



September 3, 2014

Lois Corbett, Executive Director
Conservation Council of NB
180 St. John Street
Fredericton, NB E3B 4A9

Dear Lois:

Thank you for your *excellent* questionnaire. You will find the Green Party's responses following each of your questions.

Air and Climate Protection

1. If elected, will your government commit to reviewing New Brunswick air quality regulations to ensure the province's residents are protected by standards that are health effects-based and are at least on par with those in Quebec and Ontario?

Response: Of course. Reducing exposure to harmful contaminants, including carcinogens and developmental toxins which continue to be emitted from industrial facilities, is a central component of our preventative health strategy. Until we reduce such exposures, the costs of health care, not to mention the strain on individual and family resources of pollution-linked illnesses, will continue to spiral. Historically, the connections between pollution and ill health have been downplayed and denied by the provincial government. Not since the crack-down on SO₂ emissions two decades ago has the government paid any attention to this issue. The Green Party will change this.

2. If elected, will your government commit to re-assessing the 2020 greenhouse gas reduction target?

Response: Yes. The Green Party election platform reads:

"Legislate new provincial greenhouse gas reduction targets of 15% below 2012 levels by 2020; 40% below 2012 levels by 2030; and 75 to 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2050 in keeping with global efforts to stabilize the climate system through the phase out of fossil fuels and shift to a renewable energy system."



In addition, the Green Party would deny permits for new fossil fuel infrastructure such as pipelines, and we would ban the exploration and exploitation of shale gas and cancel existing licences and leases.

3. If elected, will your government commit to developing a province-wide action plan to retrofit our building stock to create conservation and renewable energy opportunities?

Response: Yes. Our platform makes the following commitment:

“Give New Brunswick’s Energy Efficiency and Conservation Agency [Efficiency NB] the mandate to pursue a ten-year building retrofit strategy with clear targets to reduce energy demand and lower heating costs for households and business through financial incentives and technical advice.”

4. If elected, will your government develop a broad incentive package for residents and our businesses to reduce their consumption of fossil fuels at home, at work and in their vehicles?

Response: Yes, sort of. The retrofit program (above) which would contribute to this and is incentive-based. The *Renewable Energy Act* would include measures to ensure that most residential and commercial heating is supplied by geothermal, bioenergy and solar space heating; those measures would likely be in the form of incentives. Other measures to reduce dependence on fossil fuels would involve direct spending by government rather than incentives. We would restore Efficiency NB’s original mandate to expand affordable and accessible public transportation in order to reduce dependence on private vehicles. These measures, as well as the retrofit program and renewable energy investments, would be financed by a pollution tax on imported and produced carbon at the point where it enters the economy (\$10/tonne), as well as part of the federal gas tax rebate. The gas tax fund would also be allocated to programs and infrastructure to ensure cities are walkable and bike accessible.

5. If elected, will your government commit to replacing the outdated Crown Lands and Forest Act with legislation that protects water, wildlife and unique ecosystems including old growth stands, makes certain there are no back-room deals and creates a wider range of forest-based jobs?



Response: Yes. The Green Party platform includes the following provisions:

- Replace the *Crown Lands and Forests Act* with a *Crown Land Forest Sustainability Act*. The Act would create a new management structure that respects our treaty relationship with First Nations and the Supreme Court's recent Tsilqhot'in decision, works with forest-based communities, linking access to forest resources to local regions, while protecting water, fish and wildlife.
- Implement a plan to protect and restore Acadian forest biodiversity, ending logging in any remaining old growth forest.
- Enact legislation to immediately cancel all contracts signed by the Alward government with forestry companies.
- Provide for the creation of Community Forest Licences, adjacent to and within municipalities and First Nations. Community Forest licence holders would have the authority to control the use of forest resources within that licence. A portion of stumpage fees would remain with the community.
- Replace timber-using companies (the mills) as the managers of Crown land with professional management authorities that are publicly accountable to the people of the province. Forest management services could be provided by cooperative, social or business enterprises or by public sector agencies through forest management agreements signed with the Dept. of Natural Resources, First Nations or municipalities, depending on the relevant jurisdiction.

6. If elected, will your government commit to supporting sustainable wood harvesting and ensure our woodlot owners are the first source of wood supply to our mills?

Response: Yes. This measure is in the Green Party platform.

7. If elected, will you commit to ensuring the majority of the 19 rivers submitted for government action are classified under the Clean Water Act regulation within your first year as government?

Response: Yes. This is a priority.

8. If elected, will you commit to introducing a Watershed Protection Act that would require comprehensive watershed-based protection plans?

The Green Party platform includes a provision which would require Regional Service Commissions to integrate management on a watershed basis into their planning



responsibilities. While we did not specify a legislative basis for this responsibility, it makes sense to do so. Obviously, such planning would also have to meet the requirements of any water classification regulation related to a particular watershed.

9. If elected, will you commit to producing a report on the adequacy of New Brunswick's ability to respond to a serious oil pipeline break and/or spill from tankers in our saltwater ports and freshwater systems?

Response: The Green Party would not issue permits to allow the Energy East pipeline to be built, thereby eliminating this risk to water. That said, should the federal government find some legal way to override the Province in this case, it may be useful to have such a study done. Therefore, we would support that being done. There is no harm in gathering information.

10. If elected, will you commit to a moratorium on the development of shale gas resources until it can be ascertained that its extraction poses no unacceptable risk to water?

Response: As mentioned previously, the Green Party platform calls for a complete ban on shale gas exploration and exploitation, as well as the immediate cancellation of existing exploration licences and production leases.

Thanks for the opportunity to answer your questions. Please consult the Green Party platform on the full range of issues on which we are campaigning.

Best wishes,

**Janice Harvey, Policy Advisor
Green Party of New Brunswick**