



Election 2011: Parties Pledge Action to Protect Great Lakes and St. Lawrence

Parties agree that Investment, Political Leadership urgently needed

Ottawa, Ontario, Wednesday, April 27, 2011- Today, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative released the results of its *Election 2011 Questionnaire on the Future of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence*. Four of five of Canada's political leaders pledged to take concrete action to protect the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence, the largest source of fresh water in the world.

“We are very pleased with the results of our Election 2011 questionnaire,” said Denis Lapointe, chairman of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative and mayor of Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, Québec. “The political commitments made towards the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence show true leadership in protecting this priceless environmental and economic resource”.

The Liberal Party of Canada, the New Democratic Party of Canada, the Green Party of Canada and the Bloc Québécois responded to a questionnaire prepared by the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, a bi-national coalition of mayors representing over thirteen million people, concerned with the protection, restoration and promotion of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Basin. No response was received from the Conservative Party of Canada.

Some highlights of investment commitments made by the four Parties include:

- \$200 million per year over four years for clean water projects, with investment in the Great Lakes proportional to that of the U.S (New Democratic Party of Canada).
- A \$100 million per year Canadian Freshwater Strategy to address water pollution, inefficient use, nutrient over-loading, drought, flooding, invasive species, and bulk exports (Liberal Party of Canada).
- \$1.8 billion over three years to upgrade municipal water treatment, sewage treatment and recycling facilities to meet federal water standards (Green Party of Canada).
- \$1.5 billion over two years towards protecting the St. Lawrence, including a \$500 million fund to compensate communities affected by climate change (Bloc Québécois).



Cities Initiative questions ranged from each party’s commitment to increase investment in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence, to spills preparedness and response, to the impacts of climate change, particularly along the St. Lawrence.

“Canadian cities invest over \$4 billion in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence every year, but these waters are not solely a local responsibility”, said Brian McMullan, vice-chair of the Cities Initiative and mayor of St. Catharines, Ontario, “All levels of government must dedicate funds to protect this source of fresh water of national and global significance.”

To see the full questionnaire and the responses from each party that responded, please visit us at <http://www.glslcities.org/news/news/.cfm> .

-30-

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