



1. *Canada currently has an \$88 billion water infrastructure deficit (Our Living Waters Call to Action for the Next Government of Canada). Increasingly frequent extreme weather events caused by a changing climate are introducing additional uncertainties and costs. The City of Winnipeg's North End Water Pollution Control Centre, immediately upstream of Lake Winnipeg, is the fourth-largest phosphorus polluter among all wastewater treatment facilities in Canada (National Pollutant Release Inventory, Environment Canada) and costs for much-needed upgrades continue to rise. **How will your party address Canada's water infrastructure deficit to protect our fresh water in the context of a changing climate?***

Canada is lacking federal leadership in both water and infrastructure policy. Our water infrastructure deficit is, sadly, only a portion of our total \$350 billion infrastructure deficit. The gap between the infrastructure funding our cities and towns need, and the funding they receive, is reaching crisis levels.

The Green Party has committed \$6.4 billion annually - one point of the GST - to municipal infrastructure. This funding will provide for needed upgrades to water management systems, emphasizing innovation in green technology that supports water conservation and sanitation goals. We will create a Canadian Infrastructure Bank to provide more robust and innovative financing and investment partnerships, in order to build world-class water treatment facilities and put thousands of Canadians to work in the process. We need to invest in communities resilient to the impacts of climate change.

2. *Across the vast prairie landscape that drains into Lake Winnipeg, approximately 17.5 hectares of wetland habitat are destroyed every day (Ducks Unlimited Canada). Without these natural ecosystems to act as filters for melt and storm water, excess nutrients continue to flow unchecked into Lake Winnipeg, causing harmful algae blooms. Wetland destruction also exacerbates drought and flooding at enormous cost. In 2011 alone, flood-related costs in Manitoba exceeded \$1.2 billion (Manitoba 2011 Flood Review Task Force Report). A strong, coordinated approach to wetland protection is necessary in the Prairie provinces. **With the health of Lake Winnipeg at stake, time is of the essence; leadership is critical in the next four years. How will your party ensure wetlands protection is in place by 2019?***

Canada is home to a quarter of the world's total wetlands. These natural systems help purify water, prevent flooding, provide habitat, and, store carbon. We owe it to ourselves and the world to protect them. Unfortunately, the Harper Conservatives have made many changes that will

have a negative impact on our wetlands: the gutting of the Fisheries Act so that it now protects certain fish rather than all habitat; the destruction of the Environmental Assessment Act, and replacing the Navigable Waters Protection Act with the Navigation Protection Act – which now protects only 65 rivers and 97 lakes across Canada from development.

The Green Party will act swiftly to protect Canada's wetlands. We will work with landowners to restore or forego drainage on prairie potholes and wetlands that currently receive much of spring meltwater. We can draw from successful provincial programs, including the Wetland Restoration Incentive Program, initiated in 2008 as a partnership between Manitoba, Ducks Unlimited, and the Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation.

3. *The current federal investment in Lake Winnipeg is \$18 million over five years, \$7.4 million of which was administered through the Lake Winnipeg Basin Stewardship Fund (Lake Winnipeg Basin Initiative, Environment Canada). This funding is insufficient, as evidenced by the fact that the fund – intended to last until 2017 – ran out of money in early 2015. How much more will your party invest in new research and coordinated regional solutions to address the root causes of harmful algae blooms in Lake Winnipeg?*

While the Harper Conservatives insist they have “cleaned up Lake Winnipeg,” their actions tell a different story. Even as they announced the Lake Winnipeg Basin Stewardship fund in 2012, they were working to shut down the Experimental Lakes Area (ELA), a groundbreaking freshwater facility that was conducting research that could help save Lake Winnipeg. The Green Party is committed to providing significant federal support to organizations that are conducting this important research, like the ELA.

4. *Strong leadership is necessary to protect Lake Winnipeg and to ensure our solutions are commensurate with the scale of the problem. LWF's Lake Winnipeg Health Plan includes eight concrete, sector-specific actions to restore Lake Winnipeg (The Lake Winnipeg Foundation). Guided by the scientific advice of nationally recognized freshwater researchers, it is now being realized in partnership with conservation organizations, industry associations, educational institutions and community groups. **The Lake Winnipeg Health Plan is a vehicle for collaborative action. Will you support this plan? How?***

The Green Party supports the Lake Winnipeg Health Plan. We share the Lake Winnipeg Foundation's commitment to protecting the watershed. We will support these conservation efforts by:

- Establish a Canada Water Fund to focus on long-term watershed health, alleviating the problem of runoff of pollutants and nutrients



- Working to restore Lake Winnipeg's wetlands
- Protecting at least half of Canada's boreal forest, and upholding its ecological integrity
- Restoring ecosystem health to Canada's coastline and inland watersheds 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
- Supporting scientific monitoring of water quality
- Working with farmers to ensure that all livestock waste is recycled safely, that contamination by agricultural runoff is avoided, and to encourage farming methods that decrease water requirements
- Increasing science capacity related to water issues by advocating for enhanced funding for data collection and integrated information systems on water use, availability and quality, and linking research spending to water policy goals

