

Election 2015 Candidate Survey from GSA : Entry # 268

Information about you

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Survey Questions

1. In light of the recent Marathassa oil spill in English Bay, what do you see as the top three priorities for improving marine oil spill preparedness and response on BC's west coast?

The Green Party and candidates are committed to enhancing and assuring the safety of our coastal waters from oil spills and other marine pollution

To do so the Green Party would - Reinstating the Kitsilano Coast Guard Station and our visual monitoring of the harbour. From my home near the river I can hear the Coast Guard hover craft, and remember the day of the Marathassa oil spill, hearing the craft head out, and thinking how late they were, given the news had been reporting on the spill for several hours before.

A legislated ban on supertankers on the BC coast is a commitment the Green Party has made to our voters. Without a ban on the tankers, including ships bringing in jet fuel from the Burnaby refinery and later from Cherry Point in Washington State, a major spill is inevitable.

- stopping further industrialization of the South Arm of the Fraser River, and restoring funding for spill response. Over the past few years many programs needed for effective spill response have been cut. The Environmental Emergencies Programme in Environment Canada used to have regional offices in Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto, Montreal, Dartmouth NS, and St John's. In 2012 they were replaced by a 1-800 number that rings in Gatineau Que and Montreal. We need to restore funding for monitoring and responding to oil spills.

2. What specific actions can the federal government take to ensure that local communities are meaningfully involved in oil spill planning and response?

Using Australia and their system as our model, Canada should bring together various levels of government to identify specific needs in areas of hazards research and to establish a collective emergency management agenda. As per the Australian model

Included in this would be:

- promoting a coordinated national response to law enforcement and emergency management issues;
- providing a framework for cooperation and shared strategic directions for policing and emergency services

a) The establishment of a Citizens Advisory Council to facilitate citizen input into and oversight of Canada's marine oil spill preparedness and response regime?

Yes, as Candidate, along with the Green Party I would Support the establishment of a Citizens Advisory Council to facilitate citizen input into and oversight of Canada's marine oil Spill preparedness and response regime. While oil companies profit from pipeline and tankers, it is the citizens, marine and wildlife that pay the price for a spill. The Green Party supports citizens having a strong voice in oil spill preparedness and response.

b) Federal funding for local governments to ensure that they are adequately prepared to play their part in a coordinated spill response, and manage the impacts of an oil spill on their community?

Greens will work to greatly increase funding through Public Safety Canada and the Joint Preparedness Program for projects that implement municipal, territorial, and provincial emergency preparedness plans, including public education and training programs and local emergency infrastructure, such as adequate oil Spill response systems.

3. Do you support or oppose Kinder Morgan's proposed TransMountain pipeline expansion project?

Personally - oppose
Green Party - oppose

The greens are the only federal party to oppose all existing proposals to expand major fossil fuel infrastructure. The use of pipelines to move raw bitumen from the oil Sands to port will dramatically increase the number of oil tankers along BC's coast, threatening local Ecosystems and economies.

4. What are your views on the National Energy Board's pipeline review process, including its current TransMountain review?

Citizens of BC must have a definitive say about the proposal to dramatically increase bitumen-loaded tankers through our waters.

5. What are the three most important steps the federal government should take to tackle climate change?

Halt expansion of the oil Sands. Rather than shipping raw product out for refining in other countries, we should be refining what we produce here, creating new jobs here in Canada.

Implement a National Energy Strategy that includes a price on carbon. We urgently need a comprehensive, science-based national climate strategy to address rising sea levels, drought, extreme weather events, changing rainfall patterns, increased forest fires, melting permafrost and crumbling Arctic infrastructure.

Eliminate all fossil fuel subsidies and put a national price on carbon.

Invest in an infrastructure that promotes renewable energy, and a more robust east-west electricity grid to promote renewable energy transmission between provinces, while reducing the enormous waste in our energy systems.

6. Would you support a cumulative effects assessment to provide information on the combined impacts of all oil, coal and LNG projects currently proposed for the Georgia Strait region?

Yes, the Green Party will support a cumulative effects assessment for this project.

7. How should the federal government address the chronic problem of derelict vessels spilling fuel and releasing other contaminants into the marine environment?

The Green Party will support legislation that holds owners of derelict vessels responsible and also empowers Transport Canada and the Coast Guard, providing the necessary funding to be proactive and deal with derelict and abandoned vessels before they cause environmental disasters.

8. Do you have any additional comments or activities you would like to share with our supporters?

Public science belongs to the people. The Green Party is committed to restoring evidence-based decision-making and ensuring unfettered access to public science. It is not for the PM's communication specialists to decide what publicly information is to be shared with the Canadian public.

This past June Elizabeth May introduced the Public Access to Science Act to make all publicly funded scientific research publicly accessible by law.

We need to lift the cloud of darkness recently placed on the federal public service, where scientists have been forbidden from sharing their findings with the public. It is irresponsible to hide evidence because it is inconvenient, and we need all the evidence we can get to defend our coast and country from devastating pollution from oil spills and climate change.

Thank you for this opportunity

Laura-Leah Shaw