

Election 2015 Candidate Survey from GSA : Entry # 267

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?

- 1) Rebuilding the monitoring and response capacity of the Coast Guard in concert with Port Metro Vancouver
- 2) Accumulating data, past and present on the health of our coastline, as there is nothing to compare the state of the marine environment after an oil spill to know where to bring it back to.
- 3) Applying highest standards when it comes to tanker safety and design, permitting only tankers with at least three layered hulls, or any other kind of state-of-the-art overall safety designs, and ensuring that tankers are flagged are in countries with a sound system of law and adequate insurance requirements. No flags of convenience.

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

I believe Canada should adopt the model used successfully by Australia to bring together various levels of government to identify specific needs in areas of hazards research and to establish a collective emergency management agenda.

This model involves the Council of Australian Governments acting through the Standing Council on Police and Emergency Management (SCPEM). The goals of the SCPEM are threefold:

- to promote a coordinated national response to law enforcement and emergency management issues;
- to provide a framework for cooperation and shared strategic directions for the policing and emergency services of Australia and New Zealand; and
- to encourage and share best practice in police policy and operations and in emergency management across jurisdictions.

This well-structured process for intergovernmental collaboration has resulted in the Australian National Strategy for Disaster Resilience – a comprehensive, long-term, multi-hazard approach to disaster risk reduction that integrates all risk considerations, with a focus on disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and vulnerability reduction. The Strategy was introduced as a response to a fractured system in which disparate policy agendas and competing priorities resulted in gaps and overlaps in natural hazard preparedness and management.

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?

I would support a citizens advisory council, of which no less than 1/3 are marine and/or environmental scientists serve together.

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?

The Green Party will redress the real fiscal imbalance facing the municipal level of government. Green Party MPs will work to greatly increase funding through Public Safety Canada and the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP) 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.

We need to simplify the Public Safety Canada application process and expand the eligibility criteria for funding through the JEPP. Green MPs will work to increase funding for emergency preparedness training programs for emergency responders, including the Canadian Emergency Preparedness College.

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

The Green Party fully opposes the Kinder-Morgan TransMountain pipeline expansion project. The Greens are the only federal party opposed to all existing proposals to expand major fossil fuel infrastructure. We stand firmly against the expanded use of pipelines for the purpose of getting raw bitumen (dilbit) from the oil sands to port. These projects will dramatically increase the number of oil tankers along the British Columbia coast, threatening local ecosystems and economies. The Green Party strongly opposes any such increase in tanker traffic, and has advocated for a legislated ban on supertankers on the British Columbia coast.

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

It is a biased process, which is incapable of honestly appraising the broad value of the project itself, let alone to incorporate the public sentiment towards the projects.

It is no surprise that the review is currently suspended due to a conflict of interest.

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

- 1) Establish clear and serious carbon emission targets for the nation and stop ducking them -- see the Green Party's platform -- and give Canada's full and genuine support to international efforts to set new collaborative targets and guidelines for all nations.
- 2) Stop subsidizing the fossil fuels industry in this country, and raise more rigorous standards for its operation and product pricing.
- 3) Make it a top national priority to invest in the successful development of world-class industries in and around sustainable energy systems and advanced technology sectors, especially in regions of the country that are currently dependent upon fossil fuels extraction and processing.

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, I absolutely do!

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

As Paul Manly, Green Candidate for Nanaimo-Ladysmith, wrote:

Derelict and abandoned vessels pose a serious threat to the environment of B.C.'s coastal communities but the federal government has been reluctant to act.

The Transport Canada Ship-Source Oil Pollution Fund can only be used for clean-up after a spill has occurred. That's too late.

The Green Party stands by the principle that polluters must pay and be held responsible for their actions. Registration, insurance and vessel safety codes should be in place to ensure that boat owners are in compliance with the standards necessary to protect our coastal waters.

We also stand by the precautionary principle and would empower the Canadian Coast Guard to take action in situations where vessels have been abandoned in substandard conditions and pose a threat to the environment.

Our local economies depend greatly on the vital role played by our harbours in the fishing, tourism and transportation industries. They must be protected with the full force of federal legislation.

The Green Party will support legislation that holds owners of derelict vessels responsible but which 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?

I believe that our environmental safety is at stake and might be lost forever if we don't begin to take the appropriate actions today. This is more than just about mere sustainability. Without environmental safety, we will face increased unrest in the world, mass migration, and put the lives of our future generations at risk. There are already vast numbers of environmental disasters in this world with devastating results. They are hard to ignore. I like to believe that - together - we can do better. Let's get started now!

Thank you for the given opportunity to participate in this survey!