

Elizabeth May made history in 2011 when she became the first Green MP in Canada. She has been a beacon of hope – her lone strong voice championing democracy on behalf of us all. The BC Legislature needs voices like hers. Let's make history again.

Green Book 2013

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Green Book 2013 is a living document that is updated periodically as new policy is adopted by the Green Party of BC. The document is current to the end of April 16, 2013.

Core Green Principles

Participatory Democracy

Working to create proportionally elected governments that represent and engage citizens.

Sustainability

Using natural resources wisely to protect the rights and needs of future generations.

Social Justice

Acknowledging that all humans have a fundamental right to health, wellbeing, and freedom.

Respect for Diversity

Protecting and valuing all cultures and individuals while conserving variety in the natural world.

Ecological Wisdom

Learning to live within the physical and biological limits of our Earth and to protect its life-giving nature.

Non-Violence

Safeguarding people's security and freedom through cooperation and consensus building.



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Message from the leader



Photo by Derek Ford

The Green Party is excited about Election 2013. Our goal is to win at least four seats so we achieve “official party” status in the Legislature. We are on track to meet or exceed that goal but we need your support to make it happen. The old politics of the NDP and Liberals are responsible for the social and economic problems we now face.

Unless something drastic happens, the BC NDP will form a majority government in May. This is where the opportunity comes in for you to help change the nature of politics in BC by electing some Green MLAs. What would you rather have, a rump of unhappy BC Liberals who will spend the next four years defending their record?

Or a group of Green MLAs who will be constructive and cooperative and work across party lines to make the government more accountable?

BC Greens have gathered solutions from you, the people of BC. Individual citizens, community groups, businesses, and First Nations have helped us put together great ideas for how we could solve the problems we face as a province.

This plan is your voice and ensures you regain a say in governing this province. It includes measures to invest in a new green economy, improve healthcare, build affordable housing, care for our families and neighbours and bring the expectations of citizens into public policy decisions. The BC Greens’ plan is all about solutions – solutions that will allow us to flourish for generations.

Green MLAs will reach out to the people of BC to help us bring these and other ideas into the legislature. We believe people should have a say and we’ll be using innovative ways to get people involved and assisting Green MLAs to be truly representative of the people of BC.

Some of the changes we propose are bold. How will your job security or community change when Greens are elected and participate actively in the Legislature? The well-being of all British Columbians is important for the Green Party. As we encourage needed changes, we will suggest plans to help everyone – individuals, families and communities – adapt to and thrive in the new economy.

With your support, we can work together for a prosperous future. With your support, we can build a better BC.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Sterk". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jane Sterk, Ph.D.

Leader, Green Party of BC

Building a Strong Economy

Jobs and the New Economy

By investing in new infrastructure, green technology, retrofits of houses and buildings, and advanced education designed to educate young people and retrain skilled workers for the new economy, we can transform the BC economy. A switch to clean industries and technologies; a re-investment in traditional industries like forestry, fisheries, and agriculture using sustainable practices; a return to local provision of social and health services; and support for arts and culture will create thousands of new jobs. All of these jobs mean money flowing through the economy and retaining that money in the local region. Greens plan to reduce taxes on businesses that are responsible and sustainable. We will work with business and industry to create lasting, skilled, and meaningful jobs. At the same time, we will reduce the emissions that are changing our climate.

A Strong Green Economy Will

- Create thousands of new green-collar jobs
- Be community-based and based in values of cooperation and giving back
- Encourage municipalities to favour local businesses
- Result in diverse regional economies
- Tax waste, not employment
- Reduce our dependence on gambling and oil and gas revenues
- Invest in energy efficient buildings and retrofits
- Support sustainable agriculture, renewable energy projects, and value-added manufacturing

Moving to Sustainable Economies

A sustainable economy is healthy and resilient. It seeks to develop a diversity of practices,

technologies, and jobs, which will address the needs of the next 25 to 50 years.

For BC Greens, a sustainable economy would be holistic, ethical, and equitable. It is a green economy driven by sustainable scale, just distribution, and efficient allocation of resources.

BC is a unique and diverse physical and cultural region. The features, demographics, strengths, and resources of BC vary from region to region. We aim to develop sustainable economies throughout BC that reflect and build on that diversity. Sustainable economies for BC would be balanced, responsible, empowering, hopeful, and centered in communities.

Our current economic model leaves us with fiscal, social, and ecological deficits.

Irresponsible consumption and ever expanding economic growth made possible by cheap fossil fuels and financed by debt have created the recipe for the climate crisis that threatens our way of life.

The wealth promised by expanding economic growth has not ended up in the hands of working, middle-class Canadians. Indeed, it is contributing to the impoverishment of Canada and British Columbia by the over-exploitation of our natural resources and the export of resources to other countries for processing and adding value.

Sustainable Economies

Moving away from an economy that depends on growth and consumption and toward one of sustainability will improve health and quality of life for us and for future generations. Moreover, sustainable economies can handle sudden shocks and put an end to the boom and bust cycles that hurt our communities.

The Green Party of BC proposes moving to a coherent set of economic policies that promote and develop strong, resilient, self-sufficient, sustainable regional economies tailored to BC's demographics, natural resources, physical environment, and blend of cultures. Our economy will create economic prosperity throughout the province. It will benefit all

British Columbians and will require that we live within our ecological means. Each region will add value to the local and regional resources close to home.

The new BC economy will close the gap between rich and poor. It will create a province where all British Columbians can afford housing, food, and clothing and find meaningful work through jobs created locally in the business, government, and not-for-profit sectors.

Promising that our salvation can be found in perpetual economic growth is irresponsible and will doom our children and grandchildren to an uncertain future.

BC Greens Will

- Decrease taxes on industries and individual practices that promote individual and community health
- Focus on local and regional economies
- Support business, co-operative, not-for-profit, and public creation of jobs to stimulate the region
- Return to balanced budgets, end corporate welfare, eliminate subsidies to polluting industries, and develop fair taxation policies
- Invest in renewable energy and energy efficiency that shifts BC to a low-carbon economy
- Use financial measures to foster value-added industries
- Finance a provincial Green Venture Capital Fund to encourage local green business start-ups and support the creation of green-collar jobs in the green technologies and renewable energy sectors
- Encourage restaurants, markets, and grocers to use local produce and livestock to support small and family farms
- Reduce our dependence on energy and pesticide intensive agriculture and imported food
- Finance research to increase local organic food production
- Cease all support for genetically modified organisms (GMOs); make BC GM free
- Invest in wild fisheries and large-scale rehabilitation of habitat and spawning rivers
- Establish spaces in technical schools to train workers to install solar photo-voltaic systems, solar hot water systems, geo-exchange heating and cooling systems, and to conduct general energy audits and perform energy efficiency upgrades
- Create a program for youth to receive training and provide six months of service in repairing environmental damage, restoring natural habitats (including, for example, salmon habitat), and building parks and recreation infrastructure
- Facilitate First Nations participation as partners in projects that create long-term employment for their people and economic benefits in their communities
- Introduce Corporate Social Responsibility amendments to the BC Business Corporations Act to require that businesses operating in BC positively contribute to social, environmental, and economic prosperity in the communities in which they do business
- Allocate one percent from the PST to municipal governments for “Green Cities” initiatives for emission reduction programs
- Create a BC Legacy Fund from oil and gas royalties as a recognition of our responsibility to future generations

Developing a Cooperative and Social Economy for BC

A co-operative is an autonomous association of persons who voluntarily cooperate for their mutual, social, economic, and cultural benefit. Co-operatives include non-profit community organizations and businesses that are owned and managed by the people who use their services (consumer co-operatives), by the people who work there (worker co-operatives), or by the people who live there (housing co-operatives). Hybrids include worker co-

operatives that are also consumer co-operatives or credit unions, multi-stakeholder co-operatives such as those that bring together civil society and local actors to deliver community needs, and second and third tier co-operatives whose members are other co-operatives.

A social enterprise is an organization that applies commercial strategies to maximize improvements in human and environmental well-being, rather than maximizing profits for external shareholders. Social enterprises can be structured as for profit or not-for-profit. On March 2, 2013, BC's Business Corporations Act was amended to create a Community Contribution Company, a new hybrid type of company that combines the traditional benefits of a corporation with a social purpose.

Strengthening the co-operative and social economy sector will help diversify the types of businesses in BC. Expanded support for co-operatives and social enterprises in BC will help with the Green Party of BC's objective of developing strong local economies throughout BC.

Co-operatives have always been an integral and essential part of BC's economy. In key sectors like agriculture, financial services, retail, housing, and health care, co-ops provide essential goods and services to British Columbians.

Co-ops are good at:

1. Mobilizing and securing community capital for local economic development
2. Empowering ordinary people with modest means to create new wealth through enterprise by sharing risks, skills, and resources with others
3. Diminishing economic inequality and providing stability and resilience, particularly in times of economic crisis

BC Greens Will

- Extend to co-operative and social enterprises British Columbia's tax credit for venture capital corporations (VCCs) and

eligible small businesses (ESBs), which has been a productive facilitator of equity investment into BC companies

- Amend the Small Business Venture Capital Act to designate "Social Enterprises" and "Co-operatives" as new eligible categories for VCCs and ESBs
- Re-allocate \$1 to 2 million from other categories in the Provincial budget to support these new entities
- Create a co-op and social enterprise development and incubation initiative to provide financial and technical support for new co-op and social enterprise start-ups; for further development of existing co-op and social enterprises; and for assisting in the transition of financially viable but challenged companies to a co-operative or social enterprise form through employee buy-outs
- Create tax incentives to promote investment by members and community supporters in co-operatives and social enterprises
- Adopt innovations in the financing of co-operatives and social enterprises by removing barriers to local investing
- Enhance job and business retention by providing assistance to employees who want to turn a business into a co-operative
- Develop an affordable business space strategy that can assist in the incubation, start-up, and development of co-operatives and social enterprises throughout BC
- Develop a co-operative and social enterprise shared service strategy to support the growth and competitive capacity of small and medium firms in strategic sectors

To ensure the co-operative and social enterprise economy is developed in BC, the Green Party of BC will assign the Co-operative and Social Enterprise development to a Ministry for Economic Development.

Getting BC off Gambling

The Green Party supports a moratorium on additional gambling licenses and a gradual phase-out of the most addictive forms of gambling. The Green Party would use a defined percentage of gambling tax revenues to help gambling addicts as well as to develop educational programs aimed at reducing gambling.

Green Economic Concepts

Triple Bottom Line Accounting: Greens believe that accounting should consider not only the economic bottom line, but the social and environmental bottom lines as well. The Green Party would ensure all provincial ministries, crown corporations, government funded agencies, and government contractors use this practice. This will guarantee the public is not left paying huge social, health, and environmental clean-up costs in the future.

Genuine Progress: As a measure of progress the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is out of date. It does not take into account social and ecological costs. A Genuine Progress Index (GPI) paints a much truer picture of our well-being. The GPI values unpaid labour such as parenting and volunteer work. It considers the costs of pollution, poverty, and crime and the use of natural and non-renewable resources. The goal of switching to GPI is to combine social, environmental, and financial indexes to better measure the well-being of BC citizens.

Giving Small Business a Boost

Greens would like to see the production and consumption of goods moved closer together. This will result in a smaller ecological footprint. It will also increase diversity and help decentralize the economy. A diverse and decentralized economy is a stronger economy. The future health and stability of BC's economy lies in our small businesses. Ninety-eight percent of all businesses in BC are small to mid-sized. They invest money directly into the communities where they operate. They are an important part of community spirit and quality of life. Unfortunately, current government

policies do not recognize their importance. BC Greens will take small businesses seriously. We will work with local governments to ensure small businesses have every chance to succeed.

Key Goal

Create a business climate in which more locally owned businesses, across a range of industries, can be started and prosper

BC Greens Will

- Introduce a Buy Green BC campaign that provides consumer incentives to buy made-in-BC green products and services
- Provide Small Power Producer (SPP) Loan Guarantees – interest-free loans for small and mid-sized businesses to install green energy solutions
- Offer Clean Air Tax Credits – tax credits for green business initiatives

Advanced Technology

Advanced technology is an area of strength and innovation in BC and one where BC Greens would like to see increased investment. It is through advanced technology that solutions can be found to some of the serious problems we face. Greens would build on BC's reputation as an advanced technology powerhouse.

Key Goal

Make investment in advanced technology a priority for British Columbia

BC Greens Will

- Reduce taxes on advanced technology businesses to the same level afforded to the film industry
- Reinstate funding for Discovery BC to help turn BC research into commercial applications
- Offer incentives to private investors and philanthropists (with contracts to gain) to fund new initiatives and research

Arts and Culture

The Green Party of BC recognizes the important health and economic benefits of arts and culture to our society and minimal associated impacts on the environment. A vibrant arts and culture community in BC will give the province an edge over other places in attracting talents for our high-tech, biomedical, and renewable energy sectors as well as nurses, doctors, and other professionals. Greens believe that the arts and culture communities are a significant part of the BC economy.

Key Goal

Create vibrant and sustainable arts and culture communities throughout BC

BC Greens Will

- Restore arts and culture funding to 2008-09 levels of \$23.8 million
- Expand the BC Arts Council mandate to include liaising with the sponsorship world by connecting arts and culture programs with corporate benefactors, in a way that provides the excitement, profile, and accolades that a sponsor is looking for
- Establish funding objectives including measurable outcomes focusing on prudent fiscal practices as well as artistic output
- Provide multi-year funding to emerging and experimental arts and culture groups to incubate their programs, while also providing multi-year funding to established and traditional arts and culture groups as they transition to financial independence
- Provide funding to develop affordable rental facilities for local arts and culture development
- Maintain a stock of affordable housing in arts and culture hot spots in BC
- Sponsor annual international events and competitions hosted by the arts and culture community
- Enhance arts and culture community capacity for fashion and industrial design

- Encourage the formation of co-operatives within the community to reduce members' operation costs and improve profits
- Strengthen school curriculum on arts and culture subjects to encourage young people to develop an interest in arts and culture and to take part in art activities as amateurs or as professionals
- Establish a Ministry of Arts, Culture and Heritage
- Cooperate with other levels of government to provide funding for an indigenous peoples arts and culture plan for BC

Ecotourism

Ecotourism is a fast growing sector of British Columbia's tourism industry. As more and more tourists to BC are attracted by the amazing landscape, iconic species and travel and recreational opportunities afforded by ecotourism, companies are responding by promoting niche markets like sports fishing and landscape level activities that take advantage of protected areas like the Great Bear Rain Forest. BC Greens want British Columbians to continue to experience economic benefits from this growth and we want to ensure that all ecotourism activities meet the high standards of ecological stewardship that visitors and British Columbians expect. BC Greens will improve regulation and raise habitat preservation standards to counter the environmental impacts that are already in many areas unacceptable.

Key Goals

- Expand the opportunities for ecotourism
- Insure that ecotourism meets high environmental standards

BC Greens Will

- Renew BC parks by providing funding to restore interpretive services and to hire rangers and conservation officers
- Ensure that BC parks are funded on par with national parks

- Re-open public campgrounds and upgrade aging infrastructure and trails
- Expand BC's protected areas system on land over the next ten years and create ocean reserves

Fuelling the Economy with Clean Energy

BC Greens will encourage the building of green and clean renewable energy facilities. We believe a mixed public/private energy system is appropriate. We support a system that favours regional energy production over inefficient, large-scale projects. Regional energy is resilient and creates more long-term jobs and contributes to regional self-sufficiency. A new Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change will oversee a new BC Energy Authority. The ministry will be responsible for all energy regulation and planning for the province.

Our past reliance on hydroelectric power puts BC in a unique position to be among the first nearly emission free jurisdictions in the world within a generation. This is not the time, however, to be building additional large dams and the Green Party opposes building the Site C Dam on the Peace River.

A vibrant and thriving power generation industry based on geothermal, solar, and wind power can eliminate the need to import coal-based power. The Green Party believes that conservation (building codes, industrial reform, and behavioural change) will move us towards energy self-sufficiency and an emission free BC, without resorting to nuclear energy or fossil fuels like natural gas to create energy.

Key Goals

- Get the province off oil and gas
- Power the province using only green and clean power
- Develop strategies that make it easy to reduce energy consumption
- Provide incentives for citizens and businesses to generate their own power
- Encourage new clean and green energy generation projects

- Promote local and district scale generation over remote and large projects
- Correct the operational and accounting deficiencies at BC Hydro

BC Greens Will

- Establish a Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change
- Create a BC Energy Authority (BCEA) to diversify energy sources. BC Hydro and all new power producers will report to BCEA
- Create a clear reporting relationship for the BCEA to the Ministry
- Make the BC Transmission Corporation (BCTC) a division of the BCEA
- Restore the independence and oversight of the BC Utilities Commission
- Institute Regional Resource Management Boards that report to the BCEA for planning and approval of regional energy generation and distribution systems
- Redesign calls for power to:
 - Promote geothermal, solar, ocean, and wind power
 - Favour local generation projects
 - Develop co-operative and public ownership as well as Small and Independent Power Producers (IPPs & SPPs)
- Explore the use of feed-in-tariffs as a way to diversify energy production and support renewable projects
- Reinstate local oversight over public resources
- Include local and regional governments within Regional Resource Management Boards
- Cancel plans for and consideration of the Site C Dam on the Peace River
- Subject new river-based energy generation projects to the Green Party's stricter environmental assessment process in order to mitigate impacts on salmon and other wildlife

- Where necessary, revoke water licenses for river-based energy generation and provide fair compensation to license holders
- Require methane capture and power generation plants at all wastewater and landfill sites
- Restore public ownership of the Nechako/Kemano generation system
- Phase out all power imports from fossil fuels or GHG emitting sources
- Halt consideration of the proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline project (Alberta Tar Sands to Kitimat)
- Reject any expansion of the Kinder-Morgan pipeline from Alberta to Vancouver
- Establish a permanent ban on crude oil tankers on the west coast of BC to protect BC's fisheries, tourism, coastal communities, and natural ecosystems
- Require that BC's short- and long-term energy needs are fully met before foreign energy sales take place
- Prohibit the use of food products other than local food waste for the production of fuels



What does Clean and Green mean?

- Clean energy does not produce harmful by-products such as sulphur dioxide, carbon dioxide, radioactive waste, and other toxic or harmful substances
- Green energy does minimal harm to the environment and its planning and development considers broader economic and social concerns
- In keeping with green principles, green energy projects can be smaller scale and managed regionally

Smart Meters/Smart Grid

Greens recognize that a Smart Grid can be an important part of an energy conservation and energy management plan. Smart Meters are a small but expensive component of a Smart Grid. Many other components should have been in place long before BC Hydro decided to install Smart Meters. BC Greens believe incentives for conservation and retrofit programs; incentives to make homes and buildings more energy efficient; investment in non-hydro renewable energy; and a plan to develop a distributed grid should have been in place before switching meters. The Green Party of BC also thinks feed-in-tariffs are needed to encourage the development of small and mid-scale renewable energy projects.

By May 2013, BC Hydro will have installed wireless Smart Meters on most of their customers' homes and businesses. BC Greens believe that this program was undertaken prematurely and it needed to be part of a strategic plan designed to conserve electricity.

The implementation of the program gave license to BC Hydro, its employees, and subcontractors to ignore the needs and wishes of BC Hydro customers. Greens believe people have a right to feel safe in their own homes.

Key Goals

- Provide those adversely affected by the installation of wireless Smart Meters with a wired-in alternative

- Call a public inquiry into the operations of BC Hydro generally and the Smart Metering program specifically

BC Greens will:

- Instruct BC Hydro to provide any customer with health, privacy, or security concerns who requests it, a replacement wired-in Smart Meter at no added or at minimal cost to the consumer
- Provide rural internet providers with compensation to cover costs arising from disruption of internet services due to Smart Meter installation and use
- Place BC Hydro under the jurisdiction of the BC Utilities Commission, whose mandate will be strengthened so that the provincial government cannot interfere in the operations of BC Hydro and other utilities

Further, the Green Party of BC will call a commission of inquiry into the operations of BC Hydro. This inquiry would look at:

- Technical aspects of the Smart Meter program including the decision to use wireless Smart Meters rather than wired-in meters
- The cultural deficiencies at BC Hydro that allowed rudeness, threats of service removal, and disdain and ridicule of genuine concerns to be the norm, rather than a customer/consumer focus
- The decision to continue the Smart Meter program after public and community opposition mounted, including the call for a moratorium by local and regional governments throughout BC
- How the Smart Grid will be achieved
- Whether Time-of-Use (TOU) rates can be advantageous for large industrial and commercial users
- Why BC Hydro paid substantially more per meter than was paid in many US jurisdictions
- The concerns raised by the Auditor General about BC Hydro's fiscal accounting

BC Greens believe BC Hydro should be accountable to the people of BC. We want to make sure that the Smart Meters contribute to energy conservation and to making the necessary transition to renewable energy.



Planning Better Transportation

The Green Party wants to improve the quality of life in BC communities. We support clean, affordable, and efficient transportation. We cannot build our way out of gridlock. Expanded highways and bridges lead to urban sprawl and increase long-term overcrowding. Greens want walkable neighbourhoods, an increase in cycling paths, and affordable transit systems.

Key Goals

- Limit urban sprawl
- Institute regional land use and transportation planning

- Improve public oversight of transportation system planning
- Encourage walking, cycling, transit, and car sharing by implementing Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies including road pricing

BC Greens Will

- Review the corporate structure of BC Ferries to make it more accountable to the people of BC
- Explore the use of distance driven Pay-As-You-Drive (PAYD) insurance to provide cost savings for driving less
- Expand the High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) network
- Introduce Location Efficient Mortgages (LEMs), enabling car-free citizens to afford housing in urban centres
- Investigate the feasibility of commuter and light rail as well as trams in Vancouver, the Fraser Valley, the Interior, and on Vancouver Island

Caring for One Another

Improved Health and Vibrant Communities

The overall health of the population is getting worse. Poor nutrition, obesity, a lack of physical activity, smoking, and alcohol and drug abuse, along with aging, have led to an increasing burden of chronic disease. Some credible projections indicate that this generation of children may live shorter lives than their parents. There are several serious consequences:

- Lower productivity of the workforce erodes the sustainability of the economy
- An increasing burden of chronic disease (hypertension, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, cancer, mental health, and musculoskeletal conditions) causes increasing demands on both primary care and acute hospital care. Most of these conditions are preventable
- Ever increasing costs of health care are consuming more and more available government revenues. As a consequence, other important (and health enhancing) services are compromised, such as primary, secondary and advanced education; skills training; early childhood care and education; social housing; income supports; food security; the justice system; family supports; physical infrastructure (highways, ferries, recreation facilities, libraries, etc); job creation; and environmental sustainability

Both the patient experience of care and the quality of care are substandard. Patients frequently experience frustrations in accessing primary and specialized care, visits in primary care are often limited in time and to one problem per visit, return visits are often required for the renewal of prescriptions and to follow up on test results, and there is a lack of coordination of care and a lack of sharing of

vital clinical information. Repeated research studies show that patients often do not receive evidence-based preventive and clinical care service and that there is widespread error and waste in the system. Hence, care is substandard and costs are high.

Health care costs continue to increase faster than government revenues, as a consequence of the increasing burden of chronic disease, aging, and the increased costs of health, human resources, drugs and technologies, as well as waste and inefficiency in the system. In a political environment where tax increases are difficult to implement, this leads to the erosion of other services and a continued push for privatization of health care.

As a result of these factors, jurisdictions across the developed world have adopted the 'Triple Aim'^{*}, which the Green Party of BC supports, as follows:

1. Improve population health and reduce health inequities
2. Improve the patient experience and the quality of care
3. Reduce health care costs

The Green Party of BC's health care plan involves improving people's overall health. We will shift priorities and financing to preventative strategies. We will ensure there are adequate dollars for acute and hospital care. We will also address the social determinants of health by supporting at risk children and families, improving access to quality childcare, and supporting education designed for the new century.

The Green Party of BC believes that co-operatives and social enterprises will be integral to the more efficient provision of community-based health services.

A Society that Cares Will

- Improve our health
- Educate our citizens
- Provide for seniors

- Treat workers fairly
- End homelessness and poverty
- Create local support systems that promote health, child welfare, and accessibility for people with disabilities and the aging
- Regulate substance use

Promoting Healthy Living

Our province spends far too much money on managing disease. Greens believe that we can save some of that money by focusing on **preventing disease**. British Columbians will become healthier through green initiatives that reduce environmental pollutants. Prevention initiatives would also promote changes to lifestyles through better nutrition and exercise. By cleaning and greening our environment and our economy, we reduce cancer, asthma, and other lifestyle and environmentally related illnesses.

Key Goals

- Remove environmental contaminants from soil, water, and air
- Legislate controls on the use of pesticides
- Focus on creating lifestyles and environments that promote health
- Invest in public health and preventative measures
- Reduce pollution from industry

Our Commitment

We are committed to working with many stakeholders (policy-makers, community groups, health agencies, multiple levels of government, the private sector) to reduce, eliminate, or overcome those factors that harm health or act as barriers to health enhancement. We will promote those factors that enhance the health, well-being, and quality of life of all British Columbians.

Our changes to the health care system include a drug plan; reformed primary care; better governance; reducing waste and inefficiency; better home care, long term care, and mental health services; and better end-of-life care.

BC Greens Will

- Enforce existing laws for industrial pollution, increase pollution fines, and create a graduated pollution tax that increases with the amount of pollution
- Legislate a province-wide ban on the cosmetic use of pesticides that applies to institutional, industrial, business, and residential properties and that restricts sales and provides for enforcement
- Implement Right-to-Know Product labeling legislation, requiring a clear hazard symbol on products that contain carcinogens and Genetically Modified (GM) ingredients. This legislation will enhance current protections in the federal Food and Drugs Act
- Eliminate the import and use of products containing the most toxic substances
- Increase tobacco taxes
- Expand Medical Service Plan (MSP) coverage to include preventative treatments such as chiropractic, physiotherapy, eye exams, and massage therapy
- Establish a routine clinical prevention program that would include age-appropriate screening for hypertension, high cholesterol, breast, cervical, and bowel cancer; preventive care for diabetics and post Acute Myocardial Infarctions (heart attacks); and appropriate immunizations
- Institute a junk food tax
- Initiate a public inquiry into the rising cost and over-prescribing of drugs
- Commission a cost-benefit analysis on the feasibility of establishing a new Crown corporation to bulk purchase and dispense generic drugs to pharmacies in BC
- Establish an initiative to support the development of co-ops and social enterprises for the provision of community-based health, social, and education services

- Mandate that Requests for Proposal (RFP) processes and selection criteria by all government bodies will facilitate participation by health, social service, and education co-operatives and social enterprises
- Establish education programs about co-operatives and social enterprises in the training and retraining programs of existing health, social service, and education professionals; for Health Authorities and social and educational agencies; and for the governing bodies of these professions

Healthy Seniors

The BC Green Party believes in providing appropriate and affordable community and home-based care for all BC seniors. As the population for BC seniors is projected to increase over the next decade, the BC Green Party recognizes the urgent need to address the current inadequacies in seniors' health care, focusing on providing a strong foundation for community and home-based care. Taking the BC Northern Health Authority as a model, the BC Green Party aims at improving seniors' health care with a fundamental reallocation of existing resources.

Key Goals

- Improve home and community care
- Give a voice to patients
- Provide social support networks
- Improve public reporting

BC Greens Will

- Integrate community, home, and primary care services for seniors in order to address their unique and complex needs, with a focus on preventative health care initiatives
- Reconfigure services around seniors' home-based care needs, provided by an interdisciplinary team (nurses, care aids, and community workers) of health care professionals, 24/7

- Increase funding to residential care facilities in order to improve staffing levels and ensure a higher quality of care
- Provide transition coaches (specially trained nurses or case managers) to aid seniors in the transition from hospital to home care
- Expand BC's Chronic Disease Self-Management Program and other educational programs to ensure more accessibility to low-income and immigrant seniors as well as those living in rural areas
- Establish a community support network to help seniors remain independent, build self-esteem and improve knowledge and understanding of available health and community resources
- Provide funding to create a broader network of seniors outreach programs in the community and/or seniors centres
- Encourage the construction of senior-oriented communities, providing housing options to suit all seniors' different needs, ensure proper access to health care facilities, and offer social engagement opportunities
- Follow the BC Ombudsperson recommendations and improve public reporting of key indicators in order to increase accountability and aid in effective planning and health system improvements
- Provide an independent review of all public reporting to ensure transparency and accountability

Healthy Kids

The Green Party of BC resolves to improve the Healthy Kids Program – and any similar future program – to pay for dental fillings that do not contain mercury (which has harmful side effects to children and adults). The improved program will cease to reimburse providers for administering mercury-based fillings and the provincial government will cover any increased costs.

For low-income British Columbian families, the Healthy Kids program helps cover the costs of basic dental care for children under the age of 19. Children are eligible for \$1400 of basic dental services every two years. This coverage includes services such as exams, x-rays, fillings, cleanings, and extractions.

Mercury is extremely toxic to humans. Modern dentistry has developed an increasing range of alternative filling materials, which do not contain mercury.

Key Goals

- Improve health of children of low-income families
- Increase public health through effective reduction of the use (and environmental discharge) of dental mercury
- Better the health of health service providers by reducing their exposure to mercury from dental amalgam

BC Greens Will

- Require that dentists providing dental services to children from low-income families under the Healthy Kids Program use dental fillings that do not contain mercury

Caring for the Sick

We are facing a crisis in BC's public health care system that is more than two decades in the making. The problem began in the 1990s with decreases in federal government transfer payments. The provincial NDP added to the problem by cutting the number of health care professionals being trained in BC, reducing funding for mental health, and eliminating home support for seniors. Since then the Liberals have closed hospitals, surgical services, and long-term care beds. The result has been increased wait lists, over-crowded emergency rooms, and the increased privatization of services. We have watched the steady development of a two-tiered system.

BC Greens can and will do better. We will reform health care so that people get the care they need, when they need it.

Key Goals

- Reduce health care costs and maintain service levels by getting rid of waste, improving primary care, and increasing multi-disciplinary service
- Provide adequate access to health care in both rural and urban communities
- Preserve universal single-tier health care

Our Commitment

The Green Party of BC is committed to creating a robust public health care system that guarantees our children the same standard of care we have enjoyed.

BC Greens Will

- Provide increased and new training programs for health care professionals for both acute and preventive care
- Facilitate the recognition of the qualifications of foreign-trained doctors, nurses, and other professionals
- Provide payback incentives for graduating doctors, nurses, paramedics, and other health care professionals who staff facilities where recruitment is currently a problem
- Restore publicly managed and delivered food, housekeeping, laundry, and security services in public health care facilities
- Offer financial assistance to families providing home care for seniors and disabled family members
- Establish 24-7 clinics in rural areas staffed by salaried doctors and nurse practitioners who can perform emergency surgical services
- Implement e-Hospital services that monitor patients at a distance and allow for local provision of timely care
- Establish community health care centres.
- Gradually change from the fee-for-service MSP billing towards salaries for doctors
- Expand home support and home care programs and assisted living services to

support people with chronic care needs, including seniors, so they can remain in their own homes

- Educate the public about end-of-life issues
- Enact living will legislation that guarantees people the right to limit or refuse medical intervention and treatment so that people have the choice to die with dignity

Mental Health and Social Justice

The Green Party's core values celebrate cultural and personal diversity and acknowledge that all humans have a fundamental right to health, well-being, and freedom. We also recognize that cooperation, consensus building, and active participation in decision making at all levels of our lives are crucial to the growth of our individual and social health.

Key Goals

- Improve our mental health care system while protecting human rights, supporting prevention and recovery, encouraging participation and cooperation amongst those affected by mental illness, and improving access to services
- Establish monitoring, evaluation, and identification of the most successful and cost-effective programs by using measurable outcomes such as people engaged in recovery, returning to work, and finding and remaining in appropriate housing
- Re-establish the office of the Mental Health Advocate to provide ongoing, independent feedback and recommendations to the legislature regarding improvement and cost-effectiveness of our mental health care system
- Fund an independent scientific team such as the UBC Therapeutics Initiative to evaluate the long-term efficacy of the major psychiatric drug classes and provide recommendations on the most appropriate uses of these drugs

BC Greens Will

- Amend the BC Mental Health Act to comply with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Support independent mental health advocacy services that help maintain universal access to a comprehensive range of programs and ensure accountability
- Enact legislation to establish the right to appoint substitute decision makers and develop advance directives
- Provide increased support to parents and families impacted by mental illness
- Revitalize social services that have been shown to have direct impacts on mental health outcomes, such as affordable and supportive housing, education and work training opportunities, and prison recidivism programs
- Broaden the publicly funded treatment options available in our hospitals and communities such as counselling and psychotherapy services, peer support groups, and physician-recommended exercise and nutrition programs
- Increase funding for non-institutionalized mental health patients, including children and youth, to provide adequate housing, community-based support, and ongoing outpatient and inpatient care
- Improve accountability of the mental health system by developing clear goals for recovery with measurable outcomes as well as better evaluations of program effectiveness
- Assist post-secondary institutions in providing specialized training to psychiatrists and physicians in the value to mental health of complementary treatments such as exercise, nutrition, and other non-drug therapeutic interventions
- Support the involvement of families, patients and ex-patients, consumers, and survivors in the ongoing development of

mental health research, policies, and practices

- Improve access by increasing funding to independent mental health legal advocacy to adequately meet British Columbia's needs in order to:
 - Reduce demands on extremely expensive hospital services
 - Allow people who do not need to be treated in psychiatric hospitals to access services in their communities instead
 - Free up needed beds for people who do want treatment in hospital
- Increase funding for disability benefits, supportive housing, and low-cost counselling services
- Encourage creation of networks of peer-run crisis supports and non-medical emergency responders in order to reduce costly police encounters and the use of emergency hospital services
- Invest in Research and Accountability that establishes clear and achievable short- and long-term goals for our mental health care programs

Climate Change and Mental Health

Climate change is increasing the severity of disasters and adverse weather conditions. Growing scientific evidence shows that events such as natural disasters can have severe and long-lasting effects on physical health as well as on mental health and psychosocial well-being.

Climate change will disproportionately affect individuals with lower resources. Women, children, the elderly, the disabled, and those with pre-existing mental health or substance use problems are especially vulnerable. They are more likely to show severe and persistent stress reactions and are less likely to recover socioeconomically.

Addressing the projected impact of climate change on mental health and psychosocial well-being requires the collaboration and effort of multiple stakeholders including global agencies,

governments, donors, NGOs, universities, and civil society at large.

Building healthy resilient communities involves capacity building, strengthening existing structures, creating new or reinforcing social networks, and recognizing the value of local and indigenous community knowledge and perspectives, as well as increasing the availability of psychosocial resources and services.

Our Commitment

The Green Party of BC is committed to helping our health care, social, and education systems to help people prepare for potential mental health and psychosocial impacts induced by climate change.

Key Goal

Implement a full range of direct and supportive programs for people to help mitigate the impact of climate change on mental health and psychosocial well-being as part of a preventative health care budget

BC Greens Will

For Education:

- Train both specialized and non-specialized staff in mental health and psychosocial care
- Train local professionals (such as school teachers, nurses, doctors, and first responders) in the basic principles of psychological first aid and in providing referrals to specialized staff if necessary
- Teach students (K—12) about the potential impacts of climate change and appropriate response strategies to familiarize children with the potential problems and to empower them to overcome fear or deal with it in a positive way
- In high-risk areas, provide community-based training in disaster response, first aid, urban search and rescue, and disaster mental health, using community training models implemented successfully in Japan, the United States, and elsewhere

- From grade 8 onwards, teach students disaster first aid in a progressive fashion, so that they are better able to assist their communities should climate-related disasters increase in severity and frequency

For Social Services:

- In high risk communities, existing social services should inventory the strengths of specific social groups as well as talents and skills within the community that could contribute to mitigation and alleviation of the psychosocial impacts of climate change

Regulating Substance Use

British Columbians recognize that substance use is a public health concern, not a criminal matter. The Green Party agrees with this approach. We support an end to the prohibition of illegal substances, especially cannabis, as well as the regulation and control of their production, manufacture, distribution, and sale. Greens would control and tax these substances as we do tobacco and alcohol.

Greens will focus on harm reduction rather than criminalizing substance use. By ending prohibition and controlling distribution, we would remove the scourge of criminals and gangs from the streets of our communities.

The Green Party's "Green Strategy for Substance Use" is evidence-based. Public health is at the centre. Organized crime has its power taken away. Those who struggle with addictions are not criminals. We believe that enforcement has a role to play, focused on protecting the public from serious crime, and not on harassing and criminalizing personal substance use.

Key Goals

- Establish drug policies based on clear scientific evidence
- Treat substance abuse as a health problem, not a criminal problem
- Reduce crime associated with marijuana prohibition
- Help addicts to stop abusing drugs

BC Greens Will

- Support the use of evidence-based, harm reduction practices such as needle-exchanges, substitution treatments, and safe consumption sites
- Work toward regulation and control of the production and distribution of cannabis through licensed outlets
- Support regulated access to currently illegal drugs through a physician's recommendation
- Implement school-based drug education focused on science, reason, and evidence-based public awareness
- Ensure that regional health authorities in British Columbia offer a variety of options for treatment of addictions of all kinds
- Regulate access to substances traditionally used for spiritual purposes and provide funding for research into their therapeutic potential

Reforming Health Care Governance

The Green Party would reform the governance of provincially funded health services to create more effective and responsive provincial health services.

BC Greens Will

- Establish Regional Health Trusts based on the demographic and geographic realities of British Columbia to replace Health Authorities
- Establish public accountability in provincially-funded health organizations
- Institute a health ombudsperson to investigate and resolve complaints
- Establish executive pay scales appropriate to senior public sector executives
- Phase out MSP premiums and fund the public health system from general revenue
- Negotiate access to provincial health programs for members of the Canadian Armed Forces, RCMP, and other federal employees

- Encourage ongoing Health Canada investment in First Nations health programs in BC

Providing for People with Special Needs

Nearly 640,000 British Columbians have special needs. If they do not have access to services and cannot participate in the social and economic life of BC, this has a negative effect on their quality of life, and ours. According to the 2006 Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, in BC:

- 25% of children with disabilities have unmet educational needs
- For 60% of children with disabilities, families pay the costs for the aids that are needed to manage their condition
- Loss of financial and other supports and the lack of accessible transportation were named as barriers to working by 27% of adults with disabilities

The Green Party understands that a fundamental shift is necessary in order to create inclusion and opportunity for people with disabilities and programs to help them and their families cope with their disabilities.

The Green Party of BC recognizes that co-operatives and social enterprises can provide vital, community-based care and services to vulnerable individuals and the broader community.

Key Goal

To improve the level of services and supports so that people with disabilities can participate actively and productively in our communities, and not simply deal with their impairments as if those define them as individuals

BC Greens Will

- Request that the Auditor General review services to persons with disabilities with particular attention to structural barriers
- Take a partnership approach to developing a strategy supporting people with

impairments as full citizens, within a framework that:

- Provides a comprehensive continuum of ongoing services (as well as appropriate capital and one-time investments)
- Supports inclusion in the social fabric of BC
- Promotes economic participation in the province
- Implement an Access and Ability Strategy with a commitment to fund its components. Initial actions must address improvements in accessible transportation, health and support services, and income supports
- Establish services to ensure fair access to programs, by:
 - Appointing an Advocate for Persons with Disabilities as an independent officer of the Legislature
 - Requiring an annual report be tabled in the Legislative Assembly
- Enter into a formal agreement with the federal government to ensure full coverage for those who have some form of fiduciary relationship with the Government of Canada
- Support co-operatives and social enterprises as a means of training and employing marginalized individuals and people with disabilities
- Remove income and social assistance restrictions to individuals being trained by social co-operatives and other social enterprises
- Promote the use of social co-operatives and social enterprises to serve high priority groups, especially the elderly and those living with disabilities

Helping At Risk Families

BC's programs for children at risk and their families have fallen short. Current funding and programs that deliver 'one size fits all' solutions have not worked.

British Columbians want an effective plan that focuses on whole and healthy families. When a child is at risk, this requires a 3-step process: (1) remove the child from danger, (2) fix the issues within the family, and (3) reunite the family. The current system only deals with the first step. Greens know how to do better.

Key Goals

- Protect children from harm
- Work with families to overcome conditions that lead to abuse
- Provide local programs to support at risk families so they can learn to care for their children
- Establish caring homes and appropriate support for children who need to be permanently removed from their families

BC Greens Will

- Implement a full range of programs for families, including:
 - Direct services: parental, life-skill, employment, and education training; grade school and high school completion; and health and mental health education
 - Supportive, indirect services: prevention services such as child care, in-home support, emergency and crisis services; a guaranteed liveable income; and adequate and safe housing
- Establish local child care trusts with provincial standards that are monitored by the Ministry of Children and Family Development

Local Social Trusts

Greens will create local social trusts that will work with families living in poverty or experiencing mental health issues, domestic violence, and/or substance abuse. The trusts will implement programs throughout the province to foster healthier family functioning and to support families who are experiencing difficulties. Whenever possible, families will receive help to stay together, to find gainful

employment, and to develop good parenting and family communication and coping skills.

When children need to be removed from their families for their protection, the government will work with the families to help them make the changes necessary to allow the safe return of the child as soon as possible if the child's safety and healthy development can be achieved. In instances where a child cannot be returned to her family, the trust will ensure a permanent home is found and the child is helped to adjust and to deal with abandonment issues.

Trusts will develop prevention and remediation strategies to deal with the health and social issues of at risk families. Local authorities will be responsible and accountable for planning and coordinating complete support service plans that address housing, education, employment, remediation, and prevention for children and families faced with the challenge of overcoming their histories.

When adult activity shows criminal intent, financial exploitation of a child, abuse, or neglect, the acts will be dealt with in the criminal justice system rather than the child welfare system.

The Green Party plan acknowledges the needs of First Nations families in BC. One in 20 British Columbians is an aboriginal person but one in two children in care are aboriginal. Indigenous British Columbians struggle with a quality of life that is, according to the Provincial Health Officer, 20% lower than other citizens. Progress for aboriginal children in care has been disappointingly and unacceptably slow.

The most effective form of child welfare is family restoration.

Reducing Poverty

British Columbia is rich in resources. Sadly, our resources have been mismanaged and this has contributed to unacceptable levels of poverty.

The Green Party understands the need for action so that every British Columbian has the opportunity to share in the wealth of this province.

The Guaranteed Liveable Income (GLI) will replace all existing income assistance programs. Cost of living and other factors determine the eligibility and the amount of the income supplement. The GLI provides a basic income and removes systemic barriers that keep people poor, untrained, unemployed, or underemployed. At the same time, it encourages employment and job creation. When access to assistance is streamlined, the result is a more efficient system and a better quality of life.

Key Goals

- Ensure that we can all meet our basic needs
- Reverse the trend towards greater disparity between rich and poor

BC Greens Will

- Unify all current income support programs into one comprehensive Guaranteed Liveable Income
- Protect children by securing universal, safe, and affordable childcare
- Create tax benefits for companies that provide on-site childcare, flex-hours, and job sharing
- Reinstate and improve funding for women's emergency shelters and transition houses
- Provide employment assistance for individuals, businesses, and community organizations
- Modernize services for people with disabilities based on a social model of ability rather than a medical model

Homelessness and Housing Affordability

A home is essential to a healthy life. Greens believe that housing is a basic human right. Yet, in BC, more than 10,000 people are homeless and many more are on the verge of homelessness.

We must find homes for the homeless; we must eliminate sub-standard housing; and we must

make sure that there is enough affordable housing so that people of all incomes live in healthy, well-constructed homes.

British Columbians see these problems everyday in their communities: people sleeping on our streets, people begging for money, tent cities springing up, people lined up for free meals, increasing numbers of shelters for overnight accommodation, and pleas for support for food banks and charities.

These problems are the result of 25 years of harmful government policy, starting with:

- Federal government cuts to funding of social housing programs in 1993
- The closing of residential treatment for the mentally ill and a lack of replacement services in communities
- Provincial government reductions to welfare rates

BC can do better. We can learn from places that are addressing homelessness with Housing First policies. For Housing First policies to work, however, we need homes for people to move into and we need them now.

That is why BC Greens propose that the government purchase or support the purchase of housing by non-profits. During economic downturns, there are unfinished and unsold properties available to turn into long-term rent-geared-to-income housing.

BC Greens recognize that co-operative housing in BC has been successful in providing affordable housing options for lower-income British Columbians. We will partner with the co-operative housing sector and other levels of government to include co-operative housing as an option when addressing housing affordability.

To deal with the issues of housing affordability in the longer term, BC Greens will establish a provincial housing program. We will work with local governments as partners to ensure that an adequate percentage of newly built housing is

affordable. We will also advocate for a national housing program.

A basic income supplement, through our commitment to a Guaranteed Liveable Income strategy, will be instrumental in addressing the housing crisis. If people have adequate income, there will be less need for the government to be in the business of providing houses.

BC Greens know there are some people who will need government support and services to assist them in living to their capability within our communities. Services must accompany housing as part of a holistic program.

Key Goal

Ensure all British Columbians can live in safe and affordable homes

BC Greens Will

- Commit 1% of the annual provincial budget to solve the housing crisis
- Provide financial support for small-scale, mixed-income, co-operative, and non-profit housing
- Construct healthy, energy efficient green housing for people with disabilities and mental health problems and for low-income people
- Modernize the BC Building Code to ensure that buildings are more energy efficient
- Update the Residential Tenancy Act to ensure a balance in the rights of renters and landlords
- Restore the local Residential Tenancy offices that were closed across BC
- Mandate that BC Housing purchase existing units of market housing that are in current or stalled projects to provide an immediate and expanding pool of permanent below market and market rental housing
- Support the development of new, non-profit housing co-operatives for low and moderate-income households
- Explore the potential for using the co-operative model to create affordable home

ownership opportunities for British Columbians

Protecting Strata Property Owners

Twenty-eight percent of all taxable properties in BC are strata properties. In much of the lower mainland and Victoria, this number rises to over fifty percent. Since the Strata Property Act was passed in 2000, strata developments have grown in number and complexity. The Strata Property Amendment Act of 2009 made changes to enable developers to build all-rental condo buildings, and to require most strata corporations to prepare a depreciation report every few years or specifically opt out of doing so. The May 2012 Civil Resolution Tribunal Act provides a new alternative for resolving a dispute between a strata owner and a strata corporation. This Act does not, however, address disputes arising from misconduct by a property manager or developer. None of this legislation provides for public input or meaningful review by a legislative committee.

Key Goal

Conduct a comprehensive and public review of the Strata Property Act that is focused on (1) protecting the rights of strata owners and (2) the sustainability of strata communities

Investing in Education

Universal public education has long been the pride of Canadians. Education is an essential building block of our society and a well-educated province will be a top priority for Green MLAs.

However, in today's British Columbia, education is constrained in such a way that it marginalizes and diminishes educational opportunities for learning disabled and gifted learners, older teens, and BC First Nations; ignores extraordinary new insights into optimal learning and best practices from science; and falls short of providing students with the knowledge and experience they will need to meet future environmental and social challenges. In short, today's education policy reflects yesterday's knowledge and practices and is in need of a significant upgrade.

The Green Party of BC supports education policies that will foster within the present generation of children and young people the dispositions and knowledge needed to adapt to the impacts of global ecological, social, and economic shifts.

Policies must address the unacceptable limits that disadvantage some groups, as well as the mounting stresses posed by rising costs for educational services, including tuition charges for universities, colleges, and trade schools. It is unacceptable that students leave higher education with extraordinary levels of debt. Green MLAs will work to develop solutions to offset these costs for students.

Key Goals

- Foster a well-educated, well-trained society
- Improve affordability and accessibility as we move towards a more equitable system of adequately funded education
- Focus on the individual needs of students with different abilities and interests to make sure all students receive a strong education
- Turn schools into community centres offering educational and other programs to youth and adults

The Green Party of BC supports an education system that:

- Develops all British Columbians' strengths, potential, natural desire to learn, and curiosity
- Nurtures and encourages a passion for lifelong learning and the skills needed for students of all ages to participate meaningfully in society
- Provides choices in education and access to a wide range of education programmes that meet the diverse needs and unique learning styles of students of all backgrounds and learning abilities, as well as the needs of various learning communities

- Fosters the disposition to respond positively and effectively to the significant challenges posed by global warming and increasing environmental and social stresses
- Celebrates and rewards environmental, social, and sustainability initiatives and solutions to pressing environmental and social challenges
- Uses learning innovations and opportunities arising from the Internet, best learning practices, and recent insights from the learning sciences
- Supports and encourages educational innovation to create new, cost-effective, multi-purpose learning opportunities, especially for groups marginalized and/or constrained by present education policy
- Supports and advocates on behalf of reducing educational service access fees and tuition charges for students of all ages and especially teenage and college aged students
- Models and advocates on behalf of optimal communication, mutually-supportive conflict resolution, peace, inclusion, tolerance, diversity, and social sensitivity
- Models and advocates on behalf of environmental sensitivity, sustainability, appropriate stewardship, and the Precautionary Principle

BC Greens Will

- Apply the above mentioned principles to all education policy development
- Find an alternative to the "per-student" funding model to increase flexibility and program options for students
- Meet the needs of differentially-abled children, including early intervention for autistic children
- Promote greater bandwidth capacity with obsolescence resistant fibre optic cabling instead of wireless networks
- Promote a community school model that provides libraries, recreation facilities,

technology and training areas, fine arts theatres, and studios in partnership with municipalities and elementary and secondary schools

- Support a variety of schooling options that better meet the needs of underachieving students and different learning styles
- Fund extra-curricular sports, fine arts, and student clubs that encourage healthy community spirit, creativity, and leadership
- Promote instruction in nutrition and healthy living, including sexual health and sexuality, to ensure students understand what it means to live a healthy life

LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Questioning) Education Policy

The Green Party of BC supports a diverse and progressive BC society. As such, BC Greens believe that the BC education system should be inclusive and supportive of all peoples regardless of their sexual orientation.

Key Goals

- Establish anti-homophobia policies and action plans
- Create inclusive K-12 curriculum and learning resources
- Ensure accurate and inclusive sexual health education
- Provide teacher education programs
- Work with the LGTBQ community and parents

BC Greens Will

- Build upon the ERASE Bullying program to ensure uniformity in implementation
- Ensure all policies and actions plans are found at the provincial, school district, and school level
- Ensure that references to LGBTQ people are included in learning resources
- Provide learning resources that address current issues facing the LGTBQ community, such as bullying

- Provide sexual health education that addresses the needs of the LGBTQ community
- Establish several educational courses providing a choice for parents on which program their child will attend, aiming to address personal and religious concerns regarding LGTBQ sexual health education
- Require education on the needs of LGBTQ youth be added to Bachelor of Education programs in BC
- Ensure that educational information is up to date, accurate, and inclusive of the needs of LGBTQ youth
- Provide inclusive dialogue with LGTBQ community and parent groups to develop best practice guidelines and curriculum

Advanced Education

Colleges, Universities and Technical Institutes

According to the BC Branch of the Canadian Federation of Students, “Post-secondary education and training is among the most important social programs provided by the BC government, and is indispensable to improve BC's competitiveness and standard of living. By equipping British Columbians with adaptive skills for a rapidly evolving workforce, education also helps to address socio-economic inequities for over 150,000 students in the province.”

Post secondary education is becoming a necessity for students graduating from high school. It equips students with increased opportunities for employment.

At the same time, the increasing costs of studies beyond high school are putting an economic burden on students that previous generations did not face. The average student debt for a four-year program in BC is \$26,738. This amount increases for students who must live away from home. BC Greens believe this constitutes intergenerational inequity. That inequity is felt most by students and families with the fewest financial resources.

Key Goal



To ensure that students graduating from post secondary studies do not start their adult lives so indebted from education costs that they will have difficulty establishing themselves in their careers, gaining independence from their

parents, and having to delay starting families and purchasing homes

BC Greens Will

- Implement a program similar to that of Newfoundland and Labrador to eliminate the interest on student debt, to be phased in over five years
- Introduce a needs-based grants program to assist low-income students with tuition. A student's financial need will be determined by a means test, based upon the students' finances
- Increase core funding to colleges and universities by at least \$200 million annually
- Immediately reduce tuition fees by 20% and increase funding to post-secondary institutions to improve service levels, provide new equipment, and maintain infrastructure
- Explore how we could provide further tuition refunds for post-secondary graduates who work, live, and pay taxes in the province for five years after receiving their degree

Retraining, Adult Upgrading, and Trades Training and Credentials

In a constantly changing economy, increased education or educational upgrading is a necessity. The provincial government recognized this when it eliminated tuition fees for Adult Basic Education (ABE) in 2007. This enabled adults without a high school diploma to return to secondary level education and qualify

for employment or post-secondary education. The government has reduced funding to colleges and universities offering these programs, making it difficult for these institutions to maintain ABE classes.

It is increasingly evident that high quality trades and apprenticeship programs provide the foundation for rewarding careers, labour mobility, and innovative BC-grown businesses. Previous governments made a mistake in reducing funding to apprenticeship programs.

Over the past few decades, with increased industry involvement in training, comprehensive trades have been modularized into short-run programs that train individuals to do a narrow job without providing an avenue to become a credentialed trades person. Short-term training for a specific job may serve the immediate short-term needs of some industries. In the long term, however, it serves to de-skill the trades workforce by limiting the scope of skills taught. There needs to be a re-investment in comprehensive trades training, apprenticeships, and credentials.

Laid off workers represent another area where there needs to be new investment in training and re-education. BC Greens believe we have a responsibility to provide re-training opportunities that will prepare people to work in the new economy.

Key Goals

- To re-establish comprehensive trades education
- To maintain free Adult Basic Education (ABE)
- To provide training and re-education for laid-off workers

BC Greens Will

- Commit to free ABE, lift enrolment targets, and provide the funding to support new and existing spaces
- Re-balance the oversight of the Industry Training Authority (ITA) to reflect all stakeholders

- Work with employers to guarantee apprenticeship spaces
- Restore a system of employment councillors to liaise between the public's investment in skills training and the employment market
- Provide training for laid-off workers to get them get back into the workforce by training them for jobs in the green economy

Protecting Our Resources

Strengthen Environmental Laws and Ensure Food Security

British Columbia can truly be the 'Best Place on Earth'. Our province is a spectacular part of our world and we have much for which to be grateful. However, in the last one hundred years, the rapid depletion of resources and poorly planned development has led us into environmental debt.

The Green Party recognizes that a healthy environment and responsible resource use is essential for healthy communities and a strong economy. Our plan for the environment focuses upon the conservation of resources through improved efficiencies, the reduction of toxic pollutants, and the protection of wilderness.

Protecting Our Resources and Environment Will

- Guarantee the prosperity of future generations
- Result in meaningful action on climate change
- Ensure our economy runs sustainably

Strengthening the Environmental Management Act

The Green Party is committed to restoring and enhancing public and local government control over resource use, development, and the protection of ecosystems. We will re-establish the right of local and regional governments to say no to development and resource use that is not in the best interests of their region. The BC Greens will establish elected Regional Resource Management Boards to review development proposals. This will strengthen the environmental assessment process by introducing a local focus that will ensure resource use is sustainable and in the community interest.

Improving Environmental Assessment (EA)

The current environmental assessment legislation and regulation has limited scope and restricts public participation. BC Greens will appoint an independent Commissioner for Environment and Sustainability. Environmental assessments will assess all potential economic, environmental, and social effects as well as examining cumulative impacts. The EA process will evaluate alternatives to proposed projects; utilize a Watershed Based approach; be inclusive of local governments, First Nations, and public participation; and be part of a broader land-use and planning regime.

BC Greens Will

- Strengthen Environmental Assessments and Standards
- Reform the process of appointing people to the Environmental Assessment Office
- Pass strong Species-at-Risk legislation that includes appropriate habitat protection

Safeguarding Biodiversity

BC is Canada's most biologically diverse province. The health and well-being of our citizens depends upon this biodiversity, which provides life-supporting ecosystem services such as the air we breathe, the food we eat, the water we drink, and many of the resources that are vital to our economy and lifestyle.

With 94 percent of the province comprised of Crown land, much responsibility lies with the BC government to ensure that this great biodiversity is protected. Specifically, the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations are mandated to conserve, maintain, and enhance native species and ecosystems in the province.

Unfortunately, however, BC's biological diversity is in decline. According to a report released by the BC Auditor General in February 2013, the BC government is not doing enough to address this loss. Moreover, the report found that (1) significant gaps exist in government's

understanding of biodiversity in BC, (2) government does not know whether its actions are resulting in the conservation of biodiversity, and (3) government is not adequately measuring and reporting on its progress in the conservation of biodiversity.

The Green Party of BC recognizes that, in order for BC to reverse the current decline in our province's biodiversity, specific and strategic actions must be taken by government. We are committed to the long-term improvement of BC's biodiversity management and to implementing the Auditor General report's six key recommendations in order to ensure that such improvement occurs.

Key Goals

- Improve BC's biodiversity management
- Reverse the decline of biological diversity in the province
- Ensure long-term conservation of BC's biodiversity

BC Greens Will

- Expand programs to collect and apply sufficient and reliable information on the status of biodiversity in BC, towards improvements in conservation decision-making
- Identify and address gaps, inconsistencies, and barriers within BC's conservation legislation
- Establish goals, objectives, targets, and timelines in order to fully implement habitat designation tools and determine whether other tools are needed to reach measurable conservation goals and objectives
- Assign specific responsibilities so as to reach these measurable conservation goals and objectives
- Develop science-based monitoring programs to assess the effectiveness of the province's conservation programs
- Report regularly to the Legislative Assembly and the public on the progress of

biodiversity conservation relative to provincial, national, and international commitments¹

Restoring Our Wild Fisheries

Well-managed wild fisheries can be sustainable and provide healthy food and jobs in many smaller communities. However, many salmon runs have gone extinct due to poor logging practices, road building, fish farming, and urban development.

BC Greens will rehabilitate decreasing wild salmon stocks and restore their habitat. We will recognize First Nations' right to fish. We will also put the control of fisheries back into the hands of coastal communities and small fishers.

Key Goals

- Restore healthy natural fish stocks to BC's waters
- Create local jobs in coastal communities

BC Greens Will

- Negotiate with the federal government to take over management of coastal marine fisheries
- Implement stream-by-stream actions to rejuvenate wild salmon by restoring habitat
- Re-evaluate run-of-river projects pending strengthened environmental assessments and better regulation
- Phase out bottom trawling and less-selective seine and gillnet fishing and replace them with more selective methods
- Phase in terminal salmon fisheries to replace open ocean interception salmon fisheries and to restore traditional First Nations fishing practices
- Implement transition plans for workers and First Nations communities to ensure

1 From *An Audit of Biodiversity in BC: Assessing the Effectiveness of Key Tools*, by the Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia (OAGBC). Published February 10th 2013.

employment when fisheries closures are needed to rebuild wild stocks

- Reform licensing of fishers, breaking up the corporate concentration in big seiner licenses and reallocating licenses back to small-scale fishers

Protecting Wild Salmon from Fish Farms

The dramatic decline of BC's wild salmon began when fish farms were introduced to the province. Wild salmon cannot be saved until open net finfish farms are removed from salmon migration routes, because of their deadly role in pathogen amplification and introduction.

One benefit of the fish farm industry has been the development of state-of-the-art processing plants in BC. These plants are capable of processing soft-fleshed seafood into high quality products. BC's wild fisheries could benefit from this local processing capacity. The BC Green Party will ensure that the province benefits from these plants and explores further options for their use.

Key Goals

- Protect wild salmon
- Encourage coastal employment in traditional fisheries, sport fishing, and eco-tourism

BC Greens Will

- Ensure that the BC coast is free of finfish farms along the length of the east coast of Vancouver Island and the west coast of the mainland from the Fraser River north to the Broughton Archipelago, by not renewing the licenses of finfish farms with annual tenure and by revoking the licenses of finfish farms with long-term tenure
- Provide transitional money so that fish farm processing plants can find alternative sources of soft-fleshed seafood for processing and to establish markets for the resulting seafood products both domestically and internationally

- Provide employment security through retraining and job matching for workers displaced from fish farms that close

Protecting the Wild

Some of our greatest public assets are the water, land, air, and wildlife of this beautiful province. Clean water, fresh air, incredible green spaces, and recreation opportunities are the foundation of our economy. However, the protection and management of these assets is inadequate and the results increasingly damaging.

The Green Party understands that our continued prosperity and well-being depends on a strong economy based on and in a healthy environment.

BC Greens Will

- Create a Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change
- Direct this new ministry to increase BC's parks and protected areas system, including marine environments, to 20% of the land base over the next 100 years
- Enact an Environmental Protection Act that will go beyond the Management Framework of the existing Environmental Management Act to deliver science and evidence-based environmental assessments that place biodiversity on an equal footing to economic considerations and that considers cumulative and long-term impacts
- Form elected Regional Resource Management Boards
- Make permanent the moratorium on offshore oil and gas exploration, offshore drilling, and tanker traffic to protect our coastal waters and marine wildlife
- Enact BC Species-at-Risk legislation that includes habitat protection
- Place a moratorium on logging, road building, and industrial development in critically endangered species habitat
- Stop old-growth logging

- Appoint an independent Commissioner of the Environment with responsibility to make sure resource development is undertaken in the public interest and to ensure compliance with environmental legislation
- Strengthen the environmental assessment process
- Develop park co-management agreements with First Nations
- Expand the Ecological Reserve system to encompass one percent of BC's land base
- Ban trophy hunting and restrict any hunting of species threatened by trophy hunting
- Eliminate sport and trophy hunting of grizzly bears
- Restore funding to create jobs for monitoring of pollution, protection of species at risk, and enforcement of fish and wildlife regulations
- Reinstate funding for the Bear Smart program, with 50% funding support – up to \$10,000 annually – for community bear-proofing measures
- Increase funding for the Conservation Officer Service in order to provide more training in non-lethal bear aversion strategies
- Establish bear information kiosks at roadside campground entrances and institute penalties for those who attract bears

Moving to Zero Waste

Waste needs to be seen as a resource and a potential source of revenue. In order to take advantage of new technologies in thinking about waste management, we need to shift away from seeing it as a problem and towards seeing waste management as an investment. The Green Party supports the goal of zero waste to the extent that it can be responsibly achieved.

We believe that a goal of zero waste provides direction and inspiration for improving reducing waste. A goal of zero waste is also a major part

of our economic strategy because it uses waste and reduces the burden on our resources and creates green-collar jobs.

Key Goals

- Make better use of industrial waste
- Place cradle-to-grave recycling responsibility on producers for their products
- Declare BC a 'Plastic-Shopping-Bag-Free Zone'

BC Greens Will

- Establish an inspection and certification program to allow and encourage the use of recycled and reclaimed materials in new



and renovated buildings

- Create demand for recycled pulp by mandating a minimum 50% post-consumer recycled paper content for all newsprint
- Phase in recycling deposits to be paid when purchasing all manufactured goods in order to ensure the internalization of recycling costs into the initial price of the product

Combating Climate Change

Climate change is the critical issue of our time and it is a crisis. There is consensus that we must avert a 2°C temperature increase above pre-industrial times. Global temperature is already about 0.7° above that level, and another 0.5° is "locked in" due to an ever-thickening blanket of heat-trapping greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Run away global warming will damage our economy.

Climate change is also a social justice issue because it penalizes those in poverty, the working poor, and the lower middle class disproportionately. Therefore, BC Greens will ensure that all measures to limit climate change include protections for the most vulnerable in our society.

The Green Party has an action plan to address both carbon emissions and climate change in BC. We know that BC on its own cannot address this global problem but we can become a beacon of leadership in an otherwise irresponsible world. We can shame other governments into action.

Greens understand the need to price the cost of pollution and greenhouse emissions into the economy. We will emphasize energy conservation and alternative energy sources. Our package includes emission targets, regulation and taxation, transportation reforms, increased information sharing and coordination, and adaptation.

Emission Targets

The Green Party of BC shares the greenhouse gas (GHG) emission targets identified by the Green Party of Canada:

- At least 30% below 1990 levels by 2020 (47% below 2007)
- At least 50% below 1990 levels by 2030 (62% below 2007)
- At least 80% below 1990 levels by 2040 (85% below 2007)

Conserving Energy

A fiscally responsible energy strategy starts by reducing energy waste through increased conservation and efficiency.

Key Goals

- Reduce our overall energy demands
- Use existing energy resources more efficiently

BC Greens Will

- Implement refundable tax credits for all energy retrofit costs based on before-and-after EnerGuide or infrared heat tests for residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional buildings
- Introduce tax-deductible 'Green' loans for home-owner energy retrofit costs
- Give a 100% Accelerated Capital Cost Allowance for all businesses for energy retrofit costs
- Offer revolving loans for residential or business energy retrofits

Regulations and Taxation

One of the ways to address climate change is to use the taxation and regulation powers of government to achieve the targets.

BC Greens Will

- Amend the Environmental Management Act to include GHG reduction regulations
- Mandate the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change to audit GHG emissions and prescribe GHG remediation
- Increase the carbon tax to \$50/tonne and make the tax incrementally progressive to help reach emission targets on schedule. In addition:
 - Tax all GHG emitting industries
 - Capture the full social global cost of carbon emissions
 - Exempt British Columbians living below the low-income cut-off as established by Statistics Canada
 - Extend carbon emission taxes to oil and gas and cement industries
 - Convert fuel taxes to carbon and environmental taxes
- Place a hard cap on large final emitters of GHGs (the ten largest industrial sources account for 15% of all BC GHGs)
- Ensure that GHG emissions reporting in BC takes into account the GHGs of coal-fired electricity imported from outside the province and work to eliminate imported coal-fired electricity

- Make the Environmental Risk Assessment (ERA) by the Oil and Gas Commission a regulated requirement under the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change
- Phase out the nearly \$350 million in annual subsidies to the oil and gas industry
- Place a permanent moratorium on coal bed methane projects and shale bed gas exploration and production
- Mandate that the oil and gas industry meet provincial GHG reduction targets and make records available for GHG audits
- Prohibit gas flaring by sector industries, with significant penalties for non-compliance (flaring and fugitive emissions at natural gas facilities account for nearly 14% of GHG emissions in BC)

Transportation Reforms

Transportation accounts for 37% of BC's greenhouse gases. The Green Party of BC will work with British Columbians towards significant reductions of these gases. In the future, BC Greens will phase out gasoline powered cars and short-haul trucks.

BC Greens Will

- Regulate vehicle carbon emissions to fall by 85% by 2030, using tax incentives and regulatory standards
- Cancel the exemption of BC Ferries Corporation from the GHG Reduction Targets Act
- Introduce an automobile environmental carbon tax — by sliding scale according to the fuel efficiency of the vehicle and distance driven
- Regulate the hydrogen fuel cell industry to ensure the use of only zero emission energy for hydrogen production
- Provide tax breaks and funds that support cycling, transit, rail, tele-working, walking, and video-conferencing
- Match any federal tax incentives for Canadian manufacturers of super-efficient, Plug-in Hybrid Electric, and electric vehicles sold in BC

- Rail is the most carbon efficient way to move goods and people. Invest in renewing and expanding rail systems in BC. Move cargo to routes serviced by rail in order to reduce the volume of trucks moving goods through Metro Vancouver
- Implement distance-based auto insurance, congestion, road, and parking pricing policies

Forestry Reforms

The pine beetle has destroyed 80% of BC's pine forests and the climate crisis is linked to this devastation. Trees and intact forests pull CO₂ from the atmosphere and store it in their structure and the soil that supports the ecosystem. When managed well, forest offset Greenhouse Gas emissions. BC's forests need to be considered as part of the solutions to reduce GHG emissions and as part of our strategies for adapting to climate change. Our current industrial forestry practices leave clear cuts that release CO₂ and accelerate climate change. BC Greens would move to ecological forestry practices and a community based forestry model that places biodiversity and the contribution that forests can make to action on climate change equal in importance to continuing to use our forests simply as a source of logs.

BC Greens Will

- Conserve more forests
- Change to logging methods that increase carbon storage
- Phase out clear cutting in second-growth stands
- Move to frequent light commercial thinning and longer rotations
- Maintain the ecological integrity and resilience of forests as a strategy to combat climate change

Adapting to Change

The Green Party believes that a responsible government will show leadership in developing an adaptation strategy. All levels of government will be involved in the effort to limit the climate crisis. Failure to do so will result in millions of

lost dollars. We will not allow this kind of wastefulness to continue.

BC Greens Will

- Establish special task forces to prepare region-specific climate change adaptive strategies involving all stakeholders
- Set up a Climate Change Adaptation fund to assist those regions hard hit by natural disasters

Sharing Information

- Create an independent Climate Change Science Panel and an all-party Standing Climate Change Committee to complement the work of the BC Climate Action Secretariat
- Maintain BC's participation in the Western Regional Climate Action Initiative (WRCAI)
- Include local governments as key players in all initiatives, and provide incentives and increased budgets for successful projects
- Support global verification and certification standards for carbon credits and establish a provincial carbon bank to support the purchase of local offsets. This may be the redefined role of the Pacific Carbon Trust

Building Code Changes

- Mandatory installation of solar hot water systems and pre-wiring for solar photovoltaic (PV) systems on new buildings
- Mandatory 2 kW solar PV systems on all roofs two years after the price of solar falls to \$2/watt
- Inclusion of pre-wiring building requirements for electric cars. Particular attention will be given to implementation for multi-tenant buildings, work-place parking, and public parking lots
- Energy efficiency labeling for buildings before they are sold or leased, including the average energy consumption
- Promote geothermal, solar hot water, and ground/water/air source heat exchange in home heating

- Require that heat recovery devices be put in place on suitable (water and waste) drains

Public Buildings

- Implement a provincial program to energy retrofit public sector buildings such as universities, schools, museums, and hospitals
- Mandate the use of occupancy sensors on all public area lighting, including all multi-tenant and office buildings
- Require that all new publicly-funded buildings in BC are energy self-sufficient and qualify as net-zero GHG emitters by 2020

Changing the Way We Farm

Organic farming is the fastest growing agricultural sector and the most profitable. However, much industrial agricultural production is heavily subsidized, which lowers the price of many foods.

The Green Party recognizes the economic and ecological potential of organic farming. We hear the concerns of family farmers throughout the province. Industrial agriculture poses numerous risks for our continued health. Intensive large-scale farming methods make our food supply vulnerable to disease. We believe we can do better.

Key Goals

- Ensure that BC enjoys high quality, healthy, and plentiful local food supply systems
- Encourage biodiversity
- Prevent food-related illnesses
- Encourage long-term jobs in the food production sector

BC Greens Will

- Stimulate local production to improve regional food security
- Enable small organic producers to raise and sell – independent of the marketing boards – an economically viable number of livestock
- Limit any further establishment of marketing boards or expansion of

marketing board jurisdiction over small farm production

- Remove taxes on value-added BC agricultural products such as juices and wines
- Influence the distribution chain to support the sale of locally produced food and remove any subsidies that distort the true cost of imported foods
- Shift taxes onto imported foods and off locally produced food
- Work with the livestock industries to establish slaughterhouses in BC and help market BC range-fed livestock internationally
- Reform the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) in membership and process, with members selected in a transparent and open competition
- Freeze all further withdrawals of Class One and Class Two agricultural land from the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)
- Prohibit landowners from degrading Class One and Class Two ALR lands by activities such as removing topsoil and depositing sand, gravel, or construction wastes on these lands
 - Employ farmland covenants, trusts, and long term tenure as tools to increase the amount of land used for agriculture and to provide access to land for those who want to farm and for whom the cost of land is prohibitive
- Establish locally grown food procurement policies for government and government agencies
- Re-establish a Buy BC program to identify BC grown agricultural products and promote agricultural based tourism
- Provide small grants to support municipalities and school boards that wish to maintain and expand community gardens and urban agriculture
- Re-instate a permit system based on scientific criteria for milk grading by authorized inspectors to allow the licensing and sale of raw milk

Food Safety

- Phase out synthetic chemical pesticides
- Make BC a Genetically Modified Organism free (GMO-free) agricultural zone
- Require the labeling of all foods for genetically modified organisms and other harmful products
- Re-establish regional independence and authority in setting regulations for slaughtering to enable smaller producers to slaughter on-site under conditions inspected by local health officers
- Work with the federal government to change regulations on slaughterhouses and food processing facilities to encourage small community-owned and operated facilities, through interest-free loans, and tailored inspection and safety measures

Smart Food

- Provide technical expertise with respect to standards and best practices, supported in part by local experimental farm research
- Set up a heritage seed bank and seed exchange program and heritage botanical gardens on Vancouver Island, in the Fraser Valley, and in the Okanagan
- Implement consumer-focused and school-based education designed to support local food production
- Foster a preference and a market for local in-season food grown without pesticides using bio-dynamic or organic farming methods
- Develop a school curriculum that provides children with farming and food production experience
- Support university-based programs in sustainable food production and agriculture, including seed saving and preservation of bio-diverse, non-genetically modified food varieties, and traditional farming methods

Responsible Mining

For a number of years, mining has been a significant source of investment, jobs, and revenue in BC. In order for us to continue to

profit from our resources, changes in our practices are necessary. Mining need not come with the high environmental and social price tag it has had in the past. A responsible government providing oversight can avoid many of the negative impacts.

The Green Party is dedicated to ensuring British Columbians will benefit from the work of the mining industry for years to come. We will improve laws and make changes to mining financing and implementation. We will also couple reform in mining policy with changes in two other areas of public policy - environmental assessment and recognition of First Nations' title and rights.

Key Goals

- Reduce the impact of mining on the environment
- Share profits from mining

BC Greens Will

- Eliminate all subsidies for mining and mineral developments
- Establish a tax on mining profits that gives the people of BC, the owners of the resource, a fair return on their investment
- Require that all mining proposals incorporate triple-bottom-line accounting and full environmental assessments, including public hearings
- Ensure that reclamation plans, including plans to deal with acid mine draining, are in place before active mining begins
- Expand the Mine Reclamation Fund to clean up and reclaim old and recently abandoned mine sites and decommission mine access roads
- Move to cost-based compensation (based on monies spent on developing the property) in cases where mineral claims are expropriated in the public interest, such as for parks or drinking water watersheds.
- Require any third party applying for an exploration or development permit within a designated exploration area to submit a consent document issued by the affected First Nations

- Review and upgrade current reclamation security and bonding provisions

Modernizing Mineral Tenure Laws

BC's mineral tenure laws are over 100 years old and allow mineral claims to be staked on most land in the province, without consent required from landowners and without providing for the duty to consult with First Nations. Once staked, a claim holder has the right to convert their claim to a mineral lease. The BC government has no discretion to refuse this conversion to leases.

The BC Green Party recognizes that this tenure system interferes with effective land-use planning, community decision-making, and environmental stewardship, the costs of which fall to taxpayers. BC's mineral tenure laws must be updated in order to better reflect the expectations of British Columbians.

Key Goal

To modernize the mineral tenure system so that it is consistent with good land use planning and environmental stewardship

BC Greens Will

- Modernize BC's mineral tenure laws, through consultation with First Nations, industry, environmental groups, communities, landowners, and other stakeholders
- Replace free entry with a discretionary licensing and permitting system requiring consideration of environmental and other interests when allocating access to mineral rights
- Provide landowners and other interested parties the right to petition government to withdraw lands from mineral tenure availability
- Establish no-go mining zones, including land for unsettled First Nations' land claims, domestic use watersheds, private conservation lands, sensitive lands with poor environmental restoration capability, and fisheries sensitive watersheds

- Create adequate no mining buffers around areas of cultural and ecological importance and lands that link existing protected areas
- Require mines to conform to the terms of land use plans and agreements with First Nations
- Explicitly acknowledge Aboriginal rights and title with mineral tenure legislation
- Require consultation with, and prior consent from, First Nations and private landowners before mining permits are granted and mining activities begin
- Call for fair compensation and the option for relocation for affected landowners
- Ensure that comprehensive environmental assessments are completed before significant exploration activity begins²

Regulating Fracking

There is increasing and incontrovertible evidence that the use of hydraulic fracturing (fracking) to extract natural gas and petroleum poses risks to human health and the environment. Using current practices, fracking has an unacceptable impact on our fresh water resources due to the massive amounts of water used in the fracturing process. In addition, there are concerns about management of the contaminated water that returns to the surface; the impact fracking has on agricultural and forest lands as well as wildlife habitats; and the contribution that the mining of unconventional gas makes to climate change.

The BC Green Party will work with the fracking industry to ensure all environmental liabilities and health concerns are addressed before granting any new tenure agreements for unconventional natural gas development.

² From *MINING: Mineral Tenure Reform* by Emma Hume in *Maintaining SuperNatural BC for Our Children: Selected Law Reform Proposals*, Edited by Calvin Sandborn, Published by Environmental Law Centre, University of Victoria.

Key Goals

- Put a moratorium on new gas exploration and drilling
- Establish industry responsibility for repairing the environmental damage from fracking operations

BC Greens Will

- Require full disclosure of all chemicals used in the fracturing process
- Call for detailed mine reclamation plans with adequate bonds to ensure environmental liabilities are not passed onto the province
- Impose an immediate moratorium on new exploration permits and land tenure agreements
- Provide for the comprehensive mapping of all ground and surface fresh water resources and an improved Environmental Assessment (EA) process prior to any consideration of lifting the moratorium
- Reform the Environmental Assessment (EA) process so that it considers all potential economic, environmental, and social impacts as well as the cumulative effects from all industrial activity within a region. The EA process will:
 - Evaluate alternatives to proposed projects
 - Utilize a Watershed Based approach
 - Be inclusive of local governments, First Nations, and public participation
 - Be part of a broader land-use planning regime
- Determine the natural limits to fresh water withdrawals from streams, lakes, rivers, and underground sources and grant withdrawal permits accordingly
- Put a fair price on fresh water to be applied to all current projects
- Require long-term monitoring of spent and capped well sites by the company to guarantee public safety

- Set royalty rates that are fair to both extraction companies and the province while considering comparative rates in other jurisdictions
- Change the role of the Oil and Gas Commission to that of an oversight regulator that is required to meet the aforementioned standards and that is not influenced by industry or the government
- End subsidies to the oil and gas industry
- Revise the Clean Energy Act to require the gas industry pays for its GHG emissions

Rethinking Forestry

The impact of the global economy has affected the forest industry dramatically. The public-private forest tenure model has also damaged the industry. Industrial forestry as practiced in BC since the 1950s has mined the quality and squandered the value of our forests. As a result, BC has seen a flight of forest industry capital to the USA and other areas.

It is time for something better.

The Green Party is dedicated to strategies that will shift forestry from an industrial model to an ecologically based model. This means protecting ecological integrity as well as producing sustainable high quality, profitable forest products

Key Goals

- Manage our forest resources for present and future generations
- Create long-lasting, wood industry employment in communities throughout BC
- Preserve ecosystem biodiversity
- Stop old-growth harvesting

BC Greens Will

- Stimulate local wood-based and forest products industries
- Encourage the development of value-added, second-growth processing facilities through tax-shifting
- Provide low-interest start-up loans to encourage small, labour-intensive eco-forestry

- Ensure small and value-added BC-based forest businesses have access to a reliable wood supply through regional log markets
- Develop a licensing system and enforceable rules for sustainable commercial harvest of non-timber forest products by local people
- Increase small-scale forest tenure such as community forests and woodlots
- Support companies that want Forest Stewardship Council eco-certification for their wood products and help market eco-certified BC wood products internationally
- Establish post-secondary programs and professional development opportunities for training and skills upgrading to ensure professional foresters are competent in all aspects of sustainable forest practice, stewardship, and management
- Provide extension services for preparation of management plans, forest valuation, and capacity building

Reform Log Markets and Improve Oversight

- Set up an inquiry into stumpage manipulation, reinstate government log scalers, and set stumpage rates at fair market value
- Establish Regional Resource Management Boards with the mandate to incrementally achieve Green forest policy goals and provide stewardship role over local forests
- Accelerate tenure reform to require no less than fifty per cent of public forest tenures be held by First Nations woodlots and communities by the year 2019
- Establish competitive regional log markets that sell all logs from public land through open auction, and in the interim replace the current stumpage tax system with the payment of a percentage tax on the logs sold

Wisely Conserve and Manage Our Forest Resources

- Establish an independent review into the state of British Columbia's forests and their management, focusing on area-based

tenure, industrial structure, and sustainability of forests

- Institute watershed-and ecosystem-based management plans and rate of cut determinations based on ecologically sustainable forestry principles that protect timber and non-timber forest values, including cultural, environmental, tourism, recreational, and fishery values
- Maintain natural (fire, wind, insects, etc.) and human (logging) disturbances within the historic range of natural variability
- Phase out clear cutting in second-growth stands and replacing this practice with frequent light commercial thinning and longer rotations
- Designate as off-limits to logging our remaining intact watersheds, domestic drinking water watersheds, endangered ecosystems, habitats of endangered species, and First Nations lands on which approval to log has not been granted
- Ban the use of pesticides and synthetic chemical fertilizers in public forests
- Eliminate coastal old-growth logging
- Maintain the ecological integrity and resilience of forests to reduce vulnerability to natural and human caused stresses
- Set the same standards of environmental protection for logging on private lands over five hectares, as established for public lands
- Establish a reserve fund to enable increased forest restoration activities during times when the forest economy experiences a downturn

Restructuring Hydroelectricity Production

Over 80% of BC Hydro's power comes from the Columbia and Peace River systems. The Columbia River Treaty is the 1964 agreement between Canada and the United States that governs how dams on this river system are

managed. However, the treaty is out-of-date and needs to be restructured.

Key Goal

Update the Columbia River Treaty in order to prioritize healthy rivers and communities

BC Greens Will

- Support re-opening the Columbia River Treaty for negotiation in 2014, in order to put in place new measures to maintain the ecological flow, shape, connections, quality, and life of BC's rivers
- Ensure that First Nations and local communities are meaningfully involved in the Columbia River Treaty re-negotiation process
- Incorporate ecological considerations into water flow management, so that decision-making becomes based on the following three priorities (in order of importance): (1) flood prevention, (2) minimizing ecological impacts, and (3) maximizing electricity generation
- Encourage treaty measure that channel revenue from electricity generation towards restoring or replacing the lost ecological, agricultural, cultural, and fisheries values in the Columbia River Basin
- Develop a comprehensive sustainability assessment protocol for evaluating the individual merits of BC dams before determining if service continuation, modification, or decommissioning should occur

Reforming Government

Give Citizens a Voice and Improve Public Oversight

The BC Green Party has witnessed British Columbians' growing frustration with a political system that is much too inaccessible. We will restore integrity and accountability to our government through increased public oversight for ministries, Crown Corporations, the privatized BC Ferries, and public appointments.

Greens will change the structure of our government to reflect what we want to build. We will create new ministries and combine existing ones to build a new culture. By doing so we will reduce the size of Cabinet.

Green MLAs will decentralize decision-making. We will strengthen the role of local government by transferring to them the power and resources necessary to meet the needs of their communities. We will work to find new strategies that respect the autonomy of First Nations and that provide for community, social, and economic development.

Green Party Reforms Will

- Encourage greater citizen participation in our democracy
- Reduce the influence of special interest groups in governing
- Strengthen public oversight of government bodies and policing
- End the culture of secrecy in government

Building a Better Democracy

The BC Green Party has promoted fair voting and cooperative politics since our inception thirty years ago. The citizens of BC are eager to help make our democracy work better. In the referendum on electoral reform in 2005, 58% of British Columbian voters said they wanted to change to the system of voting recommended by the Citizen's Assembly.

However, the governing Liberals (with the support of the opposition NDP) decided that, in order to pass and change the voting system, an undemocratic 60% of the voters would have to say yes and over 50% would have to say yes to the change in 60% of the electoral districts. In fact, a total of over 50% said yes in 77 of 79 ridings.



Had the requirement been a simple majority, BC would now have a fair voting system. Dishonest politicians, corruption, strict party control, and the excessive influence of narrow interest groups, all of which have led to distrust and disillusionment among citizens, would be a thing of the past. Quite simply, BC can do better.

In conjunction with the people of BC, the Green Party will develop a comprehensive program to bring participatory democracy to BC and to build a more cooperative and effective government that works for the benefit of all British Columbians.

Based on the trend toward greater secrecy in government and the use of strategies that avoid subjecting information to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA), BC Greens would implement a framework of oversight checks and balances to ensure BC has a responsible system of public administration and governance. We believe that the general public, media, and oversight agencies should have a reasonable ability to review or scrutinize the fiscal, operational, and decision-making practices of public institutions and agencies.

Key Goals

- Ensure that voters receive fair election results
- Bring in campaign finance reform to reduce the influence that special interest groups can gain over government with their campaign contributions
- Encourage free votes in the Legislature
- Reduce the concentration of power in the Premier's office
- Make government information easier and less costly to access

BC Greens Will

- Require by law that political parties use democratic means to nominate candidates and that these democratic processes are made public
- Institute a system of free votes in the Legislature for all matters, including the budget. The BC Greens will not "whip" party members
- Initiate a one-hour question period every day the Legislature sits
- Require that all-party parliamentary committees hold public hearings on draft legislation
- Delegate to committees the power to modify the legislation and to have the modified version considered in the Legislature
- Amend the Initiative and Recall Act to add clarity related to conduct, decision-making, and criteria for both Initiative and Recall and to make this an effective tool for both citizens and legislators
- Reduce the power of the Premier's office
- Establish fixed dates for sittings of the Legislature
- Make Freedom of Information (FOI) requests more affordable and responses more timely
- Establish the administrative legal requirement for detailed documentation in key decisions of government

- Establish appropriate penalties of non-compliance in the duty to document
- Amend FIPPA to empower the Commissioner to investigate the inappropriate destruction of government documents
- Require that all lobbyists declare their lobby status when providing information and recommendations to public agents
- Strengthen the Society Act to make societies more accountable and their operations more transparent
- Introduce effective "whistle-blower" legislation

Voters' Rights

BC Greens believe that political parties are not being held accountable for their election promises. We also think that the current political party structure allows Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) to not be held accountable for not representing constituents. In addition, big-money donors to political parties inevitably influence government policies. Greens believe voters have the right to honest election platforms and to easy access to election platforms from all political parties. Voters also have the right to impartial politicians.

Key Goal

The Green Party of BC will advocate for Voters' Rights legislation

BC Greens Will

- Require that all political parties participating in an election declare their election platforms to Elections BC three weeks before the election date
- Establish an Independent Platform Commissioner to perform an audit between elections and issue a report to the public
- Have Elections BC post the declared platforms online, with one hard copy available at each public library and each Service BC location, no less than two weeks before the election date

- Implement campaign finance reform that limits political donations from any one organization or individual to \$2,000 per political party per year
- Institute an annual subsidy of \$2 per vote per year until the next election for any political party receiving at least 10% of the total votes cast in an election. This public subsidy is to compensate parties for the loss of union and corporate donations
- Appoint an Independent Debates Commission to ensure fair rules for the televised Leaders' debates

Executives and Board Members of Government Agencies

There has been a dramatic increase in the salary levels of senior executives in the public service over the past ten to twenty years. The assumption has been that the public sector must pay salaries equivalent to the private sector to attract executives with appropriate skills. Accompanying this assumption is a belief that executive positions in the public and private sector require similar skills. The Government has adopted private sector compensation strategies such as bonuses. These strategies are often based in private sector practices or cost containment and staff reduction in the name of increased productivity. The Green Party of BC challenges all of these assumptions.

While there has been lip service paid to the need for lean government, the number of senior executive positions has increased exponentially. Organizations often have multiple Vice Presidents, Senior Vice Presidents, and other positions in the executive suite. BC Greens believe in leaner government and would review the executive structure of all government bodies with the objective of reducing the number of executive positions.

The board members of Crown Corporations; municipal police boards; health authorities; the Agricultural Land Commission; BC Transit; Translink; and government-owned corporations such as BC Ferries are appointed by the

government. These appointments tend to go to friends of the party in government. The compensation for board members has risen sharply and includes both a salary and per diem rates for days when the board meets. At the same time, the oversight of many government entities has been lax. BC Greens believe that this compensation structure needs to be reviewed, with a view to reducing it to an honorarium and coverage of expenses. We would also create an independent agency to solicit applications and make appointments from qualified individuals who reflect local demographics.

Key Goal

To review the structure of government organizations with the aim of reducing the compensation level of senior executives, encouraging promotions from within, and ensuring there are no more executives than needed

BC Greens Will

- Review executive salaries and set those wages to reflect the expectations of the citizens of BC
- Review the appropriateness of the practice of awarding bonuses within the public sector for simply doing one's job
- Tie the compensation of the highest paid employees within government agencies (CEOs of Crown Corporations and Deputy Ministers) to that of the lowest paid employees on a 10 to 1 ratio. In other words, the highest paid employee cannot make more than ten times the lowest paid employee
- Cap executive and non-union severance packages in government, Crown corporations, and other government-funded bodies to bring them in line with BC Employment Standards (maximum of eight weeks severance)
- Fill management and other non-union positions from within before seeking candidates from further afield to reduce

the likelihood of overly generous compensation

- Provide mentoring and training to develop a pool of well-qualified candidates for promotion to executive and management positions from within government
- Review the compensation of board members with a view to making these volunteer positions with commensurate honorariums and coverage of expenses
- Create an independent office to make non-partisan appointments to Boards

Decentralizing Decision Making

The Green Party is committed to expanding the authority of local governments to include authority over energy development, social services, and transportation. In consultation with First Nations, local governments would also be able to make decisions about regional growth, climate change, zero waste principles, and agricultural, forest, and recreational land protection.

Green MLAs will propose new funding formulas for municipal and regional governments to ensure there is sufficient financial support for their new decision-making and programming responsibilities.

The Green Party of BC recognizes that civic democratic due process is indispensable for achieving long-term, balanced, and maximized economic and social development within BC's communities. Unfortunately, in the last several years an increasing number of municipal councils and regional districts in BC have resorted to the Alternate Approval Process (APP) in order to push forward large community projects without the direct consent of their constituencies.

The APP was introduced within the 2004 BC Community Charter. BC Greens believe that the APP contravenes the principles of prudent, democratic, and transparent civic due process. Through the APP, not only are BC's municipal councils legally permitted to presume the consent of constituents for extraordinary municipal initiatives, they are also afforded the

right to do so entirely at their own discretion and without any actual "alternate approval" mechanism being in place - in practice or theory.

BC Greens Will

- Implement elected Regional Resource Management Boards, Regional Health Trusts, and Local Social Trusts
- Expand recall legislation to include municipal officials
- Restore local land-use decision-making
- Revoke the Alternate Approval Process

Restoring Confidence in Law Enforcement

A fundamental principle of a free and democratic state is that its police must be above reproach, independent of political powers, and committed to enforcing the law in an impartial and professional manner.

The Green Party supports a police service with the highest standards of conduct that earns the respect of all British Columbians. We believe that, as with all public bodies, law enforcement must be subject to reasonable limits and undergo periodic reviews, if police are to maintain the highest level of service.

Key Goals

- Bring public oversight to internal police investigation
- Rebuild public trust in our police
- Set community supported guidelines on appropriate tools for police to employ in their duties

BC Greens Will

- Establish a provincial police service
- Appoint an independent Provincial Police Commissioner to oversee investigations of police conduct and process for all jurisdictions
- Remove electric stun devices from all law enforcement agencies within BC

- Put in place a citizen’s assembly to make recommendations on policing and law enforcement models for British Columbia

Valuing First Nations as Partners

While aboriginal rights, aboriginal title, and treaty rights are enshrined in the 1982 Constitution Act, denial of these rights continues. The BC government has been negotiating modern treaties through the BC Treaty Commission since 1992 but this process has resulted in only two treaties. The citizens of BC understand that this process is taking too long, costing too much, and is not addressing First Nations’ needs.

First Nations with historic treaties continually struggle to have their existing treaty rights recognized by the BC government. For example, most of the Treaty 8 First Nations in northeast BC have had outstanding reserve land entitlements owing to them for almost 100 years. Oil and gas development surrounds the Treaty 8 First Nations. They are losing cultural and spiritual lands at an alarming rate.

In 1996, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) published a report of recommendations to improve the lives of aboriginal people. Disgracefully, little progress has been made since publication of the report. Denial of aboriginal rights and treaty rights continues. The Green Party believes in implementation of rights agreements and the Royal Commission’s recommendations.

The Green Party recognizes the need to improve the quality of life of First Nations peoples through improved housing, better education, more employment opportunities, and increased access to health programs, including traditional medicines.

Key Goal

Recognize and affirm aboriginal and treaty rights in a fair, efficient, and respectful manner

BC Greens Will

- Honour BC’s fiduciary duty to aboriginal people by defining aboriginal title and rights in partnership with First Nations
- Honour existing treaty rights and work in good faith with the federal government to settle the outstanding claims of First Nations and enact historic treaties
- Implement the spirit of the Kelowna Accord, “The New Relationship”, and RCAP
- Work with First Nations as partners to ensure just consultation and accommodation of First Nations’ aspirations and co-management and equitable sharing of BC’s natural resources on traditional territories
- Work with First Nations peoples so that they develop economic capacity for their communities
- Invest in First Nations economic development
- Support First Nations to find solutions to eliminate the disparity in the quality of life experienced by First Nations communities using quality of life indicators as defined by First Nations
- Enhance the First Nations component in the education system curriculum
- Train educators to include materials and methodologies that better inform people on the history of First Nations peoples in BC and Canada, the continuing impacts of colonization on First Nations peoples, and the necessity of recognizing aboriginal and treaty rights

When you read Green Book 2013, we believe you will find that our values reflect your values; and, that they are shared by your friends and most other British Columbians. We want a stronger British Columbia and one that promotes responsible prosperity and well-being.

All British Columbians want and deserve a more effective, representative and accountable government that makes sensible decisions for the future so that our children and grand children inherit a province where they can flourish.

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