



THE GREEN BOOK
FULL PARTY PLATFORM FOR
THE BC GREEN PARTY'S
1996 PROVINCIAL CAMPAIGN
Putting Our Children First.

This document is produced by the Green Party Political Association of British Columbia.
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B.C. Green Party Platform Summary for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs

The starting point for the government of British Columbia in dealing with aboriginal issues must be the understanding of the nature of treaties. It is accepted international law that for territory to be ceded a treaty must be ratified by both sides to recognize and legitimate this transfer of jurisdiction. This is the essence of the Royal Proclamation of 1763, which confirms this process. Because so few treaties have been concluded by aboriginal nations within British Columbia, much of the political jurisdiction over lands within the province is in dispute.

The B.C. Green Party recognizes the N.D.P. government for setting up the B.C. Treaty Commission to deal with this significant jurisdictional problem. Unfortunately the commission's unfair requirements for entry into the treaty process, its limiting mandate, the slow pace of negotiations, and prejudicial activities by other government departments undermine the process resulting in the commission coming under fire from aboriginal and settler, alike. These problems have, in fact, resulted in nearly 40% of B.C.'s First Nations refusing to negotiate through the treaty process. A Green Party government would take the following steps to rectify these problems:

- reducing tensions by allowing the public to observe the majority of treaty negotiation sessions
- deferring resource extraction, particularly timber, fish and minerals and the development of lands in contention where requested by participants, either First Nations, provincial or the federal government
- ending requirements that First Nations renounce or concede any portion of their demands or rights or give up alternative recourse before commencing negotiations
- establishment of a mutually agreed arbitration procedure, which would involve an impartial and independent third party if requested by one side, as a fall back in the event of negotiation or judicial stalemate with the recognition that negotiation is preferable to arbitration or litigation
- full respect for the Canadian Constitution through recognition of pre-existing aboriginal rights, traditions, law and culture
- observation of both international and aboriginal protocols in negotiations and treaty ratification

We also must recognize that some First Nations are not yet prepared to participate in treaty process because they are still in the process of socially healing from the devastating effect of the past two hundred years of colonial policy. Some First Nations wish only to negotiate directly with the federal government; we must respect this. We should not force these nations to the table by cutting off other options they have for participating in public process and we must not use disputed land without their consent.

Furthermore, we must add legitimacy to the treaty process by recognizing established constitutional and international law such as the Royal Proclamation of 1763. This includes

recognizing the national sovereignty of First Nations. The B.C. government must also comply with existing treaties within British Columbia. Governments, both federal and provincial, have been in continuous and flagrant violation of treaties such as Treaty 8 in northeastern B.C. A Green Party government would comply with all treaties in effect as a basic demonstration of good faith toward First Nation governments and peoples.

B.C. Green Party Platform Summary for the Ministry of the Attorney-General, Human Rights and Multiculturalism

In addition to addressing the causes of crime by renewing our communities, creating employment and empowering youth, the Green Party offers some immediate practical policies to make the administration of justice in this province more efficient.

Justice Reform

The Green Party advocates five key areas of reform in the way in which offences are dealt with by the legal system in BC. The a Green government would begin by appointing a commission to suggest ideas on a broad range of justice reforms including the selection process for judges. In addition, we would reform the following areas: private prosecutions, custodial sentences, drug prohibition and contempt of court.

At present, when the government fails to prosecute an individual, corporation or government department for an offence, a citizen can initiate prosecution to enforce the law. Unfortunately, once a citizen has begun the prosecution, the government has the right to take up the prosecution without the citizen's consent. Recent glaring abuses include the B.C. government's take-over of private prosecutions against the Greater Vancouver Regional District by environmental groups; after which time, it dropped the charges. A Green Party government would:

- cease to take up private prosecutions without the consent of the private prosecutor
- establish a fund similar to the Charter Challenge Fund maintained by the federal government to subsidize important private prosecutions in areas of human rights and environmental protection

The prison system continues to educate drug abusers and other non-violent offenders in the commission of serious and violent crimes. Much needed tax dollars are invested in maintaining the ever-growing prison system which could be invested in expanding encouraging rehabilitation of non-violent first offenders. The Green Party advocates a change in the focus of sentencing demands for non-violent first offences away from custodial terms and towards more community service.

- expanding the house arrest program and directing crown prosecutors to request that non-violent first offenders be placed under house arrest
- directing crown prosecutors to include more requests for community service in their submissions to sentencing

- hiring more house arrest and parole officers using savings from reducing the prison population

Drug abuse is principally a health problem which manifests as a law and order problem. The prison system unnecessarily warehouses addicts in high-security institutions, and stigmatizes the non-addicted portion of the population who use illicit drugs. The Green Party would therefore:

- establish a feasibility study of decriminalizing street drugs and enhancing treatment programs through drug taxation
- cease to make investigation and prosecution for illicit drug possession a spending priority anywhere in B.C.
- cease to make investigation and prosecution for illicit drug manufacture, cultivation and trafficking a spending priority except where exceptionally harmful or dangerous drugs are being cultivated or sold or where any cultivation, manufacture or sale involves minors

At present, court injunctions are an overused and costly mechanism of law enforcement. While individuals and corporations should continue to have the opportunity to apply for injunctions, a Green Party government take the state out of the business of court injunctions. Instead, large scale protests and orders to stop work should be dealt with by conventional means:

- prosecution for mischief, trespassing, safe zone violation and promotion of hatred
- more use of negotiation and arbitration in dealing with individuals and corporations

Law Enforcement

In both the mass media and daily experience the most common face of the Attorney General's Ministry is the police. Like any other bureaucracy, the police force has some incompetent and some abusive employees. Unfortunately, however, the consequences of failing to monitor abuse of the system by its employees are much greater than in many ministries where they amount to little more than loss of public funds through abuse of expense accounts and travel allowances. The foundation of any democratic society is the need for all citizens, including visible minorities and social assistance recipients, to feel that they have the protection of the law.

The Green Party supports the movement towards more community policing. Green policies in support include:

- improved financing of community police facilities, townhall meetings and liaison work
- expanding the mandate of the commission which receives complaints about the police
- transferring more secretarial responsibilities from police officers to secretarial staff

- to get more police on the streets
- continuing to develop aboriginal police forces and other more community-sensitive forces throughout BC

Human Rights

A Green Party government would separate the adjudication and advocacy components of the B.C. Human Rights Commission into separate ministries so that the appearance of impartiality could be better ensured. In addition, a sufficient number of commissioners and support staff would be added to the commission to present it as a better alternative to the courts for timely relief of complaints.

A Green government would also add to the B.C. Human Rights Act the following rights:

- (a) the right to clean air
- (b) the right to clean water
- © the right to have shelter and adequate food and nourishment
- (d) the right of future generations to a clean environment

A Green government would also enact a bill of inter-species rights which would guarantee all species in British Columbia the following rights:

- (a) the right to exist
- (b) the right to exist in at least one geographical location without human interference
- © the right to access to food, clean water and clean air

A Green government would also implement legislation to recognize both common law relationships and official marriages of same sex couples on the same footing as those of opposite sex couples.

Multiculturalism

The B.C. Greens see the need for additional protections to ensure that threatened cultures within British Columbia are able to maintain their identities and communities in an intact state. This need is especially evident in rural B.C. where few multicultural programs are focused. A Green government would move to increase the protections for a number of culturally threatened communities throughout B.C. by:

- recognizing the initial agreements made by previous governments with Dukhobor communities to legally entrench and recognize communal systems of property ownership and management and to accommodate local and provincial tax structures to local community values without making any revenue concessions
- recognizing the Metis communities of northeastern B.C. to a status equal to their counterparts in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta and maintain a department of the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs to resolve outstanding grievances and assist these communities in developing self-government
- recognizing B.C.'s francophone communities through cooperation with federal programs in rendering government services in French, including office sharing and

- other programs to pool resources to deliver services
- focusing on the preservation and promotion of aboriginal cultures and languages in cooperation with the ministries of Education, Aboriginal Affairs and Attorney-General

B.C. Green Party Platform Summary for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Agriculture and Food

The Green Party believes in a British Columbia that meets its own food needs and is truly self-reliant. It's time that British Columbians had the ability to enjoy domestically grown, organically produced food that employs British Columbians at fair wages in safe working conditions. We have to begin to address this by eliminating BC's topsoil deficit through a moratorium on hydro megaprojects, urban development onto agricultural land and agricultural practices that undermine the long term viability of our soils. The Green Party also believes that it is time for rural and urban British Columbians to become participants in their own nutrition through preventive health education and development of community garden plots.

It's also time to recognize that BC farmers receive the worst deal of any farmers in western Canada. We need to place BC farmers on an equal footing with other Canadian farmers and to make healthy, domestically produced food competitive with chemically treated imports. British Columbians need to know that their food is safe for consumption; right now, we continue to eat imported foods grown using chemicals like DDT and other "prohibited" substances; this must stop.

The Green Party's agenda for agriculture includes the following programs:

- phasing-out all synthetic chemical pesticides and herbicides over a three year period in favour of organic pest control measures including more labour intensive practices
- helping municipalities develop free community garden projects in communities in high density urban neighbourhoods
- establishing a program to test all currently approved and pending synthetic food additives, pesticides and herbicides with a view to banning carcinogenic and otherwise toxic products in domestic and imported food
- increased labeling requirements to inform consumers about the contents and origins of food they purchase
- requiring that food imported comply with the same safety standards for production and toxicity that are currently in force in B.C.
- requiring that products from food animals be labeled intensive-farmed, free-run, free-range or wild
- phasing-out intensive farming practices like battery egg production and veal crating
- supporting an alternative fibre industry including flax, barley, hemp and rice that will

- provide agricultural jobs in the pulp industry
- opposing legislation which promotes unnecessary health requirements which undermine the quality of BC cheeses

Fisheries

Right now, the fishing strategy in British Columbia is on a collision course with nature. Through over-fishing, aquaculture, fish farming and our so-called enhancement programs, our genetically diverse wild stocks of fish are declining while a an inferior stock of farmed salmon continues to enjoy government handouts (fish farms have represented more than 20% of loans to business written off by the NDP). The Green Party believes in renewing our wild fish stocks and maintaining BC's the commercial and aboriginal fisheries.

A Green Party government would establish the following initiatives for this renewal:

- establishing ecosystem-based principles for a Green fishery based on maintaining all stocks at stable levels in intact ecosystems
- a program to restore jobs and stocks by phasing out seiners and other indiscriminate mechanized harvesting methods
- ending the genetic manipulation of our fish stocks in favour of developing an extensive genetic inventory of all BC fish stocks and a commitment to preserving that diversity
- ending the culling of so-called predator species in favour of regulated hunting and trapping where traditionally practiced
- establishing a system of marine protected areas of adequate size, including estuaries, wetlands and salt marshes
- requiring that an environmental impact assessment take place before any new fishery is developed
- phasing-out aquaculture programs and replacing lost jobs through a riparian and marine ecosystem restoration program
- restoring damaged ecosystems, particularly damages spawning grounds as an alternative to dependence on hatchery fish
- a moratorium on hatcheries which may compromise the genetic diversity of stocks
- reducing overlap and creating a more regionally sensitive fishery through demanding a transfer of fisheries jurisdiction from the federal to the provincial level
- phasing out non-biodegradable netting such as nylon
- increasing the cost of sport fishing licenses for non-British Columbians and re-investing those funds in development of marine protected areas

The Green Party recognizes that it's time to offer independent BC fishers a chance to continuing participating in the commercial fishery. Through subsidies to fish farming, the unfair Mifflin plan and other government initiatives our commercial fishers are being impoverished through ever-increasing operating costs and programs that undermine a fair market price for fish. The Green Party would see that a fair, market-based price for wild fish was established by phasing out fish farming, requiring that wild fish be labeled as such in

restaurants and food stores and working with the federal government to initiate a buyout of fishing licenses as an alternative to the practice of reducing the capacity of each license. If British Columbians paid the true market value of wild fish, BC's fishers could support themselves and their families with a reduced catch.

The Green Party also believes that by focusing fishing on estuaries, rather than ocean-going craft, international disputes such as the current salmon conflict can be reduced.

B.C. Green Party Platform for the Ministry of Education, Skills and Training

Elementary and Secondary Education

Right now, in British Columbia, education is under attack on three key fronts. Firstly, with the introduction of province-wide collective bargaining and amalgamation of smaller school districts into vast administrative units stretching across hundreds of kilometres (in one case, more than six degrees of latitude), the voice of small communities in developing education which addresses their needs is in danger of being drowned out.

Secondly, with provincial government education funding failing to keep up with inflation, let alone population increases, schools are looking to corporate and wealthy donors to supply basic services that should be supplied equally to all schools by government.

Thirdly, realization that education must be more relevant to today's job market has caused some policy directors to ignore the importance of developing critical thinking, citizenship responsibilities and adaptability to a rapidly changing world in our students.

To balance the trends toward centralized decision making control in our elementary, secondary and post-secondary systems and ensure that regional identities are recognized and promoted, a Green Party government will:

- re-institute local district-by-district bargaining so that local collective agreements can address local students' distinct needs
- re-institute the previous system of 75 school districts until amalgamation proposals can be rejected or accepted by voters in a referendum concurrent with the 1996 school board elections
- reduce costs for smaller districts by providing provincially funded regional consultancies to provide specialized professionals to local boards to avoid every board having to hire people with specialized expertise where need does not warrant a full time position
- encourage and provide support for local curriculum initiatives, especially local second language programs
- increase the diversity of the school system by phasing in independent and alternative schools and programs into the provincially funded system, without reducing the diversity and autonomy of these schools

- transfer responsibility and funding control for community colleges to local school boards to create a more cost-effective and flexible local education system with reduced bureaucracy

To address the real necessity to improve efficiency and cost effectiveness while making sure that our students and schools are not for sale, a Green Party government would:

- encourage and assist and coordinate capital funding programs between civic governments, provincial and federal ministries, and school boards to develop community schools which physically integrate community centres, recreation facilities, libraries and schools
- per-user rather than per-capita or per-district funding of special needs programs such as E.S.L. so that certain districts with disproportionately large numbers of special needs students receive the funding necessary to support these students
- prohibit local boards and schools from accepting corporate donations unless they are "no strings attached"
- end user fees for basic school services
- cease to provide funding for independent schools unwilling to become part of an expanded and more diverse public system

To better develop students' citizenship responsibilities and holistic education needs, a Green Party government would:

- retain a core curriculum aimed at literacy (reading and writing), problem-solving including the non-violent resolution of conflict, computational and computer skills, liberal arts and physical and health education.
- implement a mandatory First Nations language program in secondary and elementary schools to teach local languages to native and non-native students where languages are intact and populations warrant, with a continued commitment Canada's official languages
- create a "holistic schoolyards" program to provide information and support for developing community gardens, orchards, composting facilities and other facilities to integrate students with their communities and the natural world
- supplement the current environmental education program in two key ways:
 - a) designate specific environmental studies courses at the high school level
 - b) balance the international and personal focus of existing environmental studies curricula with a focus on local and provincial environmental challenges and public policy solutions
- develop mandatory programs to educate students better about domestic violence and their right to live in a safe home
- extend the right to vote in school board elections to all students

Post Secondary Education

The Green Party believes that the current focus on making post secondary education more

relevant to the job market must be balanced with a continuing commitment to the values on which the post secondary system was founded and the recognition that education is an end in itself, as well as a means to an end. A Green government would also establish a goal of ending tuition fees for the post-secondary system and improving and maintaining current access to the system through the following measures:

- adjusting the per-student funding of programs to reflect programs' real costs and study an end to formula-based funding or other means to ensure that sciences are adequately funded at the community college level
- establish a provincial donation review board to ensure that donations to the post-secondary system are "no strings attached"
- encourage greater industry-based funding of job training programs in line with European systems of apprenticeships and partnerships
- develop a provincial student loan program to reduce student reliance on chartered banks and reduce costs to students; loan repayment would take place as part of annual provincial income tax through existing tax structures to reduce bureaucracy and ensure that repayment plans fairly reflect graduates' earning power

B.C. Green Party Platform Summary for the Ministry of Employment and Investment

The Ministry of Employment and Investment was first created by the Harcourt government in the fall of 1993 to act as a financing agency for virtually all government infrastructure projects. It is the only ministry of its sort in Canadian history. The Green Party proposes that B.C. become like other provinces and return to financing infrastructure projects through the ministry providing the related service ie. the education ministry should build schools, the transport ministry should build roads, etc.

Since then, the ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources has been amalgamated with Employment and Investment. These departments will be considered later in this document.

The Employment ministry finances most of these projects through a crown corporation called BC21. When this corporation borrows, because it is a crown corporation, its borrowing does not show up in the annual budget deficit figure, even though this borrowing increases BC's debt. It's time to close this accounting loophole and force the government to come clean with its borrowing every year. A Green Party government would include all crown corporation borrowing in annual budget deficit figures.

BC21 isn't the only crown corporation under the jurisdiction of this ministry. In fact, most crown corporations are controlled by the Employment ministry. A Green government would abolish the Employment ministry and return these corporations to a more appropriate area of jurisdiction: ICBC would be controlled by the Ministry of Transportation, etc.

Green Party policies to finance infrastructure appropriately include:

- abolishing the Employment and Investment Ministry and dispersing its staff and crown corporations to more appropriate departments
- cancelling all infrastructure projects (including mass transit projects) which are being financed through the BC21 corporation until core funding can be found from the ministry responsible
- requiring truly balanced budget legislation which includes all crown corporation borrowing in government borrowing figures
- a feasibility study of implementing balanced budget legislation for crown corporations
- returning planning processes for infrastructure projects to non-partisan staffs from the highly partisan project approval process of the ministry
- increasing the priority of maintaining or increasing core funding to key areas like education and health, rather than continuing to focus on building and infrastructure
- reviewing all contracts of the employment ministry's highly partisan staff before their placement in another ministry is considered
- reviewing all projects undertaken by the ministry based on non-partisan merit

Energy

British Columbia is an energy-rich province. But despite our massive hydroelectric developments and wealth of natural gas, recent years such as 1994 have seen British Columbia as a net importer of power; a key reason for this is that we are the largest per-capita energy users in the world.

Reducing our energy consumption is not just a matter of conserving power and downsizing our energy needs, we must also catch up to areas of the world where energy is more expensive by adopting energy efficient technologies. We also need to embrace technologies already available to us in B.C., including small-scale hydro, low-impact tidal power, solar and wind generation. While co-generation of power is often advocated under the guise of environmental concern, it must be remembered that most co-generation projects involve the burning of fossil fuels such as wood and charcoal which produce acid rain as well as greenhouse gases. We must not increase our energy production at the expense of the planet's atmosphere.

We must also recognize that our over-production of energy has come at substantial cost in environmental and humanitarian terms. The Kootenay area of B.C., while home to less than 5% of British Columbians produces more than 35% of B.C.'s energy while the Peace region, home to less than 2% of B.C.'s population produces more than 40% of the province's energy.

We need not only to compensate people in the Kootenay and Peace financially; we need to develop long term strategies to rehabilitate the Columbia and Peace river systems impacted by development. As other areas of the province begin developing local energy production through ecologically friendly means, we can begin the long term project of returning the Columbia and Peace systems to their natural flows.

The B.C. Greens propose the following policies to decrease our energy consumption, encourage ecological power development and rehabilitate and compensate people and ecosystems impacted by energy megaprojects:

- decommissioning of the Keenlyside, Duncan and other non-power producing dams in the Columbia/Kootenay system with an extensive land reclamation program to recover key agricultural land
- maintaining Williston Reservoir at sufficiently stable levels to allow local industry to operate without undue interruption
- maintaining a steady flow through the Terzaghi dam to preserve remaining fish stocks in the Bridge River system
- increasing flows in the Nechako River to 1977 levels of 50% of the original flow to preserve fish stocks and local irrigation systems
- phasing out Burrard Thermal and other carbon-based energy production facilities
- developing a sliding scale for residential and commercial energy users which increases the per-unit cost of energy past a certain threshold for excessive consumers
- legislating against water export which includes a ban on export of water for power production and export of power produced hydroelectrically
- establishing an environmental review process for small scale energy projects currently not covered under legislation
- stricter energy-efficiency guidelines and co-generation (especially solar) targets for new public buildings
- allowing local energy producers and users greater opportunities to sell energy, which does not increase global warming gas emissions, back to the B.C. Hydro grid, subject to environmental review
- focus technological development on solar, geothermal and wind power
- development of provincial building codes to encourage greater energy efficiency

Even in energy-rich British Columbia, some communities and individuals do not have access to electric power. British Columbians desiring electrical energy for whom energy is unavailable should be able to receive access within a reasonable timetable. In areas such as the Lillooet Valley, local communities do not have access to power even though high tension power cables carry energy within feet of their homes because B.C. Hydro has determined that provision of power to those communities would not be profitable. The Green Party proposes the following measures to deal with these problems:

- establishing a special branch of B.C. Hydro required to set up and maintain local systems to serve households and small communities, independent of the larger power grid, including local windmills, small scale hydro, etc. This branch could explore funding options including development of local part-time expertise and long term amortization of infrastructure costs
- requiring B.C. Hydro to provide power from the main to any community whose property or habitat values are impacted by transmission equipment

Mines and Petroleum Resources

As mentioned in other policy documents, the B.C. Green Party favours the distribution of mining responsibilities into two departments: the Ministry of Environment, charged with enforcing regulations and a BC Minerals Corporation charged with selling mineral rights and collecting royalties. Like the Forests Ministry, the Ministry of Mines has run at a loss consistently throughout BC history. Under a Green Party government, the B.C. Minerals Corporation would only approve environmentally sound mining projects which turned a profit for taxpayers through sale of extraction rights and ore.

Another area associated with mining in which the provincial government has consistently lost funds is the area of compensation for extensive mineral claims. Mining companies consistently claim exploration or extraction rights to large areas and receive substantial compensation when these areas are designated as park land or claimed by other users. We need legislation to reduce mining companies' alleged rights to public land because otherwise the BC government may find itself paying out a second and even more costly round of land claim settlements to BC's mining establishment. A Green Party government would work toward a more environmentally sound and revenue generating form of mining through the following programs:

- establishing the principle of "full cost accounting" in evaluating mining claims to factor habitat damage and loss of timber and fish stocks as a result of mining projects
- restructuring exploration and tenure provisions so that taxpayers' liability for mining companies' land claims is reduced
- establishing a program to offer royalty-free mining rights to landfills to encourage recycling of resources
- establishing a permanent ban on offshore drilling
- ending practices that lead to toxification of the local environment from mine waste, such as cyanide leachate from tailings
- a permanent ban on export, mining and transportation of uranium within BC
- enhancing recycling of materials to increase alternative materials sources for BC smelters and refining facilities
- making gravel pit operators more accountable to nearby residents by requiring their approval for activities which cause disruption through sound, dust and aquifer damage with similar measures for residents affected by petroleum transport and storage operations

B.C. Green Party Platform Summary for the Ministry of Finances and Corporate Relations

The basis for any sound financial plan is a proper financial statement. Over the years, successive governments have debased our bookkeeping practices to the point where in 1995, the NDP reported having a budget surplus, while at the same time borrowing over \$1 billion to pay government projects. A Green government would expand the Auditor-

General's department do carry out full cost accounting, financially and ecologically of BC's current position and make those figures accessible and comprehensible to ordinary British Columbians. A renewed Auditor-General's department would:

- track alternative economic indicators which assess value to clean air, clean water, low crime rates and other factors that are currently "valueless" in our Gross Provincial Product figure
- include all public debt, including the debts of crown corporations (where the NDP has hidden over \$5 billion in borrowing) in the government's debt figures
- include all public borrowing in the annual deficit figure, rather than simply the borrowing carried out by the finance ministry
- expand the auditor-general's department to produce figures on BC's timber deficit, topsoil deficit, ozone deficit and species deficit

With proper accounting practices, a Green government would bring British Columbia toward long term financial security through the following measures:

- passing a balanced budget constitutional amendment which will disallow public borrowing except in the case of a provincial emergency
- adopting strategic plans to end the topsoil, timber, species and other deficits with in our first term of office
- applying inheritance taxes directly to a debt reduction fund
- requiring that a bond be posted by companies transporting hazardous chemicals so that BC taxpayers would not bear the financial risk for oil spills and other environmental disasters

Another key priority for a Green government would be to ensure that all British Columbians pay their fair share for the services we all receive from government. That means stopping the increasing shift of the corporate tax burdens from major corporations to small businesses and ending the inequity whereby private citizens in British Columbia pay more in taxes to government than they receive back in services, while corporations pay less in taxes than they receive in services and direct cash subsidies. In addition, unlike individuals, corporations can defer their taxes and elect not to pay taxes on a portion of their profits -- this is the equivalent of an interest free loan from the government.

- a public review of the government practice of "deferring" corporate taxes and plan for collecting deferred taxes owed by corporations
- a minimum tax on incomes over \$100,000 per year that cannot be offset by tax shelters, tax breaks, donations, RRSPs to address the fact that 17% of high income earners continue to pay no income tax
- mandating the Forests Ministry, Mines Ministry and other government departments that sell public assets to turn a profit for taxpayers
- indexing legislators' salaries to the minimum income in BC
- a guideway tax on commercial trucking firms to put them on and equal footing with rail companies which pay for the upkeep of their guideway

- ending tax breaks for megastores which operate on "industrial land" by charging commercial property taxes to all commercial property users
- a mechanization surtax to counter federal infrastructure and research tax breaks which subsidize job-killing technologies
- a surtax on disposable products such as diapers to help encourage local businesses like recyclers, diaper services and other employers
- changing the corporate tax burden in favour of "carbon taxes" and other environmental taxes to phase out provincial sales tax and other taxes which penalize small business

With the continuing decrease in federal transfer payments, the Green Party recognizes that cost-cutting is a key part of maintaining a balanced budget in BC. Our cost-cutting programs would include:

- a community buildings program to reduce costs by pooling resources with federal, municipal and first nations governments in the construction of public buildings and other amenities
- decreasing the budget of the ministry of highways by putting a moratorium on new road construction, so as to concentrate highways spending on safety upgrades
- a program to reduce bureaucracy by merging unelected local government bodies with elected bodies like regional districts and school boards. Unelected bodies proposed for this merger include: health councils, health boards, protected area, land use and land management roundtables, water districts and other bodies

Middle class and working class British Columbians are in need of tax relief. Unlike many parties, the Green Party would address the tax burden facing those living in poverty as well as the burden facing the middle class. Green programs to provide tax relief include:

- abolishing provincial income taxes on individuals earning less than \$12,000 per year
- reducing taxes on property which preserves habitat or the historic character of our communities
- immediately ending Provincial Sales Tax on used, second hand or consignment goods
- phasing out regressive measures like the provincial sales tax in favour of eliminating tax exemptions for high income British Columbians
- allowing British Columbians to receive tax concessions for volunteer hours with community organizations

While small businesses are sometimes over-regulated by the BC government, other corporate entities like non-profit societies and trade unions need stricter legislation to ensure that they report properly. Especially in light of the Nanaimo Commonwealth scandal, ordinary members of non-profit societies need better access to records of their organizations' dealings. Green reforms to the BC government's corporate relations strategy include:

- requiring that non-profit societies, unions and corporations better report to their members, particularly donations to political parties
- decreasing the number of regulatory and taxing agencies which deal with small business

Unlike the Liberals and N.D.P., the Green Party is against expanded gambling opportunities in B.C. A Green Party government would begin a gradual process of phasing out state-promoted gambling. We would:

- halt gambling expansion opportunities through initiatives by the BC Gaming Commission and the BC Lotto Corp
- cap the B.C. Lottery Corporation's advertising budget at its present dollar value, with 4% reductions each subsequent year
- ensure that lottery products are produced on recycled materials which are fully recyclable
- end B.C. Lottery Corporation games linked to commercial sport
- cancel all government plans to expand casino gambling or allow video lottery terminals
- limit B.C. Lottery Corporation activities to "over the counter" products, and eliminate existing or planned "self service" gaming

B.C. Green Party Platform Summary for the Ministry of Forests

Forestry reform is one of the most significant issues facing British Columbians. A Green Party government would reform B.C. forestry in the key areas of tenure reform, employment and better forest practices. We must also immediately roll back the increases to the allowable annual cut brought in by the NDP, particularly in the threatened areas of the Cariboo (where the cut has been increased 50%) and the Cassiar (where the cut has been increased 600%).

In addition to addressing British Columbians' employment and economic needs through forestry reform, we must guide all forest policy with the recognition that BC forests play a vital role in preserving this planet's capacity to absorb global warming gases and avoid drastic climate change. In addition, our forests contain a wealth of species key in preserving this planet's genetic diversity. Unlike other parties, a Green Party government will make forestry decisions in a global context. We will ensure that our forestry policies do not contribute to this planet's species deficit or its carbon deficit. By protecting jobs from mechanization, developing a remanufacturing industry and institution labour intensive practices like selection logging, a Green Party government will protect ordinary British Columbians from job losses resulting from a necessary dramatic decrease in the annual cut in our forests.

By adopting the principle of ecosystem-based planning which focuses on what we leave in our forests instead of what we take, a Green government will employ people in a working

forest which maintains carbon syncs and habitat.

A Green Party government would begin by merging the regulatory arms of the ministries of Forests, Mines, Fisheries and Environment into a single ministry charged with regulating environmental laws, to reduce bureaucracy and end jurisdictional overlap. The Ministry of Forests would then be reduced to a crown BC Forests Corporation regulated by the Ministry of Environment and charged with selling cutting rights to BC's working forest.

Forest Practices

Right now, B.C. forest practices are regulated by a highly complex, bureaucratic document known as the Forest Practices Code. This document, while long on words is short on hard and fast rules for appropriate behaviour in our forests. Even the code's most touted regulations, such as limiting the size of clearcuts to 60 hectares and maintaining a buffer zone around spawning streams are at the discretion of forestry bureaucrats who can grant exemptions to these rules if forest companies file the correct paperwork with the correct government bodies; and they certainly have been since the code has come into effect. British Columbians need a simple set of rules for sensible forestry that apply to all forest companies, not just those who can't afford expensive planners and high-priced lawyers to make special deals with the government.

The Green Party proposes the following changes:

- a shorter and simplified Forest Practices Code that eliminates the bureaucracy which grants exemptions to the code and reduces the power of district forest managers to selectively regulate
- re-instituting a public appeal process for individual stand logging plans which was abolished in 1993
- expanded riparian buffer zones around all spawning streams with no exemptions
- an end to "dedicated use" zones created under the CORE process which push other users out of public forests
- extending the Forest Practices Code to privately owned forest land
- a ban on commercial cutting of trees less than 25cm in diameter and more than 100cm in diameter
- a ban on current slash burning practices
- a ban on harvesting succession trees such as aspen and cottonwood which interrupts natural forest regenerations processes
- ending other silviculture practices which impede natural succession, lead to impoverishment of forest soils or create monocultural tree farms which are more prone to disease, infestation and fire
- decrease the allowable annual cut to a sustainable level based not on what we take from the forests but what we must leave behind to maintain intact ecosystems
- maintain wildlife corridors, ecosystem connectivity and

Fiscal Responsibility

For all of the rhetoric of successive governments about the forest being the backbone of BC's economy, the Ministry of Forests has run at a loss during every year of its operation. How is it that a ministry charged with selling a public good which it obtains for free can lose money in such a transaction? The fact is that transnational forest companies pay as little as a tenth of the market value of wood they cut while small operators have to bid competitively for cutting rights. This inequity has led to small operators paying on average 350% more per cubic metre for the wood they cut in public forests. This has led to the Forest Ministry's Small Business Program being the only part of the ministry which turns a profit for taxpayers. Meanwhile, the big forest companies are subsidized by the so-called Forest Renewal Plan which has given direct cash subsidies to companies like MacMillan-Bloedel for simply obeying the law or indirect subsidies by re-foresting areas those companies are contractually obliged to re-forest.

And for all the rhetoric about forestry supporting BC's rural economies, more and more forest jobs and money leave this province's rural communities. The Green Party has a plan for rural communities and small businesses to reclaim the working forest in this province that includes:

- allocating 60% of BC's working forest to Community Forests regulated by locally elected boards empowered whose revenues will go to maintaining health and education services in their areas of operation. These boards would be empowered to grant homesteads, short term tenure, long term tenure, community land title or other forms of title.
- allocating 40% of BC's working forest to a modified Small Business Program which will competitively auction cutting rights to local businesses to carry out logging plans devised by sustainable land use planners with the BC Forests Corp.
- ceasing to renew Tree Farm Licenses of other large tenures
- confiscating Tree Farm Licenses of forest companies which break the law or fail to meet their contractual obligations to re-forest
- developing a Forest Homesteading program for individuals and families to develop sustainable, self-supporting woodlots to which they will gain title

Employment

Right now, BC continues to lag behind other industrial countries in the number of jobs it produces per cubic metre of wood cut. To a large degree, this is because our tax structure continues to encourage companies to mechanize in ways that would be unprofitable if it were not for the huge tax deductions they receive for doing so. In the adjacent jurisdictions of Washington and Alaska, twice as many people are employed in the forest sector because US governments will not absorb mechanization costs. BC needs to increase the number of people employed in the forest sector from its current level of 1.2 jobs per 1000 cubic metres of wood cut to a level on par with European countries. To achieve this goal, the Green Party will:

- establish 6 jobs per 1000 cubic metres of wood cut as our goal and with an increasing long range goal
- work with the federal government to abolish the tax deductions which subsidize costly mechanization
- recognize that the jobs of hunters, trappers, fishers and guides depend on intact ecosystems and strive to preserve all jobs that depend on the working forest
- encourage the use of barley, rice, hemp and flax for pulp so that more of the wood supply can be used in value-added applications
- establish competitive local log markets that ensure that timber available first to businesses operating in the region in which it is extracted
- ban clearcutting and mandate selective logging and other more labour-intensive forest practices in its place
- ban the export of unprocessed and minimally-processed wood such as log cants

B.C. Green Party Platform Summary for the Ministry of Health and Seniors

The Green Party in a broad-based approach to health beginning by making our environment and communities healthier places in which to live and work.

While recognizing that Green health policies will lead to illness reduction in the long term, the BC Green Party is committed to preserving and improving our medicare system both reducing costs and providing better service by relying more on the skills of healthcare professionals other than doctors such as midwives, nurses, naturopaths and other qualified professionals. This includes improvements to the reference-based pricing system. The Green Party plans to provide a more diversified healthcare system which provides a wide variety of services and reduces costs while maintaining a focus on wellness and prevention; this plan includes:

- developing a certification process for naturopaths, homeopaths and other alternative practitioners to be integrated into the public healthcare system
- initiating an environmental health education program which would educate British Columbians on the full range of dietary, recreation, employment and lifestyle choices which can help to reduce risks of cancer and other diseases.
- a feasibility study of capitation and other alternative systems for paying doctors
- greater use and regulation of nurses, midwives and other healthcare professions
- targeting more than 10% of the healthcare budget to home care including visiting nurses, dietitians, homemakers, occupational and recreational therapists
- funding and recognition of medicines prescribed by certified alternative practitioners
- developing community health centres along a model similar to that supported by the BC Nurses' Union in which nurses are the primary referral agents
- phasing out the MSP premium system in favour of funding healthcare from general revenue to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy
- making the government's reference-based pricing system more patient-friendly so that patients do not bear the costs of disagreements between pharmacare and their

doctor

- allowing for greater coverage of buffered and slow release medications under reference based pricing

Other areas of Green policy will also lead to a reduction in rates of cancer, respiratory illness and chemical sensitivity such as phasing-out water chlorination, banning ozone depleting compounds, ending logging in drinking watersheds, reducing the total number of vehicles on the road, banning synthetic chemical pesticides and herbicides and ending the overuse of growth hormones and antibiotics in food animals.

While BC's New Democrats have focused on building healthcare infrastructure and providing stop-gap funding, BC's healthcare professionals and patients continue to exist in a system where core funding is eroding. We need to focus on core funding to maintain an adequate number of qualified healthcare workers and on keeping beds open.

The provincial government is currently divorcing mental health programs from the ministry of health. This includes de-institutionalization of individuals unprepared to take up normal life outside of institutions who find themselves, at best, in overcrowded group home settings under the care of poorly paid and underqualified contract employees earning little more than minimum wage or worse, simply out on the streets. Programs like the Community Living Program while continuing to be run by the Ministry of Health, are now on the bill of social services, as is the growing welfare roll of people with significant mental disorders.

Another group often forgotten in this push are elderly people in government subsidized retirement facilities. Many of these facilities are now administered by the Ministry of Social Services, rather than the Health and Seniors Ministry. Unable to cover some of the additional costs associated with these facilities, the social services ministry has exempted them from the mandatory random inspections guaranteed other facilities to ensure that the facilities are operating to standard.

To alleviate these problems, the Green Party proposes:

- consolidation of all mental health bureaucracies run by different government ministries into a single agency administered by the Health Ministry
- more regular review and liaison with de-institutionalized individuals and re-institutionalization at any time by the request of the individual concerned
- a fair wage policy for firms sub-contracted to care for mentally disadvantaged people, in line with that established for firms subcontracted for highway maintenance
- ongoing upgrading and education programs provided for care-givers in mental health facilities
- regular mandatory inspections of all care facilities contracted by government ministries

The Green Party, while supporting in principle the idea of decentralized decision-making about healthcare, has serious concerns about the BC government's Closer To Home initiatives. A Green Party government would reform these Initiatives to create truly democratic health boards by mandating regular election for health boards and councils at the same time school trustees and municipal representatives are selected. Over the longer term, the a Green Party government would create truly decentralized local government by combining school boards, health boards and other local and regional government bodies to reduce overlap and bureaucracy.

The Green Party's focus on the root causes of ill health will also be addressed by programs targeted at currently legal drugs such as:

- registering existing tobacconists and establishing a permit process for tobacco distributors similar to that for beer and wine stores
- provincial alcohol surtax on imported alcohol directed to prevention and addiction treatment programs

B.C. Green Party Platform Summary for the Ministry of Labour

Green economics, unlike the Keynesian and neo-classical economic policies of other political parties is designed to achieve full employment. Labour intensive practices, ceasing to subsidize mechanization and maintaining local business in the face of increasingly globalized economics are cornerstones of Green employment policies. Right now, the Green Party supports two initiatives which will both increase employment and improve the quality of life of those currently employed.

- an overtime cap of a seasonally averaged maximum number of overtime hours per employee
- phasing in a decreased work week of 32 hours (down from 37.5 hours)

Low wages continue to be a problem in an number of areas of the BC economy, most specifically the service industry, jobs in which individuals as paid on a piecework or commission basis and jobs in which self-employed and casual labour designations are used to avoid paying workers a fair wage. The Green Party believes that these problems must be addressed by focusing labour reform on securing rights for the genuinely needy in society, rather than continuing the NDP agenda of focusing on improving the rights of workers in already-unionized, high wage sectors. A Green government would:

- index minimum wage to the rate of inflation, subject to periodic review
- establish a public process receiving input from employers and service industry workers on how to improve wages, working conditions and regularity of hours within the service sector
- establish a labour ministry office to provide assistance to service industry workers attempting to form bargaining units

- tighten the definition of self-employed so that this designation is not used by corporations to pay their employees less than minimum wage
- tighten minimum wage legislation so that employers do not pay their employees less than minimum wage through commission and piecework structures
- require companies paying their employees less than \$10.00 per hour to absorb the costs of all uniforms and other clothing required for performance of job duties

In addition to focusing its labour policy agenda on high wage sectors over the past five years, the NDP has continued to address more of its labour reforms to men in the workforce than to women. An example is fair wage legislation which applies to government contracts to principally male-oriented jobs such as construction but not to contracts with health and social service providers. Essentially, the NDP thinks that a fair wage for men is \$22.50 per hour and a fair wage for women is \$7.50 per hour, at least when they work for government-contracted firms. A Green government would make a number of policy changes to better represent women's rights in the workforce:

- fair wage legislation that applies to all government contracted services, including mental health
- a fair wage scale which recognizes the principles of equal pay for work of equal value
- affirmative action and employment equity legislation which applies to large private sector employers, similar to the legislation implemented by the Rae government in Ontario
- a provincial childcare program including more on-site childcare so that parents can have contact with their children at or near their place of work

In addition to gender and pay equity, another key issue in contracting out is ensuring that the government only contracts to BC-owned firms so that not only the jobs but also the profits stay in British Columbia.

To avoid economic and social disruption, the Green Party recognizes the need to balance collective bargaining rights with reducing labour confrontation. This can be achieved through improved access to arbitration and mediation services for private companies and their employees, as well as fair employee buyout legislation which fairly balances the rights of employers with the rights of workers. Employers and employees also need to an expanded and more efficient labour relations board so that complaints can be dealt with in a timely manner.

BC Green Party Platform for the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

While the number of local "consultive" processes has dramatically increased under the NDP, the actual powers and accessibility of local and regional government has continued to decline. With the proposed amalgamation of school boards and the decrease in taxation powers of these bodies, bureaucrats and professional politicians have been more and

more in the drivers' seat. Meanwhile with health regionalization and land use planning processes, the government has given the illusion of giving more power to local people by creating more process but final authority continues to rest with the provincial government and these local bodies have unaccountable and unelected.

A Green vision of local government is giving real power to democratically elected officials while maintaining stronger provincial standards for environmental protection and human rights. A Green vision of local government is reducing bureaucracy and government appointed boards in favour of comprehensible, truly accountable regional government.

To regain people's trust in the political system, the Green Party will begin by working to make local governments more accessible and accountable through the following measures:

- allow distinct communities to "secede" from over-sized municipalities like Surrey by referendum so that city councils are accessible and responsive
- replace the at-large system of election for councils of large cities with a combined ward and proportional representation system so that neighbourhoods and other communities within cities can have better representation
- require approval for re-zoning in neighbourhoods be approved by local residents through a community meeting or plebiscite
- extend initiative legislation to the local level so that ordinary citizens can put referenda before the voters at election time

Regional government, while costing taxpayers money like a real level of government remains largely inaccessible while continuing to make vital decisions about communities' water supply and other vital issues. It's time for all regional governments to be directly elected and accountable to taxpayers. The Green Party proposes alternatives to the sledgehammer approach of amalgamating school boards; we can achieve cost savings by amalgamating different kinds of regional government instead of creating more centralized bureaucracies. A Green government would rationalize our regional governments by:

- making regional district representatives directly elected in all areas of BC, rather than just rural BC in the short term with a view to replacing them with two regional authorities as detailed below
- gradually merging regional districts, parks boards, regional land-use roundtables, water districts and other local environmental decision-making bodies into a single directly elected body in consultation with local residents and elected representatives
- gradually merging school boards, health boards, health councils and other local social program providers into a single, directly elected body on the geographic scale of a school board in consultation with local residents and their elected representatives
- in the interim, ensuring that health boards are elected on a three-year timeline by all residents in an area and pay an honorarium to board members in line with school trustees

A Green provincial government would also show leadership on growth issues. As British Columbians, it is hypocritical for us to demand that countries like India and Nigeria bring their population growth under control when regions of our province like the Comox Valley are doubling in population every six years. Regions like the Okanagan, southern Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland are experiencing rapidly declining water and air quality because of runaway growth. We need to move toward more livable urban areas which are better integrated with the natural world.

At the same time, agricultural and industrial land are being replaced with suburban sprawl and strip malls; it's time to protect agricultural and industrial jobs in southern BC. Green policies to address these issues include:

- programs to cap population growth in these Okanagan, south Island and Lower Mainland until a full environmental audit of these regions' sustainable carrying capacity can be carried out
- establishing growth boundaries around cities to encourage growth through densification rather than sprawl
- ending hidden subsidies to urban sprawl like the Island Highway project
- requiring cities to maintain the same average density within their limits so that when one area's density is increased, another area's density must be proportionally decreased
- adding flexibility to residential zoning designations so that densification can take place through secondary suites instead of demolition
- strengthening the agricultural land reserve and developing an industrial land reserve to protect local industry, farms and jobs
- developing an inter-regional plan to link urban park systems together into greenbelts which can act as habitat corridors and mesh with the provincial parks system

Housing

Due to market pressures and government indifference, home ownership has become more and more inaccessible to low- and middle-income earners in urban British Columbia. Also, amendments to the residential tenancy act have been a positive step to offer basic protections to tenants and owners but need to go farther. A Green Party government would make it a priority for a greater portion of British Columbians to own their own homes either through strata title or through co-op shares and to ensure that people not be forced to relocate due to demolitions or unreasonable rent increases. A Green Party government would:

- establish occupant buyout legislation, giving long term renters the opportunity to buy the property they have been occupying either individually or through co-operatives
- ease zoning and title restrictions to allow for gradual tenant-directed conversion of rental buildings to strata-titled buildings or co-op managed buildings
- register rental units and their occupants and re-establish the office of Rentalsman to monitor owner-tenant relations

- mandate improved guidelines for municipal inspection of rental property and provide a backup provincial inspection office for unincorporated areas and for emergency situations
- prepare rent control legislation to allow the rentalsman's office to establish controls in emergency situations
- amend the municipal act to require approval by a majority of neighbourhood residents for re-zoning or demolitions on residential property

In recent years as the number of strata-titled units has increased, shoddy building standards and poor planning have characterized many new condominium developments. To discourage such shoddy practices in future, a Green Party government would:

- implement legislation making it easier for residents of strata-titled buildings to sue and obtain damages for negligence both in the sale and construction of faulty suites
- implement stricter legislation to ensure that newly constructed multi-unit buildings are
 - 1) accessible by fire department ladders (11 storeys maximum).
 - 2) made with non-toxic materials as much as possible.
 - 3) wheelchair accessible.

A Green government would assist home-owners in making their homes more ecologically sustainable through offering tax concessions and professional assistance to individuals wishing to set up energy-efficient homes through co-generation (such as solar power) or weather-proofing and grey-water or other resource saving systems. Building codes would also be tightened making these requirements mandatory for new buildings as technologies become more accessible and affordable.

B.C. Green Party Platform Summary for the Ministry of Social Services

Low income and unemployed British Columbians had high hopes for the NDP government they helped to elect in 1991. Instead of recognizing that many British Columbians who continue to seek employment are forced to continue collecting social assistance in order to survive, the NDP has become another old line party blaming welfare recipients for poverty and unemployment.

In fact, after five years of an NDP government, a welfare cheque today buys 20% less than it did not the good old days of premiers Bill Vander Zalm and Rita Johnston. Today, welfare recipients have fewer rights, less money and less respect. Today, there are more British Columbians homeless and living in the margins of society. Today, everyone entering British Columbia, regardless of need is ineligible for welfare during their first 90 days in B.C., whether they have come from depressed areas of Canada seeking work, are homeless people fleeing life threatening winter conditions or whether they are refugees seeking asylum from a government threatening their lives. Now, single parents seeking to

supplement their welfare cheques through extra work will now have to work 300% more hours to keep the first \$200 they earn over and above their welfare cheques.

There is now a burgeoning class of homeless people including refugees who are prohibited by law both from working and from receiving welfare during their first three months in BC. And food banks and shelters, normally a last resort, lose government funding for every person they take in who does not meet the three month residency requirement.

The Greens propose a program of safeguarding the rights and security of society's least fortunate as an alternative to the currently trendy and expedient policies of welfare-bashing undertaken by the Liberal, N.D.P. and Reform Parties alike. A Green government would institute reform in the areas of monetary transfers, building self reliance and maintaining low income people's security and rights.

Monetary Transfers

It's time to establish fair welfare rates based on need, rather than the whim of each provincial government. A Green government would immediately strike a commission to establish the minimum income needed for a person to live a life of health and dignity in the mainstream of society, including the basic human need for recreation and social activities. In addition to implementing the final results of the study, the Green Party would:

- immediately abolish the three month residency requirement for social assistance
- index of social assistance payments to the rate of inflation for British Columbia with periodic review by a non-partisan body which includes welfare recipients
- establish a discount card for government sponsored transportation, education and cultural events for social assistance recipients
- guarantee access to social assistance to all British Columbians in need, regardless of past employment history
- recognize the care of children as a legitimate full time occupation for custodial parents receiving social assistance
- allow social services workers to give as many hardship and crisis grants as they deem appropriate, rather than the arbitrary limits set by the B.C. Benefits program

Recent studies have again shown that poverty in Canada directly affects the health and life span of poor people. Furthermore it is clear that the stresses and detriments of poverty affect children's difficulties in school and decrease the chances of completion. For the good of all British Columbians, it is time to begin treating unemployed people with compassion, dignity and respect.

Building Self Reliance

In addition to helping social assistance recipients to find full time work, a Green government would help to build self reliance in recipients and reduce costs by initiating

programs to help social assistance recipients meet more of their own needs with dignity. These programs would include:

- allowing parents on welfare to continue to supplement their incomes through part time work, allowing them to keep 100% of their earnings up to the poverty line as determined by Statistics Canada (officially known as the Low Income Cutoff), rather than 25% of their earnings
- establishing training programs in sewing, gardening and nutrition for social assistance recipients that help recipients to meet more of their own needs without spending
- providing gardening supplies and work with other government agencies to develop community gardens so that recipients can meet their food needs at reduced cost
- maintaining a registry and organizing babysitting co-ops and other alternative methods of exchange between social assistance recipients to reduce costs

Security and Rights

As part of its program to cut Canadian social programs the Chretien government has eliminated the C.A.P. program that guaranteed certain rights to social assistance recipients. As these rights included the right to food money and the right to appeal, a Green government would immediately enshrine these rights in provincial legislation.

It is currently Ministry practice to force single parents eligible for maintenance to pursue such maintenance regardless of potential risk from the ex-spouse. It is our view that the separation of a couple is too delicate a matter for the ministry to intervene in this way.

It is also current practice for the ministry to ask for a waiver on the privacy of new recipients. All recipients are protected by the Privacy Act but will probably not know this. As there have been concerns expressed about the Ministry sharing information with private agencies, a Green government would issue a statement to all new clients describing their rights in detail and encouraging them to act on these rights without fear of reprisal.

B.C. Green Party Platform for the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture

Small Business

Small scale business is the basis of a Green economy. Small businesses encourage employment, community responsibility and local ownership of our economy. A Green Party government would work to shift the corporate tax burden away from small independent businesses in favour of taxing retail chains and large corporations more fairly. A simplified tax system, ending hidden subsidies to big business and making sure that local small businesses get access to natural resources and other amenities before the big companies is part of a Green strategy for building small business in BC which includes:

- a program to work with other ministries and federal and municipal government to provide "one stop shopping" for small businesses to interface with local, provincial and federal bureaucracies and develop fairer taxation systems
- a program of subsidies, tariffs and marketing assistance (such as local log markets) to help consumers more easily purchase locally produced products instead of imports
- non-compliance with all parts of the North American Free Trade Agreement which are under provincial jurisdiction to protect threatened industries like agriculture
- decreasing hidden subsidies to megastores like Walmart by charging all megastores on "industrial land" commercial tax rates
- legislation to better protect the owners of existing franchises with BC from unfair measures by their parent corporation
- studying legislative means to cease importing goods made using unhealthy and unethical practices to as to put BC products on a truly even footing with imports

Tourism

The BC Green Party sees ecologically sustainable tourism as a key part of a Green BC economy. We would balance active international promotion of BC tourism opportunities with the need to protect more BC ecosystems from high impact tourism, including the establishment of a comprehensive system of ecological reserves focused on habitat and species protection so that other parts of the park system can better focus on tourism development. We will also cancel high impact tourist megaprojects like the Jumbo Alpine Glacier resort. A key priority for a Green government is to develop BC's tourist industry into an industry which can provide stable employment for communities by offering more high-paying jobs and more stable year-round employment, through the following strategies:

- making BC a cycling destination by developing provincial cycle routes in co-operation with the Ministry of Transportation to ensure that cyclists can travel safely and healthily through all areas of BC
- restoring passenger rail on many of BC's scenic and historic routes, including seasonal routes focused on attracting tourists to more BC destinations

Culture

A key value of the Green Party is respect for cultural diversity and the need to maintain local culture in the face of increasingly globalized cultural and entertainment industries. BC cultural organizations need support not just through building new theatres and other facilities but by making sure that they can receive core funding and are better able to support themselves through improved charitable tax status. As some of the most threatened cultures in BC, First Nations and Metis cultural organizations must receive help not only from the aboriginal affairs and multiculturalism departments but receive support commensurate with the reality that they are BC's first cultures.

Recreation and Sport

The BC Greens believe that outdoor recreation should help to support the BC Parks system more effectively by bringing the costs of sport hunting and fishing licenses for non-British Columbians in line with price paid by tourists in Alaska and Washington for hunting and fishing opportunities. It's also time to finally ban trophy hunting in BC and properly enforce that ban.

Running counter to our society's increasing interest in fitness is a threat that with increasingly high-budget commercialized sporting events, team sport is being viewed as increasingly inaccessible. This problem is compounded by the unnecessarily violent nature of many sports (such as hockey). We need to build support and solidarity for local amateur sport. We also need to encourage women to become equal partners in amateur sport.

The B.C. Green Party proposes:

- ending government loans, gifts and promotions (through the B.C. Lotto Corp., BC21 Corp., etc.) to commercial sports teams and facilities
- funding parity between women and men in sport
- use of government funds that would otherwise promote commercial sport to promote amateur sporting events through the media
- a three year timeline for sports define and set up programs to reduce dangerous attacks, after which time the government would regulate sports which failed to self-regulate

The B.C. Green Party is also concerned about motorized recreation which governments subsidize and accomodate in the name of tourism. A Green Party government would:

- stop motorized sport within almost all provincial parks
- regulate motorized sport in provincial recreation areas and other crown land, requiring permits to be issued for motorized recreation in areas where fish, wildlife or local residents' quality of life could be compromised
- disallow motor sport on provincial highways and other roads and encourage regional and municipal governments to do the same

B.C. Green Party Platform Summary for the Ministry of Transportation and Highways

In order to meet our international commitment to reduce our emissions of global warming gases by as much as 80%, it is not enough to reform transportation policy. We must transform it. And with 50% of the energy consumed in a private car's lifetime consumed during its manufacture, we must reduce the total number of cars and trucks British Columbians need to meet their transportation needs.

Unlike the NDP government, the Green Party believes that the best way to transform our transportation system is by using existing infrastructure rather than building costly new projects. Existing rail lines could provide rapid commuter rail in southern Vancouver Island,

the southern Fraser Valley and elsewhere in BC without a single new track being laid. Similarly, the Green Party would institute a moratorium on road expansion and new road building and instead focus remaining spending on roads on safety upgrades and maintenance.

The Green Party believes that all road users should be treated equally and will create a funding formula for funding transportation projects with equal per-user funding of cycling, public transit and private car infrastructure, instead of the current formula where car users receive over a hundred times the government funding per driver as cyclists receive per cyclist.

Green Party transportation programs include:

- a moratorium on road expansion, new road construction and parking lot development, including the Island Highway Project
- establishment of commuter rail on existing lines including the Esquimalt-Nanaimo, southern BC Rail (Chilliwack to Surrey)
- restoration of passenger rail to Fort St. James, Tumbler Ridge and other northern communities formerly serviced by BC Rail
- a program to gradually electrify and double track BC's rail system
- tolling of single occupant vehicles on major arteries as rapid transit alternatives become available for drivers
- rehabilitation and development of passenger rail on currently un- or under-used rail lines such as the Kettle and Slokan Valley rail lines
- phasing-in design requirements for vehicles not only mandating California style emission controls but also a maximum speed
- banning gasoline additives
- gradually closing excess lanes on urban traffic arteries as
- establishing a branch of BC Transit focused on developing public transportation in rural BC not only in town centres but also linking rural communities
- including a BC Transit Pass with purchase of ICBC insurance
- restoring core funding to support passenger rail through BC Rail
- developing a provincial bicycle route system within and between urban centres
- phasing-in a Car Free Downtown program for Vancouver, Victoria and other BC cities as public transit alternatives become more easily available
- developing a fleet of rapid passenger-only ferries linking downtown Victoria, Vancouver and Nanaimo
- issuing bicycle racks for the current BC Transit bus fleet
- developing better night bus service in cities that address safety concerns through dial-a-bus programs, improved lighting and more frequent, smaller buses
- constructing "Greenways" (multi-purpose trails for walking and biking in the summer, skiing in the winter.)
- making BC Ferries, ICBC, BC Transit and BC Rail responsible to the Transport Ministry instead of the Employment Ministry

- integrating the VIA Rail system and bus systems run by municipal and regional governments with a comprehensive provincial transportation system which integrates BC Ferries, BC Rail and BC Transit to create a unified fare and schedule system
- ensure that additions to the bus fleet have improved storage facilities for larger items and are not combustion powered

The Green Party recognizes that private cars account for only the bare majority vehicle emissions in BC, while the gradual movement away from barging and rail in favour of truck transportation in the industrial sector goes on unaddressed. A Green Party government would end hidden subsidies to trucking firms to encourage more fuel efficient transportation which protects rail workers' jobs.

- implementing a Guideway Tax on trucking firms to put them on an equal footing with rail firms who have to maintain their own track system
- stabilizing reservoir levels, building docks and other government initiatives to encourage barging for industrial goods

B.C. Green Party Platform Summary for the Ministry of Women's Equality

After years of consistent social and economic gains by women since the early 1970s, the mid 1990s have shown a depressing turnaround. Just as the gap between rich and poor continues to widen, the gap between the earning power of women and men is beginning to widen again. Excellent progress has been made in guaranteeing the equality rights of women through human rights legislation and constitutional entrenchment, governments have been reluctant to address key bread and butter issues which must be taken up before women can truly be said to have equal opportunities and political and economic participants in society.

A Green Party government would begin its program of addressing these issues by recognizing that the pauperization of women is a serious threat not only to our values of equality but to the health and social well-being of women and to children who continue to be primarily cared for by women.

Green Party programs would include:

- a taskforce into the decline of women's incomes and the pauperization of women
- immediate increases in welfare rates for custodial parents on social assistance so that they can meet theirs and their children's basic educational and nutritional needs
- a provincial childcare program with a focus on providing childcare in or adjacent to the workplace so that parents can have contact with their children throughout the work day
- restoration of funding to women's programs cut by federal government cutbacks

- a study into legislating affirmative action and pay equity programs for large private sector corporations as was implemented by the Rae government in Ontario

A Green Party government would also establish a single government fair wage policy that ceases to discriminate against women. Current government policies set up a two-tiered system of "fair wages" in which firms contracted for construction work and other predominantly male jobs receive a guaranteed fair wage of \$22.50 per hour while work carried out principally by women such as care of disabled adults continues to be contracted to firms paying as little as \$7.00 per hour. A Green fair wage would be set and maintained through an open public process, based on need, private sector standards and other social goals.

B.C. Green Party Platform Summary for the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks

At present, there are too many regulatory agencies enforcing laws on this province's crown lands. Environmental laws are currently being enforced by the federal Ministries of Environment and Fisheries, and the provincial ministries of Environment, Energy and Forests. It's time to simplify enforcement and reduce bureaucracy by amalgamating the regulatory and enforcement functions of these departments into one ministry. This will also lead to tougher enforcement and better communications.

Despite British Columbians' pride in the wealth we have derived from our forests and minerals, the B.C. government has yet to see either the Ministry of Forests or the Ministry of Mines turn a profit for taxpayers. Each year, these ministries sell publicly owned resources which they have received for free and yet somehow manage to lose money in these transactions. This is a wanton fiscal affront. The Green Party proposes restructuring and downsizing the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources and the Ministry of Forests to two crown corporations:

- a) The British Columbia Forests Corporation
- b) The British Columbia Minerals Corporation

both under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Environment. These corporations will be obliged to pay annual dividends into the provincial treasury so that the dividends from sale of our public resources can be used to pay for education, healthcare and infrastructure, instead of padding the pockets of Forest company executives.

The Green Party also proposes a changed structure for the administration of our parks. At present, our parks are designated for two purposes, sometimes conflicting -- the first is to provide habitat and undisturbed environments for B.C. wildlife. The second is to provide tourism opportunities for residents and visitors to British Columbia. A Green Party government would divide parks into two designations: ecological reserves and parks. Ecological reserves would be maintained as zones for plant, animal and insect species to exist without unnecessary human intervention. Parks would be maintained for a variety of levels of impact -- from ecologically sensitive hiking to more intensive forms of recreation in selected areas. To manage the parks, a B.C. Parks Corporation would be mandated to

maintain a revenue-neutral park system. Ecological reserves would be under the jurisdiction of a department of the environment ministry and would be carefully protected from poaching and other forms of human intervention.

A Green Party government would implement a comprehensive program of preserving habitat and ecosystems both inside and outside protected areas. We will

- increase the portion of British Columbia in protected designations determined by ecological, scientific and habitat needs rather than arbitrary percentage quotas
- the areas granted protected status would include: Clayoquot Sound, Great Coast Forest, Muskwa/Northern Rockies, Cassiar Wilderness, Randy Stoltman Wilderness and Nancy Greene Areas¹
- protect areas including the remaining undisturbed grizzly and caribou ranges
- phase-out hunting and trapping of disappearing/endangered species (also known as red and blue listed species) including grizzlies, fishers and wolverines
- increase the number of wildlife protection officers
- eliminate predator control programs

Environmental responsibility is about a lot more than land use. A Green Party government is committed to creating a conserver, rather than a consumer society in BC. We can also save money by ceasing to subsidize disposable products by ceasing to pick up disposal costs. The B.C. Greens propose additional strategies to reduce waste production, disposal costs and over-use of energy in recycling. Through a system of increased convenience, incentives and taxation, a Green government will keep taxpayers' money out of landfills and in secondary industries that will build our communities:

- empowering the Ministry of Environment to dictate water flow hydroelectric and flood control projects to preserve the integrity of marine and surface wildlife
- banning emission of synthetic chemical pesticides and herbicides within B.C.
- phasing-out water chlorination in favour of ozonation and ultraviolet treatments to increase water quality
- implementing deposit and standardized packaging legislation to increase re-use of packaging and employment in the manufacturing sector
- banning emission and transportation into British Columbia of ozone destroying compounds not currently prohibited and increase penalties for possession and emission of these compounds
- phasing out (in a three year period) chlorine bleaching in British Columbia pulp mills in favour of oxygen bleaching, providing government loans to assist in rapid conversion
- making producers of packaging legally responsible for the packaging throughout its lifetime
- phasing out organochlorine and PCB production for industrial use
- providing infrastructure funding for municipalities to decommission waste incinerators in favour of recycling and mulching facilities

- investigating and monitoring sulphur derivatives and antibiotics released at pulping facilities with a view to developing legislation reducing or eliminating emission of these toxins
- reducing global warming gas emissions (especially carbon dioxide) to 1990 levels by the year 1999 and to 20% of 1990 levels by the year 2025
- requiring corporations to carry responsibility for packaging they produce throughout the packaging's lifetime (along the model of adopted by the German government in 1992). Under such a model, for instance, littering fines for disposable wrappers would be applied both to the "litterer" and the corporation producing the packaging
- expanding deposit legislation and standardized packaging on locally bottled or canned food products
- a 1998 deadline for standardized packaging of imported foods beyond a set annual tonnage
- minimum \$1.00 deposit on any standardized food packaging
- a surtax to finance conversion to standardized packaging on disposable products such as diapers, cameras and pens
- a five year program to phase-out unnecessary disposable products, such as diapers as support services and supplies for non-disposable products become more available
- recycling instructions on all product and packaging labeling where re-use is impossible to inappropriate
- establishing a program to test all currently approved and pending synthetic food additives in British Columbia with a view to banning carcinogenic or otherwise hazardous products which are currently approved
- establishing a program to test all currently approved and pending synthetic cleaning products in British Columbia with a view to regulate the industry through a combination of
 - a) banning certain products
 - b) educating consumers on helpful protective gear to avoid excessive toxicity
 - c) restricting the availability of such products to minors
 - d) requiring greater safety standards from those employing professional cleaners and
 - e) improving and expanding existing disposal guidelines and regulations
- requiring that food imported comply with the same safety standards for production and toxicity that are currently in force in B.C.
- requiring grocery stores to place easily readable labels stating clearly the place of manufacture for all foods stocked

1. A more complete list of proposed protected areas includes the undisturbed portions of the following watersheds: Akie, Anzac, Astika, Belcourt, Besa, Blue, North Blue, Bower, Bowser, Burnie, Cariboo, Cheslashi/Blanchet, Chowika, Chutine/Whiting, Clendenning, Cottonwood, Craig, Cullivan, Cummins, Downie, Duti, Eagle, Ecstall, Upper Elaho, Entiako, Eutsak, Exchamsiks, Firesteel, Fox, French, Fourmile, Gathto, Gladys, Goat, Graham, Grayling, Halfway, Herrick, Hugh Allen, Jennings, Kawdy/Level Mountain, Kechika, Kehlechoa, East Kispiox, Klappen, Klastline, Kluantantan, Kuldo, Upper Lillooet, Littlerancheria, McNaughton, McBride, Mehatl, More, Morkill, Mosque, Muskwa, Ospika, Pelly, Pesika, Pitman, Porcupine, Petitot, Prophet, Rabbit, Racing, Rapid, Rausj, West Road, Ross, Scatted, Scud, Shedian, Shelagyote, Sicintine, Sikanni Chief, Sims, Slamgeesh, Squingula, Tahltan, Taku, Tatisno, Rteslin, North Thompson, West Toad, Tuchodi, Tutschi/Skagway, Tuya, Unuk, Vents, Walbran, Warm/Fantali, Wood

