

A living, working Fraser – with thriving peoples, ecosystems
and livelihoods – from headwaters to the Salish Sea!

Fraser River Discovery Centre

Annual Report 2021



Photo by Michal Fedeles



Contents

Message from the Chair	3
About Us	4
1. Who We Are	4
2. Guiding Principles	4
3. Convenor Role	5
2021 Highlights	6
Operations	8
Funding	15
Governance	18
Board of Directors	18
Human Resources	19

Message from the Chair

As Chair of the Fraser River Discovery Centre Society (FRDCS) Board, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2021 Fraser River Discovery Centre (FRDC) Annual Report.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has continued to impact our revenues, programming, operations, and staff. Even so, we were still able to accomplish many of our goals and, on behalf of the Board of Directors, I once again want to acknowledge and congratulate the FRDC staff for all the accomplishments!

Although pandemic restrictions limited our ability to gather in person, we were able to make progress on **xʷtatəl'əm ʔə k'w šxwəlməxwaʔt syəθ ʔiʔ snəw'eyəʔ ʔi ʔə tə ʔi ńa sta'əw** (Place of Learning About the Indigenous Heritage and Teachings of the Fraser River) with our partners the Musqueam Indian Band (MIB). There were multiple interactions between FRDC staff and members of the Musqueam community to begin dialogue on what xʷtatəl'əm could look like. We were also able to begin incorporating the spirit and approach of xʷtatəl'əm into some of our existing programs and exhibits, making them more inclusive and effective in the process. Finally, we were pleased to add new funding partners for xʷtatəl'əm, including the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority and the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation. All of this puts us in a good position to continue in 2022.

The FRDC's public and education programs expanded and adapted to our audiences' needs. We introduced new online programs and continued safely with in-person offerings. We were also very happy to bring back two important events to "near normal" approaches in 2021! RiverFest 2021 featured a multi-day celebration of BC Rivers Day with in-person and online activities. After being cancelled in 2020, the Fraser River Hall of Fame returned; we were honoured to induct MLA and Fraser River advocate Fin Donnelly with a hybrid approach that allowed for in-person and virtual attendance.

Last, but not least, our funding partners in the community, in government, and in industry also continued their support. Given the impacts of the pandemic, our operation would not have been possible without them! Due to their support and involvement, we finished the year in a sound financial position and are looking forward to 2022 as we continue our goal of being the Voice of the Fraser.



Mark Rizzo
Chair

About Us

1. Who We Are – “The Voice of the Fraser”

Our Vision

A living, working Fraser – with thriving peoples, ecosystems and livelihoods – from headwaters to the Salish Sea.

Our Mission

To bring together the many voices of the Fraser, to discover, celebrate, and inspire passionate stewards of the River.

The Fraser River Discovery Centre Society (FRDCS) is a not-for-profit organization established in 1989 with the vision to connect communities in the discovery and celebration of the living, working Fraser River. The Fraser River Discovery Centre (FRDC) is prominently situated on New Westminster’s riverfront boardwalk between the River Market and the City of New Westminster’s Pier Park.

FRDC is a 17,000 square feet interpretive centre that presents the stories of the living, working Fraser River and the contributions to the life, history, and future of British Columbia through exhibits, education programs, and special events. We connect people to the Fraser River environment with consideration for the River’s socio-cultural and economic importance.

2. Guiding Principles – the Three Pillars

The FRDC uses the powerful three pillars of sustainability—the economic, environmental, and socio-cultural aspects of the Fraser River—to guide all planning and operations. Sustainability is often defined as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability for future generations to meet their needs. This provides the strategic context for our interpretive centre to help showcase one of the largest economic drivers in the province, a globally important, biodiverse Fraser. We define these pillars as they relate to the Mighty Fraser:

a. Economic – A vital economic engine driving the province!

b. Environmental – A globally important combination of unique ecosystems!

c. Socio-cultural – A place to live, work, and thrive!



About Us

3. Convenor Role

Identified as a priority from the Society's inception in 1989, the convenor role is critical to fulfill the FRDC's mission to bring together the many voices of the Fraser to discover, celebrate, and inspire passionate stewards of the River, from the headwaters to the Salish Sea.

The Fraser River Basin is inhabited by nearly 70% of the province's population. Partnerships, collaboration, and consultation with those throughout the Fraser Basin is embedded in the FRDC's work. From the resulting enhanced planning to the development and delivery of programs, events, exhibits, and funding opportunities, these relationships are invaluable to the fulfillment of the Fraser River Discovery Centre's vision.



2021 Highlights

The proposed x^wtatəlləm ʔə́ k^w šx^wəlməx^waʔt syəθ ʔiʔ snəwəyət ʔi ʔə tə ʔi ńa staləw (Place of Learning about the Indigenous Heritage and Teachings of the Fraser River) at the FRDC in partnership with Musqueam shaped our approach to what we do.

Online engagement was a major focus for 2021. The team developed new online programs and a social media plan to guide communications.

Consideration was also given to the Centre's future exhibits and programming; an interpretive plan and exhibit plan were developed, which were informed by the five-year strategic plan developed in 2019.

Continuing to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic, Education Programs were expanded with the addition of online programs.

RiverFest was modified to include in-person activities and online workshops.

Over one week, the annual festival attracted:

1,346 visitors and

132 online participants.

Online public programs – speaker series, workshops, and asynchronous activities drew:

2,519 participants.

Outreach – 125 teachers in professional development sessions; **800** teachers and learners in national online sessions.

The FRDC introduced a group savings plan for staff in the autumn.

Volunteers are always a highlight, especially in these challenging times with COVID-19! The many long-standing and new volunteers at FRDC continue to inspire with their commitment and dedication. We could not do anything without them!

And the other people who make this possible ...

FRDC's funding partners allowed us to continue operating in 2021. That included our **Annual Sponsors** BNSF Railroad, BOSA Development, the City of New Westminster, FortisBC, Fraser River Pile and Dredge, Global Container Terminals, Parkland Fuel Corporation, the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority, SAAM Towage, Seaspan, SRY Railway, TransMountain and Western Canada Marine Response Corporation.

Presenting sponsors like the City of New Westminster, Global BC, Loren Nanke Chartered Accountants, the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority, the Province of BC, the North Family Foundation, Pasta Polo, Rivershed Society of BC, Canadian Geographic, and Ledcor also made sure we were able to offer events – in person and on-line – throughout the year.

Continued support from **public and private sector foundation grants** was also key, including from Direct Access Gaming, the BC Museum Association, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, Seedlings Foundation, BC Hydro, the David Orchard Foundation and G&F Financial.

Last, but not least, we very much appreciated the support from the **Government of Canada's Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) program.**

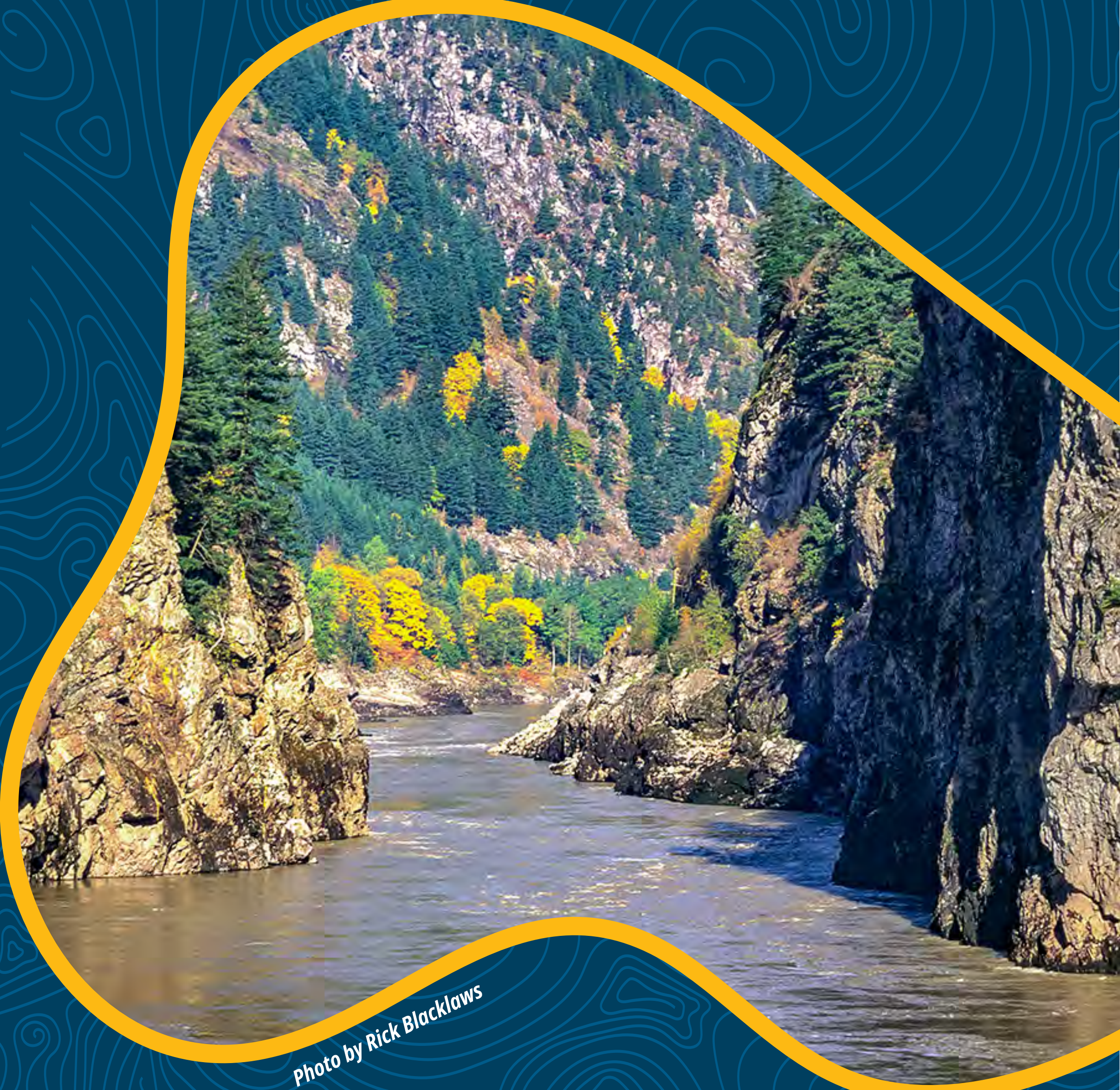


Photo by Rick Blacklaws

Operations

The FRDC 2020–2024 Strategic Plan, developed in late 2019, gives careful consideration to building upon the three pillars of sustainability (economic, environmental, and socio-cultural) that guide FRDC operations within a changing context.

Organizational Culture

In the face of the ongoing challenges presented by the pandemic, the FRDC began to transform into a learning organization. Aiming to be nimble and remain relevant to its audiences, the FRDC recognized the need to approach challenges with a growth mindset and prioritize staff development and learning. Staff are encouraged to embrace the design thinking process by focusing on the end user when approaching their work and when developing learning experiences and programs.

Administration

The FRDC's technical equipment was upgraded, including the file management system, computers, and the WiFi system. FRDC administrative policies and procedures improvements are ongoing.

Communications

Communications focused on raising awareness and involvement through social media and traditional media coverage. A social media plan was developed in January which informs the FRDC's social media and marketing strategy.



Photo by Kathy Harms



Discovery Store

The online store launched in January. Inventory continues to be updated, improved, and increased with a focus on local, environmentally conscious items as well as Indigenous designers and authors.

Exhibitions

An Interpretive Plan was developed in the spring and informs the Exhibit Plan, which was subsequently developed. For Click* Photos of the Fraser exhibit, the FRDC collaborated with the New Westminster Photography Club. We also participated in the New West Cultural Crawl by featuring the work of local photographer Kathy Harms.

Visitor Services

The FRDC expanded its summer season for the first time. With increased funding for summer staff, the FRDC opened daily from May 18 to September 6. In the off-season, the FRDC is open Wednesday to Saturday. The FRDC is committed to improving its offerings; an evaluation guide was developed in the summer, which engages staff and volunteers in ongoing evaluation of the site's programs and exhibits. The collected data is analyzed regularly to learn about the FRDC's visitors and inform the organization's activities.



Programs

In 2021, the FRDC reimagined what “hands-on” education might look like. We have placed a greater emphasis on self-directed and inquiry-based learning in both education and public programs, especially in Super Saturday and River Basin Days activities.

Learning at the FRDC

Education Programs

71 programs delivered, reaching **1,661** participants from **45** schools in **13** school districts. The most active school districts in 2021 were Chilliwack (SD 33) with **15** program bookings, Vancouver (SD 39) with **12**, and Surrey (SD 36) with **11**.

The FRDC developed 3 new online education programs and two teacher professional development workshops. These online offers, a first for the FRDC, have the potential to expand the reach of FRDC far beyond our immediate geographical area.

Birthday Parties

Birthday parties were suspended for most of 2021 due to COVID-19. Since their re-launch in September, the FRDC offered **5** parties to **55** participants.

Summer Camps

5 summer camps, **5** weeks, **42** participants.

From late May to early September, four summer staff funded by Canada Summer Jobs delivered 5 separate camps over 5 weeks with 42 participants aged 6 to 11. Camp themes were:

- Science of the Fraser,
- Spectacular Salmon,
- Voyageur Adventure, and
- Wonders of the Watershed.



Public Programs

FRDC public programs and special events continued to grow and be popular. They were updated where needed, staff responsibilities shifted, and programs were enhanced where gaps were identified. Additional programs and events were planned for 2021 as resources and circumstances permit, with adjustments made for the COVID-19 pandemic. The FRDC opened and offered programming during spring break, the winter holidays, and most long weekends throughout the year.

Fraser River Dialogues

174 participants

Dialogues was offered online twice this year. The first was titled “COVID-19’s Business Impacts on the Fraser River” with a panel featuring Nolan Charles, Musqueam Indian Band Councillor; Sarah Clark, President and CEO, Fraser River Pile and Dredge; Marko Dekovic, Vice President, Public Affairs, Global Container Terminals; Ian Finke, Director of LNG Operations, FortisBC; and Gerald Linden, President, SRY Railway. The second saw popular bird expert Dr. Rob Butler join us to talk about Birds of the Fraser Basin.

Faces of the Fraser

48 participants

Originally established to increase programming for adults, and targeted at seniors, the Faces series covers topics from FRDC’s three pillars of our guiding principles. As part of the convenor role, funding partners are also given the opportunity to share their information in this forum. There were two events in 2021, one with Sadie Caron of Fraser Riverkeeper and one with photographer Fernando Lessa



Photo by Rick Blacklaws

FRDC@HOME!

4,428 downloads, **2,297** views

An initiative that began at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, FRDC@Home grew in 2021 to include a video series about sit spots. The page was redesigned completely in fall 2021.

Guided Tours

10 walking tours, with **43** participants.

Historical walking tours along the boardwalk were offered on select dates throughout the year by long-time volunteer Mike Hoyer.

Super Saturdays and Discovery Days

15 programs, **870** participants

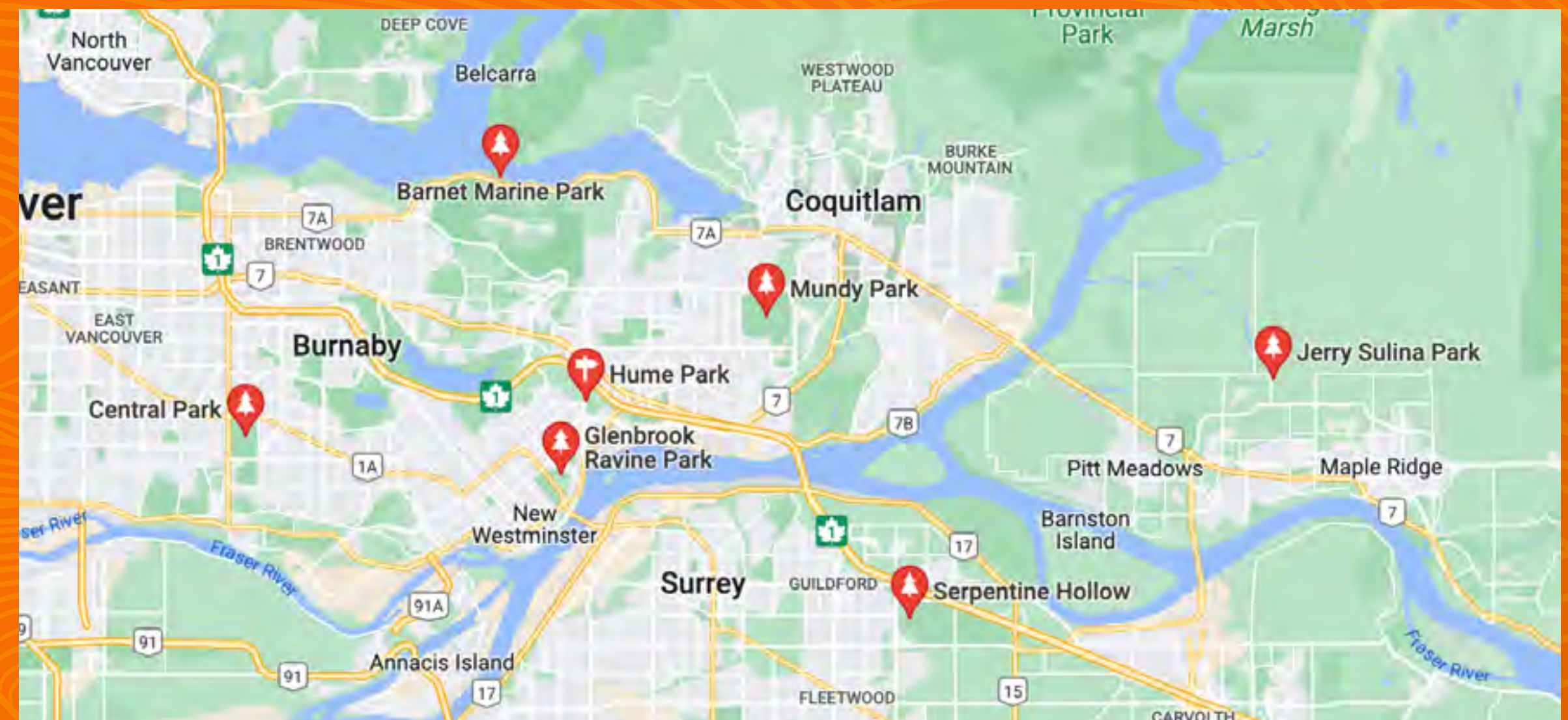
A monthly program, Super Saturdays is designed for families with children aged 3-12. Every month staff and volunteers guide visitors through various educational and entertaining activities intended to celebrate the River's economic, environmental, and socio-cultural pillars of sustainability. For long weekends and school breaks, the FRDC introduced Discovery Days which offer family programming similar to Super Saturdays.

River Basin Days

8 programs, **111** participants

In response to the pandemic, the FRDC developed River Basin Days, a monthly program which takes place at different locations in the Fraser River Basin. The program became a regular part of FRDC's offer in 2021.

- Serpentine Hollow, Surrey
- Central Park, Burnaby (twice)
- Glenbrook Ravine Park, New Westminster
- Jerry Sulina Park, Maple Ridge
- Barnet Marine Park, Burnaby
- Lower Hume Park, New Westminster
- Mundy Park, Coquitlam



Special Events

With adaptations due to COVID-19, FRDC continued to build on successful events like the Fraser River Hall of Fame and RiverFest.

Fraser River Hall of Fame

92 attendees, 78 online participants

The Fraser River Hall of Fame and Gala was one of the first activities initiated by the FRDC Society in 1991, before the Centre was even built. It was recommended by the founding patrons and inaugural Board as a way to combine recognition for Fraser River-based support with a gala fundraising event. In recognition of his life-long advocacy for the Fraser River at the local, provincial, and federal government levels and as a co-founder of the Rivershed Society, Fin was inducted into the Hall of Fame during a hybrid event held in November.



Photo by Tegan Cheremkora

Special Events

RiverFest

1,346 attendees and **132** online participants

As an example of the convener role, FRDC continues to coordinate the event founded in 2003. RiverFest returned for its 19th year in 2021 to celebrate and support the annual BC and World Rivers Day.

The festival involved on-line workshops as well as in-person events held on the weekend of September 25–26. The family fun zone, live performances, exhibitors, and the Lucille Johnstone Workboat Parade returned on the weekend. River Basin Explorer Day, a collaboration with Nature Kids, was held on the Sunday at Lower Hume Park.

The FRDC was able to reach a larger audience than in previous years due to the online component of this year's RiverFest.



Photo by Kathy Harms

Funding

Funding for the FRDC continues to be a diverse mix of grants (government and foundation), sponsorships (both annual and for specific events and activities), donations (personal and corporate) and operations (gate admission, rentals and program fees).

Funding Sources (2021):

- **Government** - Government of Canada, Province of British Columbia, City of New Westminster, Vancouver Fraser Port Authority, BC Hydro.
- **Business** – FortisBC, SAAM Towage, SRY Railways, BNSF Railroad, Western Canada Marine Response Corporation, Fraser River Pile and Dredge, Trans Mountain, Seaspan, Global Container Terminals, BOSA Development, Loren Nancke Chartered Professional Accountants, Ledcor, Rivershed Society of BC, Pasta Polo, Canadian Geographic.
- **Foundations** - TD Friends of the Environment, G&F Financial, the David Orchard Foundation, Seedlings Foundation, North Family Foundation.
- **Corporate Donations** – Parkland Fuel Corporation, Fraser River Pilots Association, Forrest Marine Ltd.
- **Personal Donations** – Anonymous, Bruno Berchieri, Brenda Hochachka, Joyce Jackson, Margaret Mason, Jennifer Whiteside, Carmen Wiseman.

Photo by Rick Blacklaws

Fundraising Events

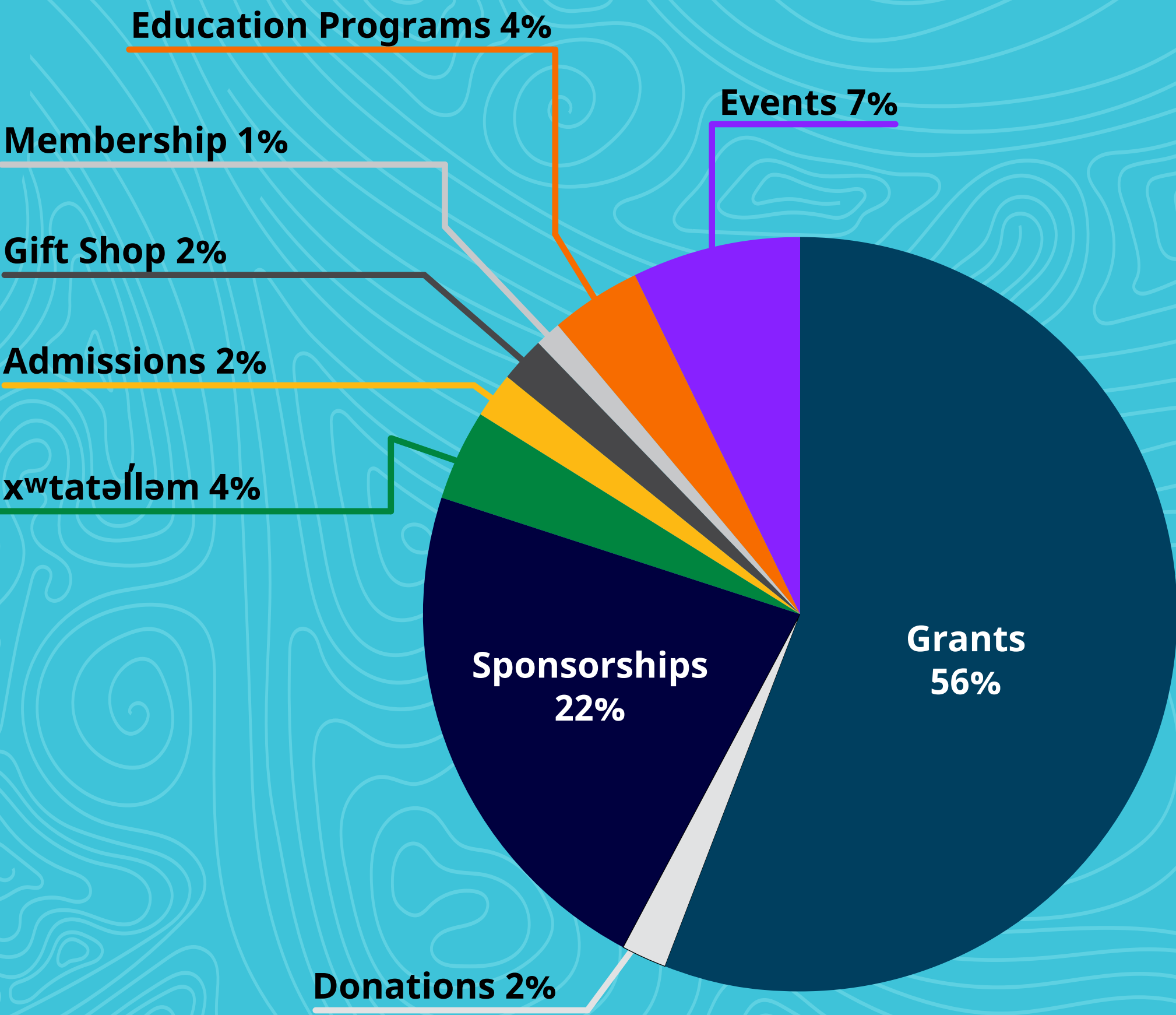
The FRDC’s primary fundraising event is the annual Fraser River Hall of Fame Gala. In 2021, the induction of Fin Donnelly raised over \$26,000.00 for the Centre through a combination of sponsorships and ticket sales.

Self-Generated Revenue

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Admissions | Facility Rentals | Public Programs |
| Discovery Shop | River School Programs | Tours |



2021 Revenue





2021 Expenses

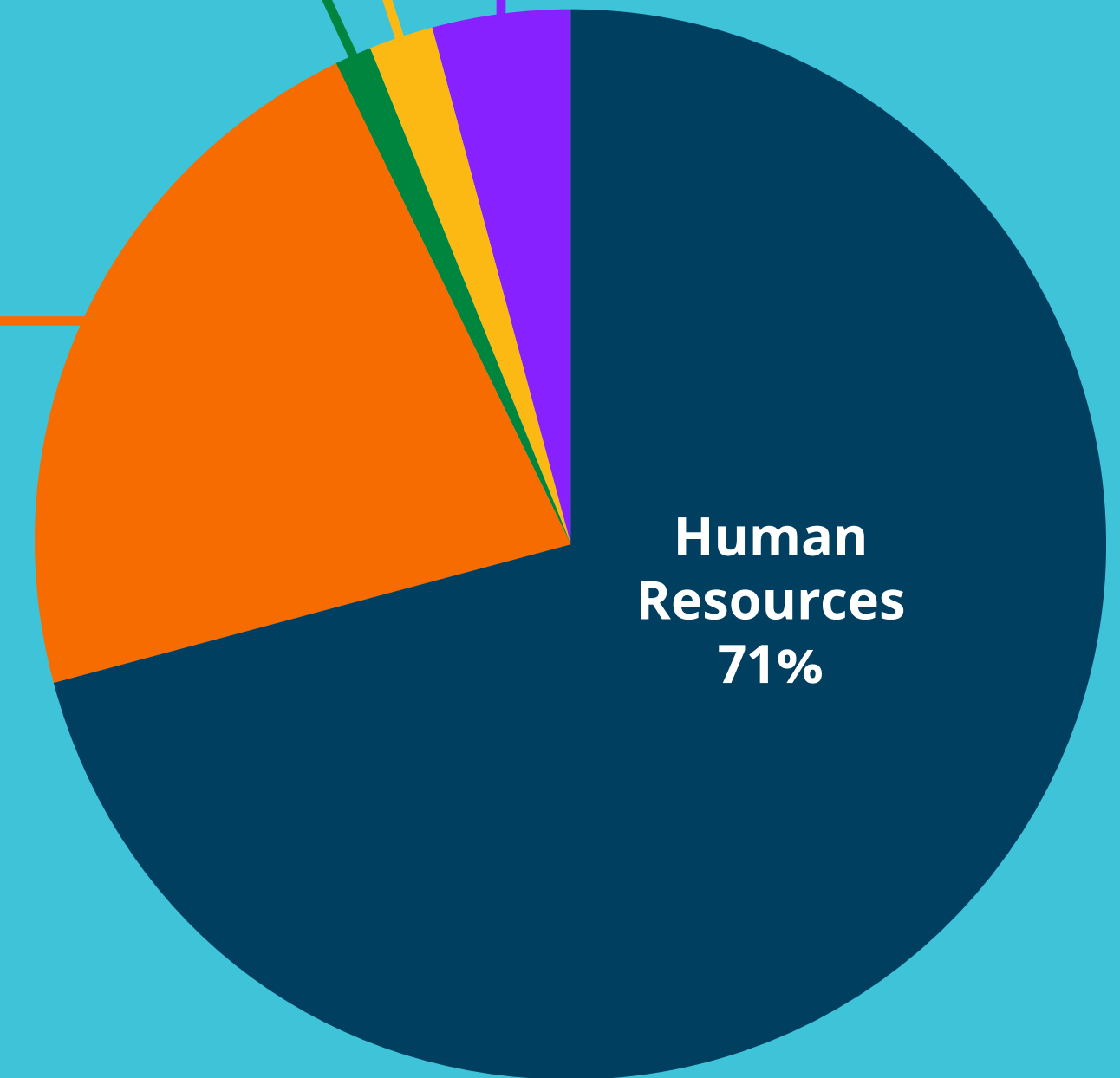
Education Programs 2%

Events 4%

Exhibits 1%

Operations 22%

**Human
Resources
71%**



Governance

Board of Directors

The Fraser River Discovery Centre Society is a registered not-for-profit society and charity governed by a Board of Directors. The FRDC Board is authorized by the FRDC constitution and bylaws to manage or supervise the managing of the affairs of the FRDC. The FRDC Board aims to be representative of the geographical, economic, cultural and social diversity of the Fraser River. The Directors of the Fraser River Discovery Centre Society for the year 2020–2021 were:

Mr. Mark Rizzo, Chair, Retired General Manager, Commercial Pacific, Parkland Fuel Corporation
Ms. Kathleen Higgins, Past Chair, Partner, Young Anderson
Mr. Lyle Viereck, Director, Vice Chair; Chair, Indigenous Committee, Principal, Viereck Consulting Ltd.
Capt. Allen Domaas, Secretary, Nordic Star Services Ltd. & Retired CEO Fraser Port Authority
Mr. Brett Pavan, Treasurer, Partner, Loren Nancke Chartered Professional Accountants
Capt. Michael Forrest, Director, President, Forrest Marine Ltd.
Mr. Nolan Charles, Director, Councillor, Musqueam Band
Ms. Catherine Ouellet-Martin, Director, Senior Operations Manager, Beaty Biodiversity Museum (departed June 2021)
Connie Baxter, Principal, Connie J. Baxter Consulting (joined April 2021)

At the AGM held in June 2021, three new directors joined the board:

Fiona Beales, Climate Action and Energy Officer, City of Burnaby
Nures Kara, Senior Environmental Manager, Schnitzer Steel Canada
Jeff Scott, President and CEO, Pacific Coastal Xpress

The 2020–2024 Strategic Plan sets the direction for FRDC by identifying goals and supporting initiatives. It is the basis for the operational strength needed to ensure the FRDC develops and sustains a prominent and valued role in the Fraser River Basin. The FRDC Board conducts a yearly review of the strategic plan and updates strategic directions as necessary, providing staff and contractors direction to develop annual plans that are current and relevant.

Human Resources

Karen Lee, Director of Operations
Danika Didur-Tate, Education Programs Manager
Michael Goodchild, Museum Coordinator
Pam Ratcliff, Administration Coordinator
Ricardo Coppola, Systems Coordinator (Left September 2021)
Alicia Mills, Programs Assistant (Started October 2021)

Summer and On-call Staff

Mikaela Corea, Julia Klossok, Alex Munro, Kathleen Nguyen,
 Colby Payne, Alyssah Pointon, and Alexis Kahlert

Contractors

Stephen Bruyneel, Director, External Relations and Development
 Susan Jury, Bookkeeper
 digitally hip, Information Technology support

Volunteers: 18 active individuals donated 1,171 hours!

The FRDC volunteer program provides meaningful roles that offer varied opportunities. From the formidable roles taken by the board of directors to the diverse and multi-disciplinary skills needed to assist with programs and special events, volunteers continue to be vital to the success of FRDC!

