

## Election 2020

### Questions to Candidates in the **Fredericton North**, **Fredericton York** and **Fredericton Grand-Lake** ridings

#### 1. What will you do to increase New Brunswick's current 4.6% protected land for conservation to the international and national targets of 25% by 2025, and 30% by 2030?

##### **Fredericton North**

Green Party (Luke Randall): A Green government would move quickly to establish protected areas on 17 per cent of the provincial land base by 2020 and develop a short-term action plan to protect at least 25 per cent by 2025.

Peoples Alliance (Allen Price): Part of these protections need to include an increase in protected lands. We in New Brunswick take for granted the abundance of water, forest and wildlife in our province. I recognize however, that without protection these can disappear. If elected, I will work with the government to push forward an agenda that would see protected lands increase annually. While I don't see this as an easy task, given the record of the government and the influence of the forestry industry on current and recent governments, I promise to be in the fight and will strive to see these goals met or get as close to the goal as I possibly can. Wouldn't it be wonderful to see 1/3 of NB land protected for conservation?

Liberal Party (Stephen Horseman): I truly recognize the benefits of land conservation and protection to support biodiversity, protect wildlife and enhance forest sustainability. We as NB Liberal Party also want to protect farm lands and made that a priority as well. We are also committed to increasing protected lands for conservation purposes including the enhancement of Protected Natural Areas.

##### **Fredericton York**

Green Party (Melissa Fraser): For starters, thank you for pointing out how frighteningly low the percentage of protected land actually is in this province, I did not know these numbers. Environment is obviously a big part of the Green platform and in my opinion is not simply an invaluable resource we need to protect but is inseparably interconnected to our health and vitality as a province, country and species.

I would push for protected areas to be expanded by at least 10% immediately, with the goal of reaching 25% by 2025. We need to make moves that will be uncomfortable for some if we hope to have any semblance of the environment we have now, twenty years from now...

I am 39 years old and I remember as a child, the Nashwaak being full of salmon, and growing up on the banks of this river, hearing stories of how more plentiful the fish were, 20 years before that when my

parents were children. I fear for what this place we call home could look like in another 20 years if we don't take more action now!!

Liberal Party (Randy McKeen): The New Brunswick Liberal party recognizes the benefits of land conservation and protection to support biodiversity, protect wildlife and enhance forest sustainability. We are committed to increasing protected lands for conservation purposes including enhancements to Protected Natural Areas.

Peoples Alliance (Rick DeSaulniers): We will work towards achieving this target by making by providing tax incentives for people who are willing to donate wetlands and natural habitat areas to conservation organizations.

NDP (Steven LaForest): I would follow the protocols involved and set by the Provoncial government's agenda to reach the international and national set targets

## **Fredericton Grand-Lake**

Liberals (Eldon Hunter): As MLA in the riding of Fredericton- Grand Lake I would gladly lend my assistance to your association in it's relationship with their government partners at Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans and the New Brunswick Wildlife Trust Fund. I will dedicate my best efforts toward the implementation of the provincial water strategy so New Brunswickers can make clear and logical decisions in the relationship of people and the environment.

Progressive Conservative (Roy Wiggins): We are very proud to be in the midst of doubling the conserved and protected areas in the province of New Brunswick. This is a historic initiative that has been recognized by both provincial and national conservation organizations. Accomplishing something so significant in such a short period of time is something we are committed to. Once this is completed, we realize that the work is not done yet so we will continue to work with all stakeholders to continue to examine areas that can be included in future conservation targets. Conservation initiatives are not something that can be contained to "one off" projects and this government has incorporated conservation into the very fabric of mapping out the natural landscape of the province. That paradigm shift will ensure that the preservation of our outdoors will always play a prominent role within the discussion about our forest.

Green Party (Ken Washburn): A Green Party government will immediately establish protected areas to meet the national goal of protecting 17% of Canada's landscape. Furthermore we will work with organizations such as the Nature Trust of New Brunswick to help secure the future target of 25% by 2025.

## **2. What will you do to protect wetlands, buffers along streams, rivers, coastal habitats, and floodplains as well as healthy forests to protect us from flooding due to the changing climate?**

### **Fredericton North**

Green Party (Luke Randall): A Green government would Introduce watershed, wetland and coastal zone protection legislation.

Peoples Alliance (Allen Price): If elected I will fight to ensure that the amount of clear cutting is reduced. I will push for an increase in the size of buffer strips around our waterways and I will fight to put an end to spraying on crown lands. Further, I would work closely with watershed associations across the province and with agricultural groups to ensure any clear cut lands are put to best use whether that be forcing forestry companies to properly clean up and replant or, as one group of farmers suggested, remove roots and use these areas to plant crops like wheat to provide food security for the province.

Liberal Party (Stephen Horseman): I have always stated, along with the Liberal Party, that we must address the challenges of climate change and is committed to maintaining healthy, sustainable forests, protecting wetlands and waterways. If you recall both provincial and federal Liberals attended the Paris Accord a few years back to ensure our message was clear. I appreciate the work of the Local Government Working Groups on Watershed Management and will always continue to support measures for water management, wetlands conservation. I have shown you this in the past on occasions in the past. Making sure funding is available to you.

## **Fredericton York**

Green Party (Melissa Fraser): In my opinion the current state of the forestry industry in and around the upper Nashwaak watershed is a major factor in the increased severity of flooding we are seeing. This area gets some of highest snowfall amounts in the province and with the clear cutting that's happening, the snow melts extremely quickly and has nowhere to go, causing devastating flooding downstream.

I would push for the cancellation of long term Crown Land contracts, shift the focus to private woodlots. I would insist that forestry companies limit large scale clear cutting and look at more sustainable models for management that can in the long run, not only prove to be more profitable but helps protect us down river from so much water coming so fast in the spring and then drying up just as quickly.

I think there is no question also that we need the buffer zones around all wetlands, streams and rivers to be increased to help with flooding as well as protect habitat and biodiversity.

Liberal Party (Randy McKeen): The New Brunswick Liberal Party believes we must address the challenges of climate change and is committed to maintaining healthy, sustainable forests, protecting wetlands and waterways. The Liberal Party supports the work of the Local Government Working Group on Watershed Management and will continue to support measures for water management, wetland conservation and monitoring.

Peoples Alliance (Rick DeSaulniers): We would target the clear cutting operations happening in NB and we would increase buffer zones.

NDP (Steven LaForest): Develop a tool kit to deal with each issue as it arises and search for solutions ecologically and environmentally friendly, working with Watershed Associations throughout New Brunswick.

## **Fredericton Grand-Lake**

Progressive Conservative (Roy Wiggins): Doubling the conserved and protected areas of New Brunswick presents us with a tremendous opportunity to apply those efforts to watersheds, waterways, cold water pools, and sensitive natural areas. By being deliberate and intentional with protecting land masses near

waterways we can contribute greatly to our water system which is a key component to the overall health of the environment. Expanding buffers by using science, not arbitrary boundaries will allow us to provide the proper protection to these waterways instead of using a "one size fits all" approach toward water protection. We look forward to using land protection to enhance water protection at the same time.

Liberal Party (Eldon Hunter): As MLA in the riding of Fredericton- Grand Lake I would gladly lend my assistance to your association in it's relationship with their government partners at Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans and the New Brunswick Wildlife Trust Fund. I will dedicate my best efforts toward the implementation of the provincial water strategy so New Brunswickers can make clear and logical decisions in the relationship of people and the environment.

Green Party (Ken Washburn): There is already legislation in place that is supposed to protect these areas. I can say from experience that the laws and regulations in place are not strictly enforced. A Green Party government will ensure that the laws and regulations in place are revised to properly protect these areas if they don't do so already, including increasing the buffer zone around our streams and rivers. On top of that we will implement stiffer penalties for people and organizations that ignore them.

### **3. What will you do to implement the provincial water strategy?**

#### **Fredericton North**

Green Party (Luke Randall): A Green government would protect water quality in rivers, streams, lakes and bays to maintain or improve current conditions by implementing the 2017 provincial water strategy.

Peoples Alliance (Allen Price): Having reviewed the Watershed Strategy for New Brunswick, I would endorse it fully and will work to ensure the proper resources are in place to fulfill the action items. I would endeavour to work closely with the various watershed associations, First Nations and other interest groups to ensure the protection of our waterways and other natural resources such as fish and wildlife. I firmly believe that proper regulation can ensure we protect our wetlands, waterways and forests while still maintaining vibrant hunting and fishing and recreational pursuits.

Liberal Party (Stephen Horseman): When we were in government from 2014-2018, we announced a provincial water strategy (2017) following over a year-long consultation and input received from stakeholders, the public and First Nations. That strategy focussed on the protection on drinking water, preserving and enhancing aquatic ecosystems outlined an action plan to achieve its goals. If elected again, I know the Liberal Party would continue to work with all levels of government, First Nations and its stakeholders, like you and many other watershed groups. It is more than this, it also deals with the fish and wildlife. I am committed to helping us keep New Brunswick clean.

#### **Fredericton York**

Green Party (Melissa Fraser): Increasing buffer zones for industry and development around all wetlands and waterways is imperative. Stop the spraying of glyphosate...for many reasons but since water is the universal solvent, as chemicals such as this make their way into our waterways there is no stopping where it ends up and the effect it is having on all plant and animal species, which in turn upsets water quality, bacteria levels and more.

Thank you for the questions, if you have any more questions please reach out

Liberal Party (Randy McKeen): The previous Liberal government announced a provincial water strategy in 2017 following over a yearlong consultation and input received from stakeholders, the public and First Nations. The strategy which focuses on the protection of drinking water, preserving and enhancing aquatic ecosystems outlined an action plan to achieve its goals. An elected Liberal government will commit to move forward with the recommendations. A Liberal government would continue to work with all levels of government, First Nations and stakeholders like community-based watershed groups.

Peoples Alliance (Rick DeSaulniers): We will continue to work toward ensuring water sources are protected through tougher legislation.

NDP (Steven LaForest): Follow through and take action to implement provincial water strategy for the future of clean drinking water and ensured fisheries for the future. In an effort to facilitate community involvement and input into projects which may have an environmental impact, the NDP would like to introduce a community-based approach to protecting the environment. For years our rivers, our forests and our ecosystems have been threatened by development in ways that we have only begun to measure. Far too often the environmental impacts of development, even development that benefits the province, have been endured by people living within the area of that development and they have had no voice in determining what happens in their own backyards. For this reason the NDP is proposing a watershed approach to current and future developments in the province where citizens in the affected regions can play a more active role in determining what exactly does happen in their own backyards. No longer will we let government alone decide who benefits and who pays for resource development, industry will have to listen to the concerns of the people and mitigate any identifiable current and future environmental impacts in order for development within a watershed to proceed or continue.

To accomplish this task we will build upon the framework already established in the provinces Clean Water Act. We will divide the province into 14 watersheds and establish a community based network to assess the current impacts on the watershed, what factors can and should be mitigated or restored and what kind of development should be permitted in the future based upon the potential impacts upon that watershed. New Brunswickers may feel alarmed or even have a sense of helplessness when they consider the detrimental impact that humanity has had upon the planet, but we hope to empower people to protect our resources and our own environment through this plan. We may have no impact upon what happens globally, but we do have to take responsibility for what happens locally and in our own backyards. We would encourage all citizens to think globally, but act locally.

Steps to building a community based watershed approach:

1. Assign watershed groups to our 14 watersheds, some watersheds already have watershed groups. Pay the watershed groups enough to cover two employees and an office.
2. Have the watershed groups come up with a watershed management plan.
3. Have the watershed groups assess water quality in our rivers and streams and classify them according to the regulations already provided in the clean water act.
4. Have community involvement in classifying the streams and officially nominate any streams that qualify as outstanding streams worthy of additional protection.

5. Remove the minister of the environments ability to single handedly remove a streams classification and use the same public process that is required to classify a stream to strip of stream of its classification. This would require a change to the clean water act.
6. Have the watershed groups host regular meetings to update stakeholders on watershed mitigation projects to improve environmental conditions and potential threats to the watershed. The stakeholders should include industry, non-profits, municipalities, farmers, indigenous groups and anyone who wants to have their say on environmental impacts of industry. Watershed groups will need to work with industry to mitigate the environmental impacts of proposed developments and they should have the final say on what happens with development in the watershed. If an industry cannot satisfactorily mitigate its impacts upon the local environment, then the watershed group and its stakeholders should have the power to stop the development until it does.
7. Watershed groups and their mitigation efforts should be funded by the Environmental Trust Fund. They should be guaranteed a specific amount and additional funding should be awarded on a project by project basis as required.
8. This will include herbicide spraying, it will be up to the people in a watershed to determine if glyphosate should be sprayed on their public forests and the forestry industry will have to work with the people in a watershed to mitigate the environmental impacts of how they manage our forests if they want to continue to manage our public forests. The same is true with agriculture, farmers also need to be accountable to the people in the watersheds affected by their operations. That includes glyphosate spraying and the protection of streams and rivers running through farms. It will also include development within municipalities, we need to put pressure on municipalities to protect and properly manage rivers that flow through them.
9. The foundation for this approach to watershed management is the three pillars of sustainability, where we seek to obtain a balance between the environmental, the economic and social needs of society.

## **Fredericton Grand-Lake**

Progressive Conservative (Roy Wiggins): For the first time ever, this government is developing and entrenching relationships with conservation stakeholders and they are at the table as we map out bio diverse and ecologically sustainable plans for the natural landscape of New Brunswick. As it relates to the provincial water strategy or any conservation initiative, we are confident that we will be receiving wise counsel from the proper conservation subject matter experts which will lead to positive results that will produce results for generations to come.

Liberals (Eldon Hunter): As MLA in the riding of Fredericton- Grand Lake I would gladly lend my assistance to your association in it's relationship with their government partners at Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans and the New Brunswick Wildlife Trust Fund. I will dedicate my best efforts toward the implementation of the provincial water strategy so New Brunswickers can make clear and logical decisions in the relationship of people and the environment.

Green Party (Ken Washburn): A Green Party government will ensure that the 2017 provincial water strategy is implemented.