



2026 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: Hannah Gabrielson

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CO-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

When the rivers rise, nobody waits to act.

We were reminded of this as record flooding moved through Northwest Washington last December. When the power goes out, polluted runoff threatens people's health, and roads disappear under water — it isn't a federal agency that shows up first. It is neighbors and local organizations. It is the people who already know this watershed, because they live in it. They jump into action because it is *their* community. This was impossible to ignore in 2025.

Meanwhile, in Washington, D.C., we watched the EPA move to repeal the very legal foundation for regulating greenhouse gases, scrap emissions standards for power plants, and cancel mandatory pollution reporting altogether. We saw \$20 billion in greenhouse gas reduction funding disappear and an executive order that instructed federal agencies to challenge the very state and local climate laws that communities like ours fought hard to win. Piece by piece, the systems many of us assumed were the bedrock of climate and environmental protection have been dismantled from the top down.

We cannot stay discouraged by this, however. Just like everything flows downstream in a flood — rain, trees, sediment — so too can policy and, more importantly, action. The low ground collects, processes, and transforms all that debris, just like local communities create their own plans, implement changes for public safety, and adapt to local challenges. Local

knowledge, built over decades, is the key to a thriving future.

This year, we leaned harder into that role, continuing our decades-long work to build local systems that make our community more resilient regardless of what Washington, D.C. does next. Ten years after celebrating the defeat of the Gateway Pacific Terminal at Cherry Point, we filed an appeal challenging Whatcom County's permitting decision to expand fossil fuel infrastructure without an environmental review — defending herring habitat that Chinook salmon and Southern Resident orca depend on.

We published our third year of PFAS data in the Squalicum Creek watershed, adding hard evidence to a growing statewide picture of forever chemicals in our waters. We helped pass the Recycling Reform Act and sewage spill transparency bill into state law, and secured a permanent ban on net pen aquaculture in Washington waters. We hosted community work sessions to ensure comprehensive plan updates reflected the diverse needs of our community.

None of that work depended on federal cooperation. **It depended on us and on you.**

We've come to think of RE Sources as a community resilience hub; a place where water quality data, forest policy, waste systems and youth leadership all connect back to the same watershed, the same community, the same stake in getting this right. This work is knowing that a stormwater outfall, a mature forest stand, and a high school student learning to test for bacteria in Squalicum Creek are all part of the same picture, and that picture is best understood by the people within it.

Bigger institutions will keep failing upward, insulated from the consequences of their own decisions. We don't have that luxury, and honestly, we don't want it. Ownership means showing up for the place you live.

Thank you for being part of that ownership with us in 2025. When the systems that were supposed to protect us stepped back, you didn't. Neither did we.

The South and North Twin Sisters poke out above the clouds, basking in the warm light of spring. Photo: Jerry Mark

Ander Russell | *Callie Hamilton* | *Janet Marino*

RE Sources Co-Executive Directors



2025 BY THE NUMBERS

Not everything we do here at RE Sources can be quantified. The relationships we've built within our community are intangible, yet they are the incredibly important base of so much of our work. The policy we've advocated for has helped shape the place we call home, and will continue to do so for decades. And the youth who've been encouraged to speak up for what they believe in are learning how they can create change and uplift each other as part of our society every day. This is the work we're most proud of.

Quite often though, numbers give a sense of scale. In the most literal sense, the sheer quantity of waste The RE Store has diverted from the landfill in a single year. Or the number of people who are willing to show up at 9 a.m. on a Saturday morning to give back to their community by picking up trash at a local beach. Numbers can also paint a picture. Water quality samples taken by a team of dedicated volunteers lead to more data about where — and how — forever chemicals exist in our local watersheds.

Together, unquantifiable impacts and statistics tell the story of our community values, the love we have for the place we call home, and the work we need to do to create a better future. Here's a numerical snapshot of a few of the things we accomplished in 2025. 🌍

230

Volunteers who joined for 11 beach and paddle cleanups.

26

Locations sampled for PFAS “forever chemicals” in the Bellingham Bay and Whatcom Creek watersheds.

39

Comment letters we authored or signed on to advocating for local issues.

503

Community members engaged during the 2025 legislative session.



YOU MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

Your support makes it possible for RE Sources to secure crucial environmental victories today, while ensuring plans and policies center people and planet for generations to come. **Thank you.**

THANK YOU TO OUR BUSINESS AND FOUNDATION FUNDERS FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT:

Audio Visual Excellence
Community Food Co-op
Cosman Family Foundation
Darby Foundation
H and H Evergreen Foundation
Loyal Bigelow and Jedediah Dewey Foundation
Lucky Seven Foundation
Lummi Indian Business Council
Mindport Exhibits
North Sound ACH
Northwest Fund for the Environment
Pacific Environment
Puget Sound Benefit Services
Recycling and Disposal Services, Inc.

Satterberg Foundation
Sustainable Whatcom Fund
Swinomish Indian Tribal Community
The Burning Foundation
The Dudley Foundation
The Harder Foundation
The Hugh and Jane Ferguson Foundation
The Peach Foundation
The Rose Foundation
Tulalip Tribes Charitable Contributions Fund
Village Books and Paper Dreams
Washington Conservation Action
Whatcom Community Foundation
Whatcom County Health & Community Services

398

Water samples taken by our staff and 22 volunteers. Sample sites include lakes, creeks, and stormwater outfalls.

99

People joined for two MTCA cleanup site tours to learn about local legacy pollution and the process of cleaning it up.

2.88M

Pounds of reusable building materials diverted from the landfill in 2025 through The RE Store.

42

People attended three Circular Economy Skill-share workshops at The RE Store: repairing sheetrock, wiring outlets, and plumbing basics.



DECADES OF DEFENDING

Ten years ago, the proposed Gateway Pacific Terminal at Cherry Point — which would have been the largest coal export facility on the West Coast — was defeated through strong community organizing, leadership from Lummi Nation, and support from RE Sources.

A precedent was set and a message delivered to extractive industries: Not here. Yet in the fall of 2025, we were once again working with our community to fight permitted expansions at the Petrogas liquified petroleum gas (LPG) refinery and shipping pier at Cherry Point.

The cerulean waters of the Salish Sea have surged along the shore of Cherry Point (Xwe'chi'eXen) since the last ice age. Herring have spawned in the nearby eelgrass for millennia. And Lummi people have gathered there since time immemorial. But for the last 50 years, this sacred ground has been — and will continue to be — perhaps the most contentious stretch of land in Whatcom County.

Extractive industries and industrial polluters have been fighting to take this place over, lured by the deep-water shoreline and nearby rail access. But those who are dedicated to defending this place are armed with intimate connection, local knowledge, decades of experience, and a lifetime of commitment to protecting the places that sustain them. This is a powerful meld.

After the Gateway Pacific Terminal proposal was trounced, Whatcom County Council enacted a five-year moratorium on fossil fuels expansion projects to limit the development of these industries at Cherry Point. This pause gave the County time to create the Cherry Point Amendments, a handful of limitations that would be ingrained in its Comprehensive Plan.

RE Sources was instrumental in this work, crafting policy in coordination with allies and sitting in meeting after meeting with industry and government lawyers as well as County leadership and staff. These amendments were intended to prevent piece-

meal upgrades for increasing exports, ensure no new piers could be constructed, honor Lummi Nation's treaty-protected fishing rights, and minimize the impacts and expansion capacity of fossil fuel exports. These landmark amendments were finally put into place in 2021.

Yet during this same time, Petrogas was already in the process of testing what would become the Cherry Point Amendments. Between 2013 and 2024, the County took little to no action while Petrogas moved forward with 31 unpermitted projects at their facility and increased their butane and propane exports from 3.7 million barrels to 22.7 million barrels in that timeframe. This is exactly what the Cherry Point Amendments sought to stop.

So when Whatcom County declined to require an Environmental Impact Statement for these projects (and two future ones) in late 2025, it was the first

challenge as to how strong the Cherry Point Amendments truly are.

In response, RE Sources and five other environmental groups, represented by Earthjustice, filed a lawsuit on grounds that the Ferndale Terminal at Cherry Point significantly and illegally expanded its capacity to ship fuels without first studying the environmental impacts, as required by Washington state law.

In a decision RE Sources and our coalition considered a significant win, the Hearing Examiner agreed that the expansions “would defeat all of the policy intents” of the Whatcom County Council to regulate fossil fuel transshipment. Something we knew all along—because we helped write that policy. Ten years after a monumental defeat of the proposed coal terminal, we're still here defending Cherry Point, standing strong on the groundwork our community has built up. 🌊

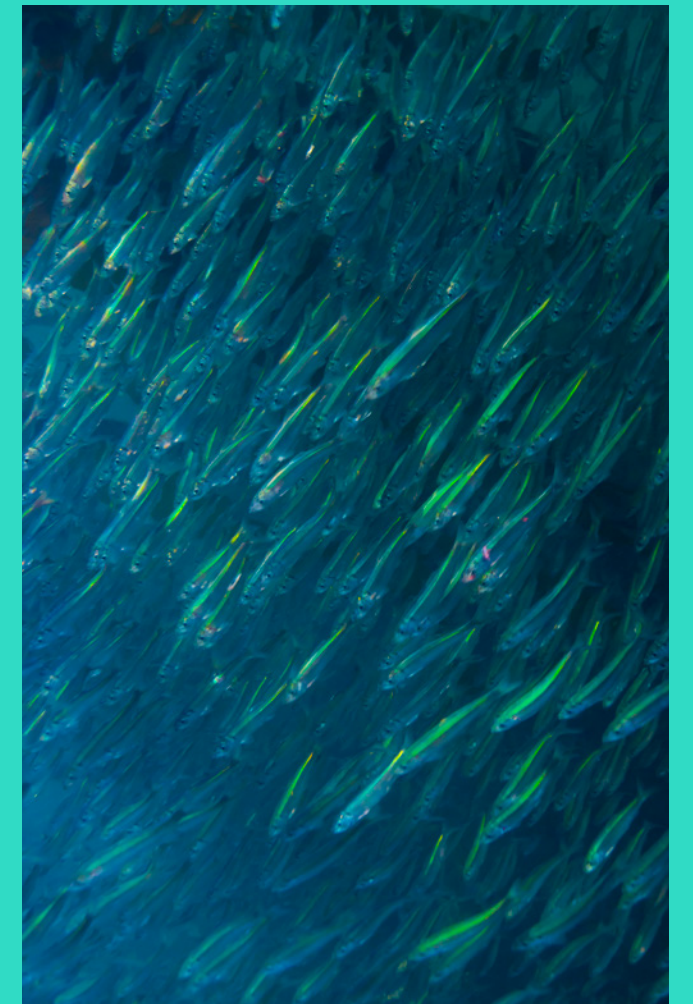
17

Estimated spawning biomass in metric tons of Cherry Point Herring in 2025. This is up from the zero observed in 2023 and 2024, but down significantly from the 25-year mean of ~2500 metric tons.

300%

Increase in export of LPG and LNG from ALA Energy's Cherry Point Terminal between 2014 and 2024, despite their claims that the facility's capacity has not increased.

Facing page: Tankers docked at ALA Energy's Chery Point Terminal as seen from the shoreline. Right: Once abundant, Cherry Point herring have all but disappeared from their namesake spawning grounds. Photos: Hannah Gabrielson



“TO BE AN ACTIVIST IS TO SPEAK. TO BE AN ADVOCATE IS TO LISTEN. SOCIETY CAN'T MOVE FORWARD WITHOUT BOTH.” –EVA LEWIS

ADVOCATING FOR A HEALTHIER FUTURE

Guiding a city into the future is a challenging task. Ask a thousand people what they'd like to see and there will be a thousand different answers. And in the issues that affect everyone, there need to be opportunities for meaningful community involvement. But in the process of determining the next step for Bellingham's wastewater future, this has not been the reality.

Currently, Bellingham's Post Point Wastewater Treatment Plant burns the city's sewage sludge, which contains a toxic medley of waste, with two decades-old incinerators. This releases a slew of contaminants into the air we breathe: Chloride, lead, mercury, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, dioxins and furans, sulfur dioxide (all regulated), as well as PFAS, pharmaceuticals, flame retardants, PCBs (all unregulated).

The City is committed to investing more than \$40 million into these two incinerators to keep them online for years — and likely decades — to come. We see this as completely counterintuitive to the City's own climate resilience goals, an improper use of taxpayer dollars, and woefully neglectful of our community's health. We aren't the only ones, either.

In 2025, RE Sources helped convene a coalition of concerned citizens to help envision and create a

better wastewater future for Bellingham. The coalition is composed of more than a dozen folks with considerable knowledge about the issue, including a former Post Point operator, a former City Council member, engineers, waste experts, scientists, and community activists.

This endeavor is at the heart of our work; working to build coalitions, promoting climate resilience, holding polluters accountable, and advocating for community health. Affectionately dubbed the “Sludge Coalition,” the group has invested thousands of hours bringing this issue into the public eye, researching wastewater treatment alternatives, including a trip to Pennsylvania and New Jersey to tour alternative technologies, meeting with the City about Post Point and advocating City Council take an appropriate course.

Without bringing the public into the decision-making process, the City is failing at its most basic obligations. “To be an activist is to speak. To be an advocate is to listen. Society can't move forward without both,” said Eva Lewis, an American human rights advocate. Open discourse is perhaps the key element of coalition building, a practice that takes effort, time, and commitment. Coincidentally, all the same ingredients it takes to build a better future. 🌱

FOLLOW THE DATA

Water is life, they say. And just like our lives, our local waters are being impacted by harmful chemicals that have proliferated into everyday items and uses. The most concerning of these are PFAS, or per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, which are toxic, bioaccumulate, and never break down — rightfully earning them the name “forever chemicals.”

With uses in everything from non-stick frying pans to cosmetics, these chemicals are ubiquitous in the modern world. It wasn't until 3M — a company that produced many products containing PFAS — alerted the EPA that certain forever chemicals could build up in the human body from everyday exposure that health impacts became a concern. There are more than 9,000 PFAS compounds, with some of the more common assumed to be in a majority of people's bodies.

Despite all this, PFAS are unregulated by the federal government. This leaves it up to states and manufacturers to voluntarily take action on phasing out these harmful chemicals—and to local organizations to monitor and track PFAS in communities.

In 2023, RE Sources began sampling for PFAS in local waterways in addition to our stormwater monitoring. Our initial investigation found PFAS at 10 out of the 11 test sites we tested, with concerning high levels in Squalicum Creek in Cornwall Park, a stream frequented by kids and dogs. In 2024, we found detectable amounts of PFAS at all of the 17 sites we tested, including Squalicum Creek — just higher upstream this time.

Data is often more than just knowledge, though. It's a clue hidden in a little clear plastic cup. Knowing

common uses for substances containing PFAS, it didn't take RE Sources' scientists Kirsten McDade and Zoe Fry much mapping to hone in on a few potential source points near upstream tributaries.

Data is also a door to collaboration and education. Our results showed elevated levels of four different PFAS chemical compounds—all of which are common in firefighting foam. So, McDade reached out to Whatcom County Fire District 4's Station 12 (located upstream of the highest result sites) and they were eager to meet, listen to our findings, and help find the source of the PFAS contamination. The Bellingham Fire Department also offered to investigate the use of PFAS containing aqueous film forming foam (AFFF) in the Squalicum Creek Watershed.

Building relationships is at the heart of what we do at RE Sources, because the challenges our communities face cannot be meaningfully solved by just a few people — it takes a village. Our stormwater monitoring program is supported by a handful of dedicated volunteers who sample at the whims of the tides, day or night, rain or shine. We ensure people have the knowledge they need to spot sources of pollution in the wild, and always keep the ringer on for the pollution hotline.

Without the evidence of PFAS in our streams or long-term tracking of stormwater outfalls or monthly water quality tests at local freshwater lakes, the health of these places and ecosystems would be considerably more cloudy (figuratively and literally). So too would be the impacts on the people who live near, rely on, enjoy, and help care for them — and that's all of us. 🌊

67%

Of the nine creeks RE Sources tested in 2025 had detectable amounts of PFAS.

Zoe Fry, RE Sources' Program Coordinator, fills in sampling specifics while testing for PFAS at Squalicum Creek.





ADVANCING FOREST PROTECTIONS ACROSS WHATCOM COUNTY

Thanks to years of grassroots advocacy for better forest management in the Mount Baker foothills and Lake Whatcom Watershed, Whatcom County has taken major steps toward leveraging our region's forests for climate resilience, watershed health, and a sustainable local forest economy. Milestones we're celebrating and will continue building on in 2026:

- The Forest Resilience Task Force completed a draft Forest Resilience Plan (FRP) to guide landscape-level forest management decisions countywide. The County Council passed the plan in October 2025.
- To support the FRP's implementation in 2026 and beyond, the Forest Advisory Committee (FAC)

expanded to include new seats for Lummi Nation and Nooksack Tribe, Whatcom Conservation District, Whatcom Land Trust, and the US Forest Service.

- In May, we hosted our first annual Roots and Rivers benefit at Barnstar in Ferndale, drawing more than 160 people for a panel of forest management leaders: WA Commissioner of Public Lands Dave Upthegrove, our own Land and Water Policy Manager Kaia Hayes, Setting Sun Institute's Free Borsey, and Whatcom County Commissioner Kaylee Galloway. 🌲

YOUTH EDUCATION + ACTION

Youth, educators, and school leaders are key to driving a societal shift toward ecological restoration and climate action, but too many feel overwhelmed by these issues and pulled in too many directions to act. Our Educating for the Environment program keeps giving them tools, training, and space to lead. In 2025, we:

- Connected 28 high schoolers with hands-on environmental leadership through our Youth for the Environment & People (YEP!) program. Spring cohort students studied pollution in the Salish Sea and spent a day hosting activities on Taylor Dock, drawing attention to stormwater pollution. Fall cohort students dug into regenerative food systems by touring Viva Farms and City Sprouts, writing state legislators in support of the HEAL

Act, and producing videos on food access and our local community "Freedge."

- Conducted waste assessments at six local elementary schools, cutting more than 30 cubic yards of garbage from the landfill every month.
- Provided custodial training and tools to help Whatcom County schools navigate the state's new Organics Management Law.
- Conducted 11 school waste assessments across Whatcom County and provided each school with an action plan for reducing their waste, and resources and support for implementing it.
- Worked with Bellingham Public Schools to offer three professional development workshops for every first-grade teacher in the district. Teachers walked away with lessons and materials to teach streamside about watersheds and water quality. 🌊

SOMETHING I LEARNED ABOUT MYSELF DURING YEP! IS THAT I CAN BE A SUCCESSFUL LEADER, AND SPEARHEAD PARTS OF A PROJECT." –FALL 2025 YEP! PARTICIPANT

DEFYING WASTE AT THE RE STORE

For more than 30 years, The RE Store has proven that reuse builds community. It's a cornerstone of a circular economy in Whatcom County, and keeps usable materials in circulation, cuts the demand for new resources, and creates local jobs in the process. Proving that we are more than a store, we:

- Diverted 2,888,070 pounds of material from the landfill program-wide — up 11% over 2024.
- Strengthened our Manufacturing Waste Diversion (MWD) program with a Whatcom County grant, adding four new business partners and diverting 103,844 pounds of manufacturing waste in 2025. These are materials that would otherwise slip through the cracks of the waste system unnoticed.
- Completed 19 contract salvage jobs, reclaiming 42,514 pounds of building material — an average of 2,238 pounds diverted per job.
- Trained 65 participants in our Community Jobs Training Program, logging 3,815 hours of paid work experience. 🌱

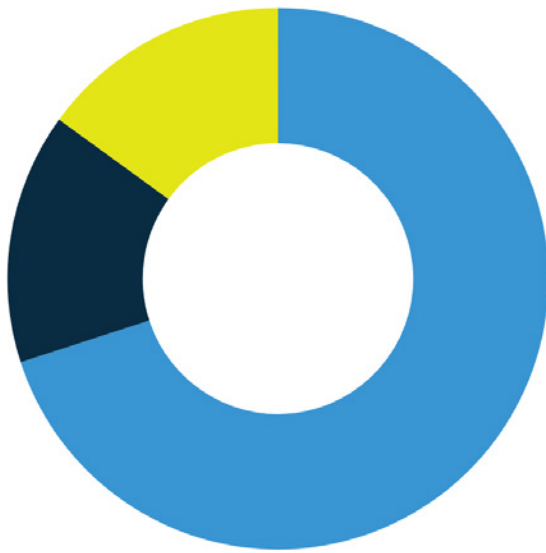


2025 FINANCIAL REPORT

In 2025, RE Sources ended the year with revenue exceeding expenses. Grant revenue outpaced expectations, bolstered by new partnerships like North Sound Accountable Communities of Health, who joined us in advancing environmental justice work. Individual donors deepened their investment in our mission, giving more than they had in years past — a vote of confidence we don't take lightly. This year, we also earned Candid's Platinum Seal of Transparency for the first time, a reflection of our ongoing commitment to open, accountable operations.

As we move through 2026, we expect strain on grant revenue, as fewer new funding opportunities emerge and the broader funding landscape keeps shifting. We remain committed to adapting and sustaining our work for lasting impact, and now more than ever, community support is critical to our success.

A copy of our 2025 990 Tax Filing can be found on our website at re-sources.org/donate. 🌍



EXPENSES: \$2.14M

- 70% Programs
- 15% Administration
- 15% Fundraising



You can support our work with trust and confidence knowing that RE Sources earned a 2026 Platinum Seal of Transparency with Candid.



REVENUE: \$2.38M

- 30% Foundation Grants
- 28% The RE Store Sales
- 24% Individual Donations
- 11% Government Grants
- 6% The RE Store's Salvage Services
- 1% Other Income



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We mobilize people to protect the water,
land and climate we all depend on.

