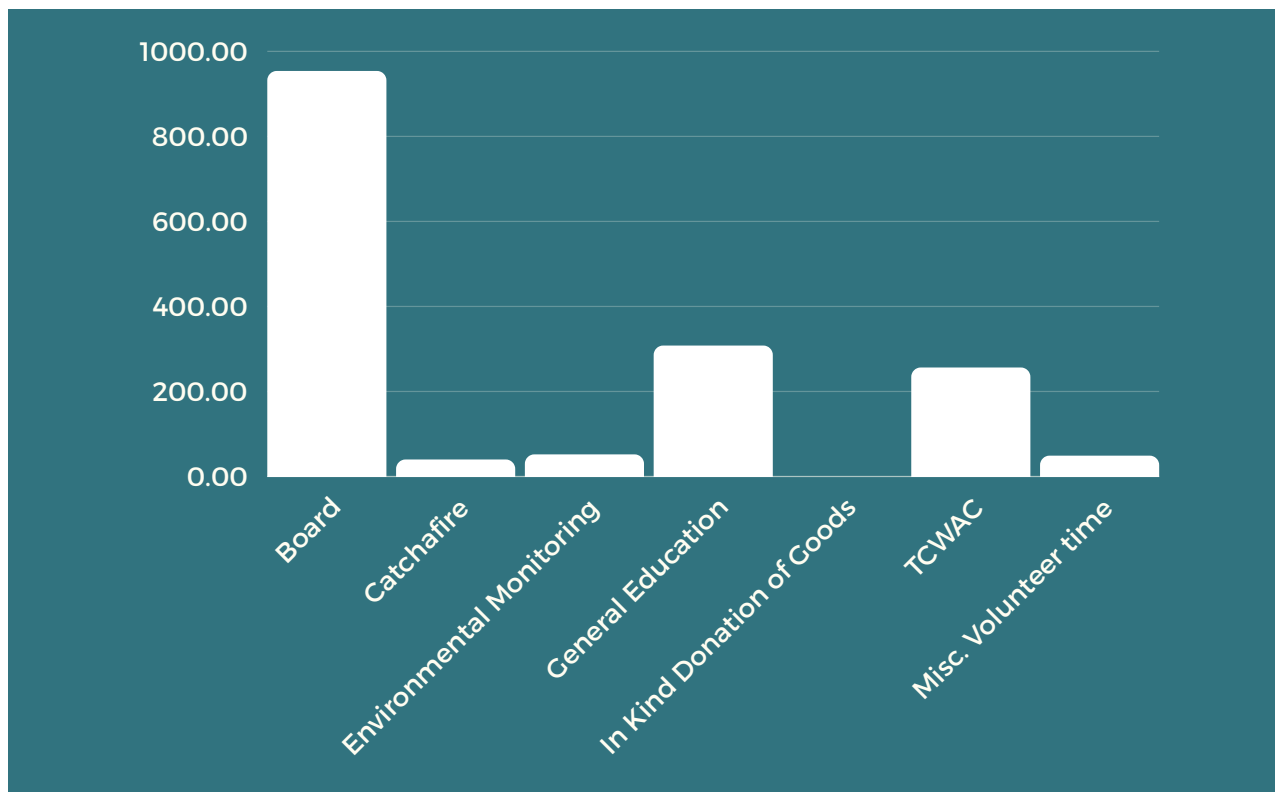
While expenses vary across different initiatives, Protect PT prioritizes funding its people-power, the most valuable resource we have in tackling our community-centered goals.



IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

In addition to individual contributions and membership dues, Protect PT receives invaluable in-kind donations from volunteers and Catchafire professionals who generously donate their time to capacity-building projects like promotional videos or strategic planning. As a small team with a big mission, we are so appreciative of community members who dedicate their free time to support us, especially our devoted board members. We wouldn't be going on 10 years without all of them!

VOLUNTEER HOURS

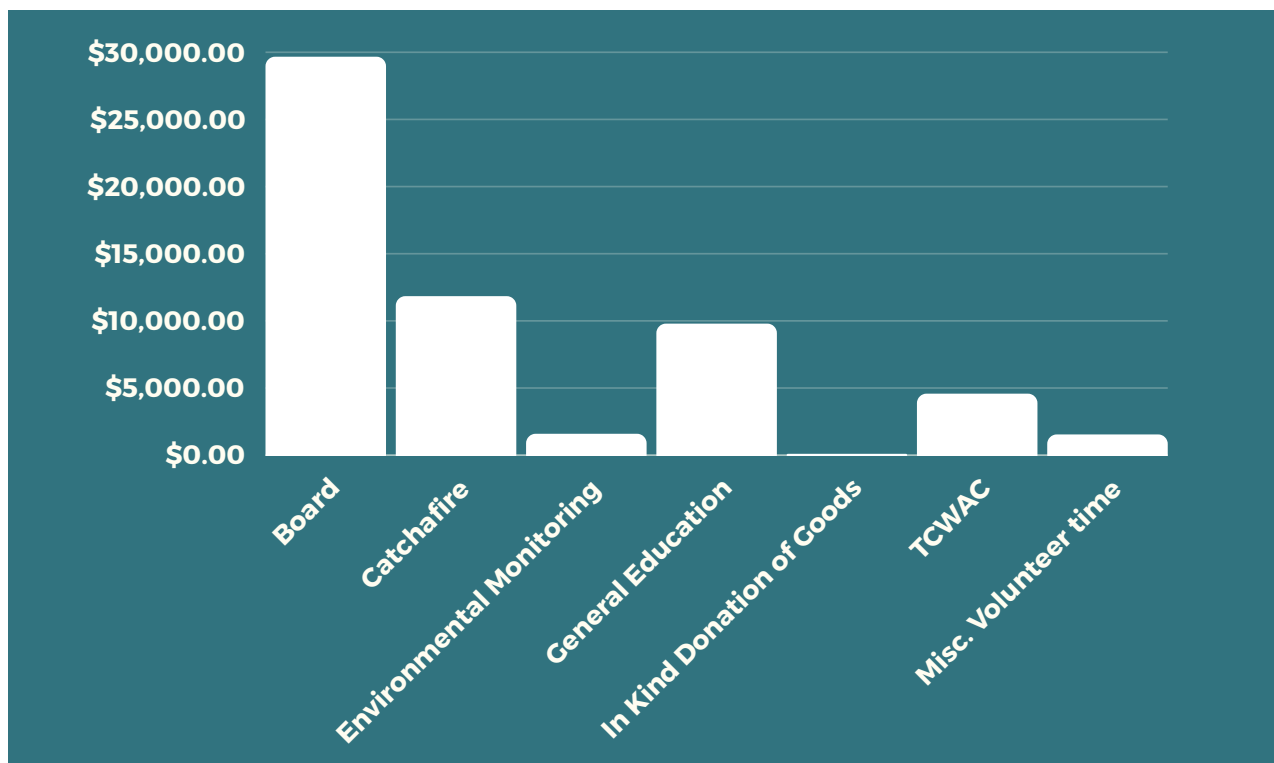


Board.....	953.94 hours
Catchafire.....	40 hours
Environmental Monitoring.....	52 hours
General Education.....	308 hours
Donation of Goods.....	0 hours
TCWAC.....	256.38 hours
Misc. Time.....	49 hours

IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

We not only record the hours our volunteers work but also calculate the value of their volunteered labor as a cash equivalent. We multiply each volunteer hour by the industry standard of \$31.80/hour.

TOTAL VALUE OF CONTRIBUTIONS OF TIME AND GOODS



Board.....	\$29,670.12
Catchafire.....	\$11,840.00
Environmental Monitoring.....	\$1,592.00
General Education.....	\$9,794.40
Donation of Goods.....	\$100.00
TCWAC.....	\$4,579.20
Misc. Time.....	\$1,542.30

COMMUNITY



**Environmental Monitoring
Outreach Events
Community Education
Sustainability**

Environmental Monitoring

New Team Members

In 2023, our work was enhanced by two new contractors, Makenzie White and Fabiana Licata.

Makenzie's work has been crucial in the drafting process for technical comments related to our advocacy work. Fabiana assists our Environmental Scientist, Yvonne, with water and air monitoring as well as reporting. She also tracks permits and violations for Unconventional Oil and Gas Development (UOGD).



Makenzie White
Environmental
Consultant



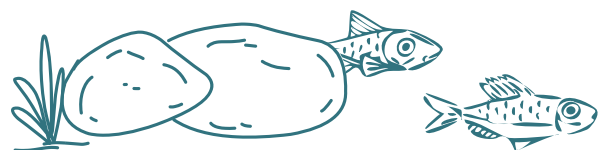
Fabiana Licata
Environmental
Program Assistant



Yvonne Sorovac
Environmental Scientist

What We're Up To

Due to the generous support of the Colcom Foundation, we have valuable baseline data in areas where UOGD is being pursued. This data relies on input from residents living near proposed and existing infrastructure. Residents often know what is happening in their backyard better than regulatory agencies. With this information, we will engage citizens in local hearings, public meetings, public comment periods, and permit reviews from the local to federal levels creating better policies to protect communities from the adverse effects of UOGD. It also helps residents take informed practical actions at home to protect the health of their families.



Outreach Events

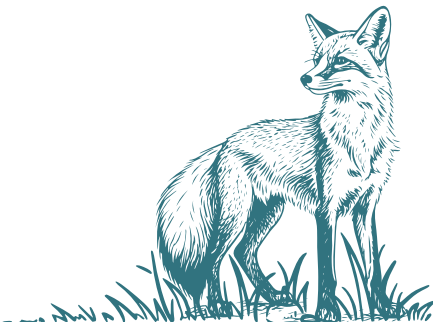


Our Events

Protect PT hosts a variety of community environmental events. Of our 30 outreach events in 2023, there are a few standouts.

Protect PT organized Monroeville canvassing and education events in March in response to a proposed landfill expansion and zoning changes that would have allowed for oil and gas operations in all conservation districts. Members of Protect PT later attended the April 4th Monroeville Council Public Hearing alongside the community to speak out against these changes. This resulted in Monroeville preserving appropriate zoning which prevented the landfill expansion and continued to protect the conservation districts from potential industrial activity.

The Penn-Trafford Fall Festival is a celebration of the community and their continued support for Penn Township. Protect PT sponsored the event as well as participating in the parade and hosting an informational booth.



The PA Climate Convergence held in Harrisburg is a three day event for advocates, activists, and residents to gather to tell their governor, lawmakers, and local regulators about the ongoing climate crisis and encourage them to action.

Protect PT celebrated Fat Bear Week, an event organized by the National Park Service and Explore.org, on October 6th with a fundraiser to support wildlife protection.

It was a big year for our Youth Programs. On February 12th, Maria Wheeler-Dubas, founder of Backyard Nature, a non-profit environmental education organization, joined us for an exploration of winter wildlife and cold-climate adaptations. On November 18th, we also held our novel Kids' Fox Painting Event, which sold out, in order to educate about and promote wildlife conservation.

30 Outreach Events
1390
Participants in 2023



Community Education



Join Us!

Every year, we host at least four Living Near Shale Gas Workshops, educational events that teach community members the potential impact of infrastructure, how to prepare for emergencies, and how to participate in monitoring programs. In 2023, we completed over 31 educational and training programs, and we plan to replicate this in 2024. After holding a series of workshops, we anticipate that more citizens will feel empowered to take action to defend themselves and their environment from unlawful pollution and polluters. Ultimately, we anticipate this project will reduce human strain on natural resources by reducing the number of fracking operations, which will subsequently preserve our natural environment, protect public health, and conserve freshwater resources.

31 
Educational Events
 **378**
Attendees

Sustainability

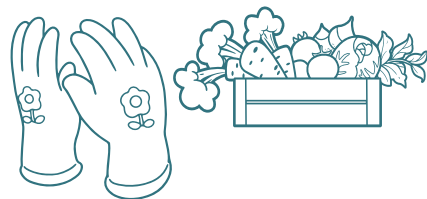
Catching up on



May Torpey joined the team as our new Sustainability Coordinator in the fall! May prioritized making appropriate preparations for TCWAC's 2024 visioning sessions. These visioning sessions allow for community members to have a platform to voice their inquiries and suggestions to allow TCWAC to best help community members. May's preparations allowed for a successful kick-off in January of 2024 and will continue throughout the year leading to the goal of a new strategic plan for TCWAC to present by the beginning of 2025



May Torpey
Sustainability
Coordinator



Municipal Sustainability

In 2023, Laura Vincenti joined the PPT team as our Municipal Grant & Outreach Manager. In this position, Laura introduces local governments and school districts to PPT's free grant writing service to access the billions of dollars in new federal funding now available for infrastructure projects. She shows them that lower energy bills, efficient buildings, and budgetary flexibility are within reach. There's a green future ahead for Westmoreland County!



Laura Vincenti
Municipal Grant and Outreach
Manager, Independent
Contractor

LEGAL



**Right to Know
Advocacy Comments
Members, Volunteers, and Donors**

Right to Know

Pennsylvania's Right to Know law allows for any legal body, be it an individual or an organization, in the United States to request access to public information and open records. This act was passed in order to promote transparency and to hold the government accountable.

Here, at Protect PT, we utilize this resource in conjunction with the Freedom of Information Act to gain access to permitting actions by agencies, reported or discovered violations by oil and gas and waste operators, and internal and external communications by both the state and federal agencies.

41 Right to Know & Informal File Review Requests



Advocacy Comments



Pictured: June's packed Compressor Station Hearing with our Environmental Consultant, Makenzie White, as an Expert Witness.

14
**Advocacy
Letters**

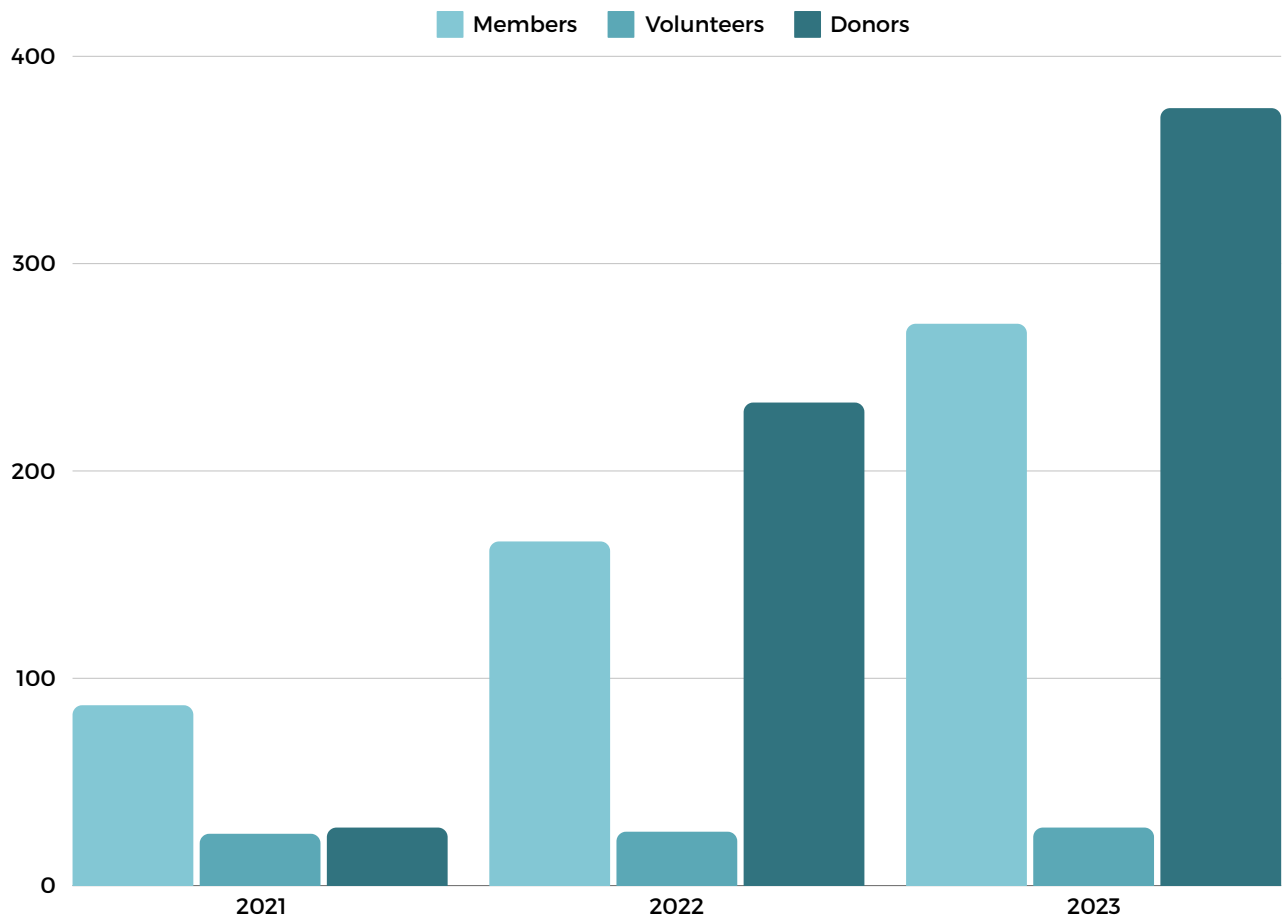
Why?

Sending advocacy letters is one of the many ways Protect PT makes the voices of the community heard. These letters let our legislators know what is really important. Throughout 2023, we sent a total of fourteen letters to a number of government agencies and individuals, including but not limited to the Monroeville Council, Governor Shapiro, and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), regarding the health and safety of our community and its members.

You can read all of the letters sent this year and in years past on the Protect PT website:

<https://www.protectpt.org/advocacy-letters>

Members, Volunteers, and Donors



Conclusion

A message from our
Executive Director and Co-
Founder, **Gillian Graber**

In 2014, I learned about fracking in my backyard. When I learned that this development could harm my kids, I thought my neighbors should know. I sprinted after our kids' school buses to hand out educational information to fellow parents on the poison in our own backyards.

It's funny to look back on the days when we were selling candy bars and popcorn in my living room to cover attorney fees. Nine years ago, I officially co-founded PPT with a fellow mother. Nowadays, we have an amazing 8-person full-time staff and are hiring a full-time staff attorney! From running after school buses and selling treats to now litigating in court, watching our growth has been surreal to say the least.

These past nine years have brought us closer with community members. We listen to their stories when no one else will. I remember feeling alone in the fight against oil and gas, and our purpose remains to never let anyone facing the oil and gas industry in Westmoreland and Allegheny Counties to feel as alone as I did. I am so proud of the team we have. Everyone is fervently passionate to enact justice. Together, we send a clear message to



all levels 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.

As we start our 10th year as an organization, we will continue to fight until our elected officials start making the people and natural resources they took an oath to protect their top priority. With the right funding and allies, we will find a path forward that promotes climate and environmental justice while improving the quality of life for our planet and all who inhabit it.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Gillian Graber'.

GILLIAN GRABER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Acknowledgments

Protect PT Staff

Gillian Graber (she/her): Executive Director, Co-Founder

Kiara Jimenez (she/her): Communications Manager

Emily Nissley (she/her): Project Coordinator

Brendan Wissinger (he/him): Community Organizer

Tom Pike (he/him): Environmental Policy Advocate

May Torpey (they/them): Sustainability Coordinator

Jim Cirilano (he/him): Community Advocate

Yvonne Sorovacu (she/her): Environmental Scientist

Protect PT Board

Lois Drumheller: Board Chair

David Mintz: Vice Chair

Darlene Leslie: Board Treasurer

Ryan Graber: Board Secretary

Patricia Emich: Board Member

Patricia Wendell: Board Member

Jackie Nixon: Board Member

John Detwiler: Board Member



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