

Jim Carr, Liberal Party, Winnipeg South Centre

Thank you for your query regarding the protection of, and advocacy for, Lake Winnipeg. The Lake Winnipeg Foundation is an invaluable organization in promoting protection of a provincial and national treasure. Action on Lake Winnipeg is long overdue; implementation of recommendations outlined in numerous reports generated over the past several decades is essential and if elected as MP for WSC I will ensure that the health of Lake Winnipeg and its watershed is not only a priority, but that the development of a management plan for the Lake Winnipeg watershed so clearly outlined in the Lake Winnipeg Health Plan can serve as a model for water stewardship, and a legacy for Manitoba and Canada.

As a Manitoban who has witnessed the transition from a clean, healthy freshwater lake enjoyed during childhood summers along the shores of Lake Winnipeg, to one afflicted by eutrophication, invasive species in response to climate change, land use changes and development during adulthood, I am deeply committed to ensuring that a comprehensive federal strategy be developed in cooperation with the watershed provinces, municipalities, communities and stakeholders to restore the health of Lake Winnipeg.

As former vice chair on the board of the International Institute for Sustainable Development, and having served on the provincial climate change task force, I am keenly aware and continue to be committed to sustainable initiatives that also address the challenges incurred by a changing climate. As President of the Business Council of Manitoba, I led and coordinated an effort dedicated to the development of a Canadian Energy strategy that served as the foundation for the recently-established provincial consensus on the Canadian Energy Strategy at the First Ministers meeting noted in the *Our Living Waters* document cited in your query. I share your conviction that a similar strategy and visionary project dedicated to water and specifically to a 'sustainable water future', (also as noted in the *Our Living Waters* document), for Canada is required and long overdue, and I would ensure, building on past experience with such initiatives as the Canadian Energy strategy, that this vision will be realized for future generations.

The health of Lake Winnipeg provides a signature of responses to two key issues threatening to undermine freshwater security in Canada; water shortages and climate change due to rising greenhouse gas emissions. It is the responsibility of all three levels of government to work in partnership with communities to protect our freshwater in the context of a changing climate. Federal contributions to the development of an effective Lake Winnipeg watershed management strategy through collaboration with community residents, municipalities and provinces belonging to the Lake Winnipeg watershed will therefore incorporate initiatives dedicated both to water conservation and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

Together, we will right past wrongs in pursuit of social, economic, and environmental sustainability that unites, rather than divides, Canadian citizens in a coordinated effort to protect and restore the health of Lake Winnipeg and its watershed. Together, we will establish an effective scientific, management and implementation strategy for the Lake Winnipeg watershed as a model for other Canadian watersheds, driven by a common goal and desire to protect freshwater in Canada in the context of a changing climate. Together, we will restore Canada's role as a nation governed by innovation and values to which other nations may aspire.

Below you will find our responses to the four questions we received from the Lake Winnipeg Foundation.

Question 1

A Liberal government will renew its commitment to the protection of the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence River Basin and the Lake Winnipeg Basin.

A Liberal government will boost investment in green infrastructure by nearly \$6 billion over the next four years and almost \$20 billion over ten years.

This will include community priorities such as water and waste-water facilities, climate resilient infrastructure, energy efficient buildings and systems to protect against changing weather.

Question 2

Liberal policy is to establish and fund a Lake Winnipeg Basin Council that will bring together provinces and states that are in the Lake Winnipeg watershed to develop a comprehensive action plan to restore the health of Lake Winnipeg. Wetland protection should be a vital part of this plan to reduce flooding and the flow of nutrients nutrient loads into Lake Winnipeg.

Question 3

A Liberal government will restore \$1.5 million in federal funding for freshwater research, which was cut by the Conservatives, and we will make new investments in Canada's world-leading IISD Experimental Lakes Area.

The comprehensive action plan referred to above (in Question 2) should include a strong research program coordinated across the basin.

Question 4

A Liberal government will bring strong participation and support to collaborative efforts by provincial and municipal governments, conservation organizations, industry and educational institutions highlighted in the Lake Winnipeg Health Plan initiative.