



Election 2008 and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Responses to the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative Questionnaire submitted to Canadian Federal Party Leaders*

*Answers have been copied directly from each Federal political party letter of response, with no omissions or changes. Four of the five federal parties submitted responses. The GLSLCI has yet to receive a response from the Conservative Party of Canada. The original letters from each Party that submitted a response may be viewed at www.gslcities.org

Assuming your Party forms the next Canadian Federal Government,

<p><i>1. Will your government call on the U.S. to renegotiate with Canada a new Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement by 2010 to effectively address such key issues as climate change, invasive species, toxic chemicals, habitat protection, and others necessary to improve the health of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River?</i></p>	<p>Liberal Party of Canada A new Liberal government will work with all partners, provincial, national and international, for the protection of our environment. We have also pledged to invest \$400 million in a Canada Water Fund. This new initiative will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase monitoring and reporting of the quantity and quality of Canadian water; • clean up our waterways, including “hot spots” in the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence and Lake Winnipeg; • research the impact of 	<p>Bloc Québécois The Bloc Québécois favours a review of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. In fact, we feel the federal government must ensure that treaties dealing with environmental protection take into consideration the most pertinent data and measures in order to combat global warming.</p> <p>The Bloc Québécois feels that any negotiation of this kind must take place only with the collaboration of the</p>	<p>New Democratic Party of Canada Jack Layton and the New Democrats have committed to improving the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement to address such key issues as climate change, toxic chemicals and habitat protection. In addition, we intend to Implement the National Action Plan on Aquatic Invasive Species and ensure that acceptable treatment for ballast water is implemented and enforced.</p>	<p>Green Party of Canada Freshwater is the lifeblood of Earth. Protecting and conserving freshwater is a major political challenge for the 21st century, and nowhere is this challenge illustrated better than the Great Lakes. The Green Party has already acted to preserve the water quality of the Great Lakes, as it was the only major Canadian political party to push for the cessation of the American Coast Guard’s use of live ammunition (and thus lead contamination) in the Great Lakes.</p>
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	<p>emerging pollutants in water on human and aquatic ecosystem health;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fight invasive species, such as the sea lamprey or zebra mussel; • map Canada’s underground aquifers that supply our drinking water, so we know where our groundwater comes from and how it is affected by human activities; and, • support the on-farm and community-based fresh water development programs of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration. 	<p>province of Quebec and other provinces, which, in the end, are those who are directly affected by climate change, invasive species and other environmental challenges.</p> <p>But mostly, the Bloc Québécois believes that the federal government must do more than negotiate and sign treaties: it must act responsibly. In his latest report, the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development states that the federal government does not fulfill its obligations and that its progress is unsatisfactory, especially when it comes to invasive species and areas of concern in the Great Lakes. Simply put, this situation is very worrisome. For the Bloc Québécois, this should be a priority ground of intervention in Ottawa.</p>		<p>A Green government would move to address invasive species in the Great Lakes by developing stringent, science-based protocols for ballast water flushing prior to entering the St. Lawrence waterway, and funding for monitoring and enforcement of these protocols. Moreover, we would strengthen the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement to ensure it deals with emerging issues such as endocrine disrupters and pharmaceuticals.</p>
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<p>2. <i>How much new federal funding will your government allocate each year to support Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River protection programs and essential waste water infrastructure?</i></p>	<p>Liberal Party of Canada A Liberal government will dedicate at least \$10 billion of strategic infrastructure, particularly green infrastructure such as water and sewage treatment, and clean energy grids. In addition, we have also promised at least \$3 billion for a dedicated Small Communities Fund, to ensure that all Canadians are able to use strengthened and more resilient infrastructure.</p>	<p>Bloc Québécois The Bloc Québécois requests that the federal government, rather than create a multitude of new programs, gathers existing programs under a single, unconditional and recurring Transfer fund, so that the federal government can accommodate the jurisdictions of the province of Quebec and the other provinces; so that Quebec and the provinces get their fair share; and so that municipal infrastructure investments become predictable, recurring and suited to local needs, specifically for the gas tax fund (GTF). The Bloc Québécois was pleased to see the GTF made permanent beyond 2014.</p> <p>However, regarding the financial needs of municipalities in Quebec,</p>	<p>New Democratic Party of Canada Canada’s New Democrats are committed to providing sufficient funding to adequately support Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River protection programs and essential wastewater infrastructure. We intend to Improve water quality monitoring and the enforcement of water quality standards by funding and implementing a National Water Strategy, including a comprehensive Water Quality Audit, in conjunction with provinces, territories and First Nations to ensure clean and safe water for all. As well as investing in a new municipal water and wastewater infrastructure, and establishing national standards to require a minimum of secondary treatment for all Canadian municipalities.</p>	<p>Green Party of Canada The Green Party is committed to providing stable and dependable funding for fresh water protection. We would restore ecosystem health to the Great Lakes by funding improvements to municipal wastewater treatment systems, with particular emphasis on ensuring shoreline communities and industries stop dumping untreated waste into rivers, lakes and oceans. We would place an emphasis on innovative research by reviving the InfraGuide program (quietly eliminated by Environment Minister John Baird) that supported graduate internships in leading edge municipal infrastructure projects. Furthermore, we would link research spending in the natural and social sciences to water policy goals to ensure our higher education institutions create the knowledge for 21st century water management (i.e.</p>
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<p>3. What support will your government offer municipalities to address climate change mitigation and adaptation for the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River region?</p>	<p>Liberal Party of Canada Yes. See question one.</p>	<p>Bloc Québécois It is profoundly unfair that the federal government, which remains uninvolved in the fight against greenhouse gas emissions, leaves the enormous financial burden related to the consequences of global warming upon the shoulders of Quebec and the provinces.</p> <p>The Bloc Québécois therefore requests the creation of a 500 million dollar compensation fund to counter the negative impacts of climate changes drawn from the 2008-2009 surpluses. This fund will serve to compensate Quebec and the provinces for costs related to climate change already incurred, and will also give them the means of financing measures to mitigate its effect.</p>	<p>New Democratic Party of Canada Our team is committed to working with the provinces and territories to encourage research and develop strategies to minimize the effects of climate change on communities, vegetation and wildlife. Included in our plan are measures to deal with toxic industrial effluent by strengthening the enforcement of existing regulations. We will support provincial and municipal governments by providing national and international leadership to prevent build-up and counteract the harmful effects of marine debris. Toward this end we will provide the resources to ensure existing legislation regarding oily bilge water discharge and management will be effectively enforced. To address the problem of blue-green algae the New</p>	<p>Green Party of Canada A Green government would provide funding to municipalities through a new “Water and Waste Treatment Facilities Municipal Superfund” to enable replacement of chlorination systems with ozonation, ultraviolet sterilization, sand filtration and other safe water purification systems. These Superfunds would also allow communities bordering the Great Lakes to directly address their pressing water concerns. Moreover, we would make federal funding for urban water infrastructure contingent on water efficiency plans that include measurable and enforceable goals and objectives.</p>
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<p><i>4. Is your government willing to work with the municipal governments of Ontario and Quebec to develop and implement Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River agreements, programs and to set infrastructure funding priorities?</i></p>	<p>Liberal Party of Canada Yes. See questions one and two.</p>	<p>Bloc Québécois Quebec has full jurisdiction over municipal and infrastructure affairs in its territory. Quebec is therefore responsible for determining priority projects which will be the most beneficial to the Quebec population. Therefore, the Bloc Québécois asks the federal government to stop creating a multitude of programs and imposing its priorities, and instead to regroup existing programs under a single and unconditional transfer fund that takes into consideration the jurisdiction of Quebec and the provinces.</p>	<p>New Democratic Party of Canada Jack Layton and the New Democrats are absolutely committed to working with provincial and municipal governments to develop and implement programs and agreements to set infrastructure funding priorities for the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River.</p>	<p>Green Party of Canada The Green Party of Canada is committed to ensuring, through cooperation with the provinces, that the Great Lakes are protected, maintained, and revitalized.</p>
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