

2022

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# Activity Report & Financials

Aerial view over the Klaskish Inlet which hosts the unprotected East Creek and Klaskish Rivers in Quatsino territory on Vancouver Island, BC.



A large, moss-covered Douglas fir tree trunk in a forest. The tree is the central focus, with its thick, textured bark and vibrant green moss. The background shows a dense forest of similar trees, with sunlight filtering through the canopy. A person in a purple jacket is visible in the lower right, providing a sense of scale.

## Mission Statement

**The Ancient Forest Alliance (AFA)** is a registered non-profit society working to protect endangered old-growth forests and to ensure a sustainable, second-growth forest industry in BC. We are BC's leading organization working to secure science-based, province-wide legislation to protect old-growth forests for the sake of wild species, fresh water, the climate, tourism, Indigenous cultures, and communities.

Founded in 2010

Old-growth Douglas-fir tree  
located west of Lake Cowichan  
in Ditidaht territory.

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# Together, We're Turning the Tides for Old-Growth

2022 was a significant year in the decades-long push to protect old-growth forests in BC. We saw the deferral of over one million hectares of the most at-risk old-growth forests, 619,000 ha of areas identified as important for First Nations, as well as the deferral of 40,000 ha of old-growth on private lands across the province. Under intense pressure from Ancient Forest Alliance and our supporters, \$185 million was budgeted for old-growth, which includes funding for workers, industry, communities, and First Nations.

We also began a partnership with the Kanaka Bar Indian Band in order to provide capacity funding and support for their Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA), which included the purchase of an exceptional old-growth forest that was on private land. We made huge progress in diversifying the ancient forest movement with businesses and municipal leaders. We spent hundreds of hours in remote corners of BC, exploring and documenting the beauty and destruction of old-growth forests, and sharing photos through social media and traditional news media to educate and inspire thousands of people across the province and around the world.

Your continued support through donating, sending messages, making phone calls, purchasing AFA gear, and attending events has allowed us to ramp up pressure on the province to fulfill their promises to protect old-growth. Yet while we are seeing progress, irreplaceable ancient forests continue to fall, making it imperative that we continue to push the government to create the enabling conditions that will allow for the permanent protection of these precious forests. Thanks to you and your support, we will continue leading the charge.



*Most gratefully,* (L-R) Ian Thomas, Rachel Ablack, TJ Watt, Joan Varley, Coral Forbes, Tiara Dhenin, Dave Cuddy.

# Supporting Indigenous-led Old-growth Conservation

In 2022 we took great strides in our work to support Indigenous-led old-growth conservation initiatives and sustainable economic alternatives to old-growth logging.

We formed the Old-Growth Solutions Initiative (OGSI) with our partners at Endangered Ecosystems Alliance (EEA) and the Nature-Based Solutions Foundation (NBSF). The OGSI aims to protect endangered old-growth forests across BC by working directly with Indigenous and other land-embedded communities. The central focus of this work is to fill key funding gaps in protecting old-growth forests, provide funding support to communities for the protection of public lands, and to help in the purchase and protection of private lands.



Left to right: Kanaka CEO Greg Grayson, Lands Manager Sean O'Rourke, Chief Jordan Spinks, EEA's Celina Starnes & Ken Wu, NBSF's Hania Peper, AFA's TJ Watt.

Through this initiative, we partnered with the Kanaka Bar Indian Band to provide capacity funding (a form of preliminary funding, typically used to create new projects, pay wages/salaries, improve group operations, etc.), and support for their [proposed Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area](#) (IPCA). The IPCA will protect a total of about 35,000 hectares of their unceded lands—an area nearly twice the size of Carmanah-Walbran Provincial Park! This includes over 12,500 hectares of some of the

most biodiverse old-growth ecosystems in BC and also includes important archaeological sites, including petroglyphs and culturally modified trees (CMTs).

The proposed IPCA spans a diverse range of forest types, from dry ecosystems dominated by Ponderosa pines, to wetter forests featuring western redcedars, to montane habitats home to white and Engelmann spruce as well as whitebark pine. Plus, it includes areas of the Interior Douglas-Fir (IDF) zone, which is the most underrepresented ecosystem in the protected areas system in BC. In fact, this proposal includes the largest specimens of interior Douglas-fir trees known in Canada! Check out our photo gallery from our exploration of parts of the proposed IPCA [here](#).

To top it off, NBSF also purchased an exceptionally diverse old-growth forest on an eight-acre private property referred to as “Old Man Jack’s”, which will be returned to the Kanaka Bar Band with a conservation covenant (a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and a conservation organization to ensure the land is protected) to become part of their IPCA. See media coverage from [The Globe and Mail](#) & [The National Observer](#).



An old-growth interior Douglas-fir with Kanaka Bar lands department assistant Garth Asham on the recently protected Old Man Jack's property.

# Raising Awareness & Keeping Pressure on the Province

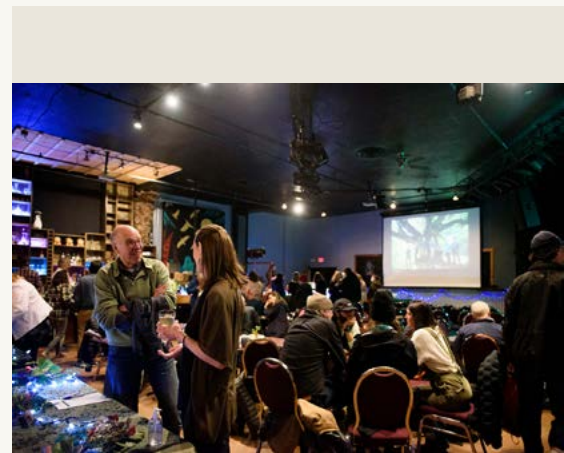
A critical part of our work at AFA is to raise awareness about the old-growth crisis, mobilize individuals to speak up for ancient forests, and exert pressure on the BC government to take decisive action. Here's a look at how we did that in 2022.

We wrote compelling and informative press releases and combined them with our powerful images to garner widespread news coverage and reach the largest audience possible. This year, our messages and photos were in numerous publications such as *The Canadian Press*, *Canadian Geographic*, and *The Globe and Mail*.

We placed another billboard along the Patricia Bay Highway featuring one of TJ Watt's before and after photos of logging in the Caycuse River watershed in Ditidaht territory. In comparing the before and after photos, the billboard asks: which future would you choose?

We hosted our first-ever educational webinar featuring wildlife experts Helen Davis and Roger Dunlop and got out in the community to provide informational presentations at Robinson's Outdoor Store and our Year-End Celebration and Fundraiser.

We focused on holding the BC government to account for its old-growth promises by issuing progress report cards at the 18-month and two-year milestones of the public launch of the independent Old Growth Strategic Review Panel report. Plus, we exposed the BC government's spin when it tried to embellish a progress report back in November. We also continued to advocate for and mobilize British Columbians to call on the BC government to provide much-needed conservation funding to support First Nations who wish to protect old growth in their territories.





# Milestones Worth Celebrating!

In terms of action for old-growth forests, 2022 was one of the most important years in a generation. Over a million hectares in deferrals, hundreds of millions in transition funding, and ambitious commitments showed us that the unrelenting pressure we have placed on the government is paying off. There is a lot more to be done yet, but it's also important to acknowledge how far we've come.

## Progress on Deferrals

In April, the provincial government in partnership with First Nations, announced the deferral (a temporary pause in logging) of just over one million hectares of the most at-risk old-growth forests in BC while long-term land-use plans are developed. This is the largest step towards old-growth conservation across BC in a generation, but still represents less than half of what was recommended by the government's independent science panel. To secure the deferral of the rest of BC's most at-risk forests, conservation financing is urgently needed to make protection economically viable for many First Nations communities, who have the final say on whether forests are deferred and, eventually, permanently protected.

## Big Funding Commitment

After our continued campaign for more funding, which saw thousands of letters sent in by supporters like you, the BC government put forward \$185 million in its 2022 budget for old growth to support forestry workers and communities affected by deferrals (with a smaller subset going toward First Nations forestry workers). The government also allocated \$12.69 million to assist First Nations in reviewing deferral options and next steps. Though this does not address the funding to offset lost logging revenues from deferrals in the short term or the minimum \$300 million needed for First Nations conservation financing in the long term, it is essential for helping rural communities transition away from a dependence on old-growth logging.

## Broadening the Movement

This year we made huge progress in diversifying the ancient forest movement: The Tourism Industry Association of BC (the primary advocate for BC's tourism industry), the Tofino-Long Beach Chamber of Commerce, and the Alberni Valley Chamber of Commerce all signed resolutions calling on the BC government to protect old-growth forests and invest in conservation financing. Plus, 25 municipal leaders, including mayors, councillors, and regional directors, signed a joint letter telling the province to follow through on and fund its old-growth promises.

## Protecting 30% by 2030 & Conservation Financing Commitment

A major highlight for 2022 was the new premier David Eby committing to protecting 30% of the lands in BC by 2030. This move would double the area currently protected in BC, safeguarding 14 million hectares—one of the most ambitious conservation plans in BC's history! Additionally, for the first time ever, the province publicly acknowledged the need for conservation financing as a tool to safeguard the most biodiverse areas and the importance of IPCAs in meeting BC's conservation targets—two things that AFA has campaigned for relentlessly! If fully funded and aimed at the right areas, this sets the stage for protecting much of the endangered old-growth forests in BC.

DEFERRED!



Cameron Valley Ancient Forest near Port Alberni in Hupačasath, Tseshaht, Snaw-naw-as, Snuneymuxw, and K'ómoks territory



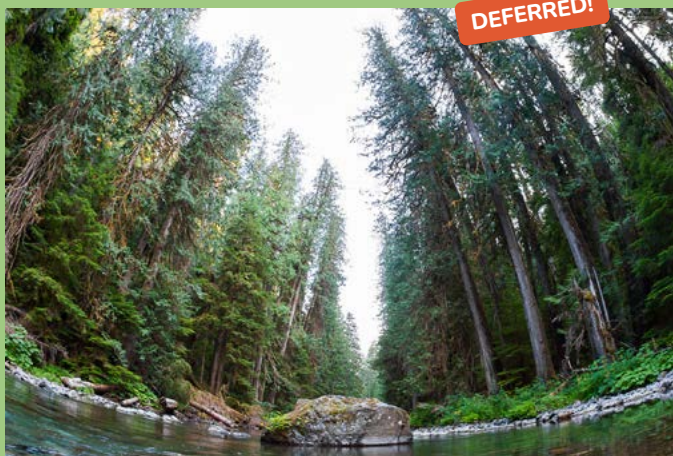
# Key Old-Growth Forests on Private Lands Deferred

In March, the largest private landowner in British Columbia, Mosaic Forest Management, announced it will defer 40,000 hectares of old-growth and mature forest from logging on its private lands for the next 25 years through a carbon credit program.

These lands include dozens of old-growth forests that the Ancient Forest Alliance has been working for years to protect such as McLaughlin Ridge, Cameron Valley Firebreak, Cathedral Grove Canyon, Mossy Maple Grove, key ancient spruce stands in the Lower Gordon Valley and San Juan Valleys near Port Renfrew on Vancouver Island; in the Yakoun watershed (where the legendary Golden Spruce grew) on Haida Gwaii; and hundreds of other groves.

Mosaic is setting these groves aside because the money to be made from selling carbon offsets is now comparable to the profits of logging many of these sites. While carbon offsets have been criticized for having loopholes, such as “saving” forests that were already off-limits to logging through environmental regulations, these offsets are positive and actually retain forests that would have otherwise been logged.

Mosaic also knows there is a high “social cost” (i.e. negative press and backlash) that would come with logging many of these sites. Without AFA highlighting and campaigning for these magnificent forests for years and the thousands of people who spoke up for their protection, it is entirely possible that Mosaic wouldn’t have considered developing alternative models that leave old-growth forests standing. Permanent protection through a Provincial Land Acquisition Fund which could be used to purchase them is still needed in the long term but we can celebrate that these areas are safe for now!



Cathedral Grove Canyon located in Hupacasath, Tseshaht, Snaw-naw-as, and K’ómoks territory



Canada’s mossiest rainforest, Mossy Maple Grove, located in the unceded territory of the Cowichan people who are part of the Hul’qumi’num First Nations group.



**Exploring and Documenting  
Ancient Forests**

In 2022, we travelled widely across Vancouver Island both to document the incredible beauty and diversity of old-growth forests and to expose their ongoing destruction by industrial logging. These explorations are crucial to our work as they allow us to connect people with the grandeur and wonder of these imperilled forests, and bring home to people the shocking brutality of old-growth logging in BC.

Some of the areas we explored include the Caycuse Valley in Ditidaht territory, the Keogh and Quatse watersheds in Kwakiutl territory, East Creek and the Koprino River in Quatsino territory, Vernon Bay in Uchucklesaht and Tseshaht territories, the San Juan Valley in Pacheedaht territory, and the Tsitika Valley in Namgis and Tlowisitis territory.



### Keogh River

In spring 2022, AFA staff explored the Keogh River near the town of Port Hardy in the territory of the Kwakiutl First Nation. Despite being an important salmon-bearing stream and having deep cultural importance to the Kwakiutl people, the Keogh River has been relentlessly logged by timber companies that continue to target the last old-growth fragments in the watershed. The remnant ancient forests in the Keogh are ecological jewels, home to nesting bald eagles, cougars, wolves, and some of the highest densities of black bears we have seen. The breathtaking glades of ancient forest along the riverside were full of bear signs, with nearly every ancient cedar showing claw marks on its trunks, clear evidence for how these last remaining old-growth forests of the Keogh are vital refuges for wildlife in Kwakiutl territory.



### San Juan & Tsitika Valleys

We partnered with a team of owl researchers to survey for the threatened western screech owl in old-growth forests, with a special focus on areas currently threatened by logging. We had multiple records of screech owls in old-growth forests in the Tsitika and San Juan valleys and detected them in BC Timber Sales cut blocks. As we continue to analyze this data we can directly advocate for the protection of the individual locations where we found these endangered birds and push the province to ensure the protection of their old-growth habitats across coastal BC.



### East Creek

Nestled against the legendary Brooks Peninsula on northwest Vancouver Island in Quatsino territory, East Creek is one of the most ecologically significant and threatened areas on Vancouver Island. This 5,000 ha watershed was the last completely unlogged, unprotected valley on Vancouver Island until the early 2000s when Lamare Lake Logging blasted a road into the valley and began to liquidate its old-growth rainforest. Despite two decades of logging, extensive tracts of valley-bottom ancient forest still remain.

When we explored this watershed in summer, we found heavenly groves of towering Sitka spruces carpeted with sword fern and forests of huge, ancient redcedars; it felt like we had travelled back in time. But everywhere we went, road ribbons and falling boundary tape showed us that without rapid action, much of what remains of this incredible wilderness valley could soon be lost.

# Trek Initiative Supports AFA Photographer TJ Watt's Field Work



In November we released another shocking series of before-and-after images bearing witness to the destruction of ancient redcedars in the Caycuse River watershed in Ditidaht territory. The series was created by AFA photographer TJ Watt with support from the Trek Initiative, a grantmaking partnership between the National Geographic Society and the Royal Canadian Geographical Society. In the summer of 2021, Teal-Jones was given approval to log 31 hectares of mature and old forest, including areas that were subsequently recommended for immediate deferral by the province's own Old Growth

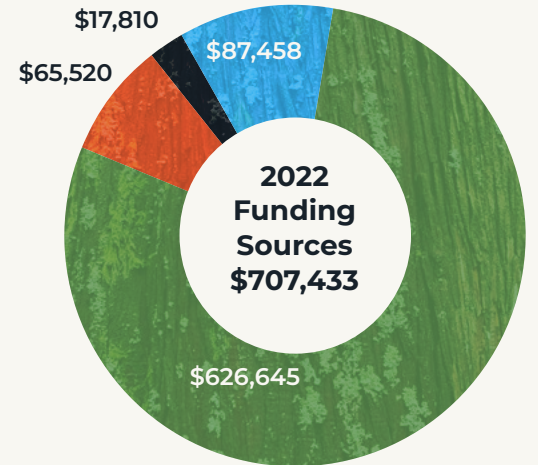
Technical Advisory Panel. In December of 2021, the forest was logged. These images depicting the destruction of this irreplaceable ancient forest provide a shocking example of what continues to be lost while the BC government delays action for old growth. Seen by hundreds of thousands of people across the world, these photographs continue to be among our most powerful tools for raising public awareness and increasing pressure on the government to act. A number of other photo projects were completed by Watt over the course of the year and will be released in the coming months.



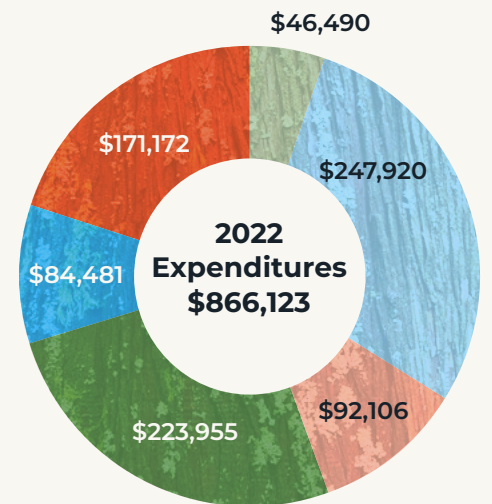
# Statement of Operations

For the year ended December 31, 2022

<b>Receipts</b>		
Donations	626,645	
Grants	87,458	
Sales	65,520	
Other Income	17,810	
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>797,433</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>		
Cost of Goods	46,490	
<b>CAMPAIGNS</b>		
Campaigners	247,920	
Research & Campaign Development	92,106	
Public Education & Engagement	223,955	
<b>OPERATIONS</b>		
Public Outreach	84,481	
Operations	171,172	
<b>Total Expenditures</b>		<b>866,123</b>
<i>Net Income</i>		<b>(68,690)</b>



- Donations
- Grants
- Sales
- Other Income



- Cost of Goods
- Campaigners
- Research & Campaign Development
- Public Education & Engagement
- Public Outreach
- Operations

# What's Next in 2023

2023 has the potential to be a game-changer year for ancient forests. We have new premier David Eby at the helm, who has promised to accelerate the implementation of the province's old-growth plans. Now, it's up to us to keep the momentum going and ensure the BC government follows through and protects these endangered, irreplaceable ecosystems and the communities and species that depend on them. Here's a roadmap of how we plan to ensure 2023 is a big year for old-growth forests.

## Build External Pressure

Change doesn't come from a silent movement. We will ensure the BC government hears loud and clear that British Columbians from all walks of life expect ancient forests to get the protection they deserve. There are three main ways we commit to building external pressure.

1. Continue to explore and document endangered old-growth forests, bringing back professional photos and videos to educate and inspire action among thousands of people through traditional and social media.
2. Continue to engage businesses, unions, outdoor recreation groups, chambers of commerce, tourism associations, faith groups, and more. Building common ground with diverse members of society to exert maximum pressure on the BC government is crucial in protecting ancient forests.
3. Encourage thousands of people to use our send-a-message tools and meet with their MLAs to get our campaign asks in front of decision makers.

## Support Solutions & Leverage Funding

While we continue to build external pressure and grow the ancient forest movement, we must also focus on supporting and promoting tangible ways forward that enable the protection of old-growth forests while supporting Indigenous communities and forestry workers. We can work toward this by continuing on these two key paths.

1. Support Indigenous-led conservation initiatives. In British Columbia, establishing new protected areas requires First Nations' consent, but many First Nations communities receive significant employment and revenues from old-growth logging while lacking alternative economic opportunities. We are committed to ensuring the BC government provides significant funding for Indigenous-led conservation, offsetting the lost revenues from accepting deferrals, and creating sustainable economic alternatives to old-growth logging. We will continue to engage with and support diverse First Nations communities within BC to develop old-growth conservation initiatives and land-use plans that sustain their cultures and ancient forests.
2. Advocate for a transition to a sustainable, second-growth forestry industry that supports communities and leaves old growth standing. This includes calling on the BC government to develop regulations and incentives to facilitate a shift to value-added, second-growth manufacturing; retrofit BC mills to accommodate the changing forest profile (ie. to accommodate smaller diameter trees); and support innovative wood processing technologies such as engineered wood products that mimic the quality and characteristics of old wood without having to use old wood. There is a path forward where we can protect old-growth forests and forestry jobs at the same time; the province just needs to put the tools and funding in place to make it happen.

**We're excited to use the momentum we've gained in 2022 to make 2023 an historic year in the old-growth movement.**

We have a new premier who has committed to protecting 30% of lands by 2030 and creating a new conservation financing fund to protect old-growth forests and biodiverse areas. This is huge, however, we're not in the clear yet. Over the next year we'll be making sure the BC government comes forward with significant funding for First Nations communities, both in the immediate term to help facilitate logging deferrals, and in the long term to help establish new Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas.

We also need to see the province set ecosystem-based targets for its 30 by 30 commitment to protect all seral stages, productivity classes, and ecosystem types based on their natural range of variation across the province. And finally, we expect BC to embrace and fund the Nature Agreement with the federal government to help vastly expand new protected areas as well as dedicate significant annual funding to purchase and protect private lands of high conservation value. These are big goals but we're up to the task, and together we continue to move the needle further in the right direction. Once again, thank you for your continued support and for standing with us.



## Get in touch!

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