

Green Party-Sabrina Levac Calgary-Buffalo

CRCAG Election Questionnaire to Candidates

To the candidates of Calgary-Elbow, Calgary-Buffalo, Calgary-Mountain View, Calgary-Bow and Calgary-Fort:

Please find below a questionnaire from the Calgary River Communities Action Group (CRCAG). CRCAG is a non-partisan organization that has been advocating for upstream flood mitigation since the 2013 flood. We believe that flood mitigation should continue to be priority in this province so that our great city has a comprehensive plan to not only protect against the financial cost that will result from the next flood, but most importantly, the human cost. Implementing upstream mitigation is a matter of public safety and therefore cannot be ignored. As we approach the second anniversary of the 2013 flood, implementing upstream mitigation strategies and infrastructure must be pursued with a sense of determination so that Calgary will be more able to withstand the next inevitable flood.

We ask that your responses be sent to us no later than 5PM May 1, 2014 at info@crcactiongroup.com. Your answers will be posted on our website and emailed to our membership for them to review.

Thank you,

CRCAG Board

ELBOW RIVER MITIGATION

- 1) Are you supportive of building upstream flood mitigation infrastructure for the Elbow River? If yes, what is your understanding of the infrastructure projects for the Elbow River and their current status? As an elected MLA, what do you intend to do to ensure that these projects are completed as soon as possible?
- 2) Do you believe that more than one upstream mitigation infrastructure project is needed for the Elbow River? If so, which ones? If not, why not?

BOW RIVER MITIGATION

- 1) Are you supportive of leveraging existing infrastructure along the Bow River system for flood mitigation? If yes, what is your understanding of how the existing infrastructure can be leveraged and the current status of such an endeavor? As an elected MLA, what do you intend to do to ensure that a timely agreement is put into place to utilize existing infrastructure along the Bow River system for flood mitigation?

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- 2) Do you believe that additional upstream mitigation measures need to be pursued for the Bow River? Is so, what additional measures should be considered? If not, why not?

Green Party of Alberta response to above 4 questions:

Understanding the anxiety and need for an instant preventative measure that people who reside in the Calgary-Buffalo area or along riverways must feel, as I was a resident in High River in June 2013 and consequently moved to city as I was never able to return home, I believe that a better understanding of the causes of the flood are needed.

The Green Party of Alberta and myself believe that large amounts of money should not be spent until we fully understand the causes. Until there is adequate understanding of the cause and there is a full upstream and watershed management prevention and mitigation plan put in place, it is irresponsible to spend huge amounts of money on engineering projects that may make matters worse, rather than better, and may unjustifiably assist some Albertans more than others.

Greens believe in solutions respecting topographical, hydrological and ecological characteristics. Integrated river basin planning and management seem to us more important than heroic and expensive engineering structures. Natural areas upstream should be managed to maximize water retention, i.e. forests and wetlands must be preserved and paving and channelization minimized. On the latter point, Greens would expect cities such as Calgary to carefully review its by-laws so as to require the use of absorptive surfaces and other un-intrusive, flood minimization measures. Greens would also be supportive of provincial laws requiring municipalities to take these flood-minimization and other sustainability steps.

Future flooding is unavoidable and aggressive attempts need to be made to remove and relocate endangered structures in the 200 year flood plain. It is obviously impractical to move downtown Calgary, but threatened buildings must be flood proofed wherever possible.

FLOOD POLICY

- 1) What is your current understanding of the status of the Provincial Floodway Development Policy?
- 2) Considering the current revisions to the Provincial flood hazard maps and the impact upstream flood mitigation will have on reducing inundation, how do you propose that the Provincial Floodway Development Policy take these two items into account?

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BUY-OUT POLICY

- 1) Do you believe that the buy-out policy achieved its stated goal? What should be done with the vacant lots that have resulted from this policy?

I believe the vacant lots should be used as outdoor green spaces or playgrounds as the threat of being affected by flooding in the future is not fully understood and cannot be predicted. Community gardens which could be used to supply food for vulnerable populations, mini-parks where the community can visit, reflect and come together or playgrounds for children would be non-intrusive, community building and sustainable projects that can be built while a full understanding is investigated.