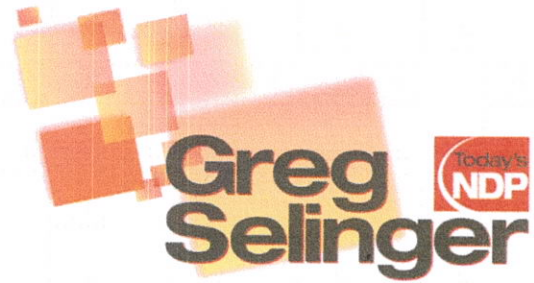


April 3, 2016



The Manitoba NDP is pleased to respond to your questions.

**1. How will you and your party resolve the longstanding stalemate that continues to prevent action to remove phosphorus from Winnipeg's wastewater? How will you ensure immediate action is taken to ensure that phosphorus in Winnipeg's effluent does not exceed 1 milligram/litre?**

The NDP agrees that immediate action needs to be taken on removing phosphorous from Winnipeg's wastewater and we will work with the City of Winnipeg on quick solutions to take action now. These interim measures will assure that phosphorus is being removed even while we pursue a longer-term, more comprehensive solution that maximizes ecological and biological benefits.

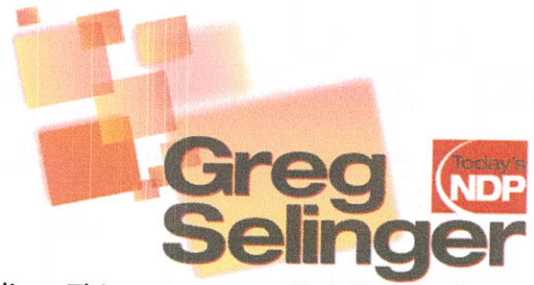
A re-elected NDP will take immediate action while also ensuring the City moves forward with the construction of a full modernized wastewater treatment plant. These goals are not mutually exclusive. Interim measures are necessary because it takes significant time to complete an ambitious project such as the new wastewater treatment plant, but that ambitious project is also important to our ecosystems long term health.

Many major centres who share our watershed are following suit, with new modernized wastewater treatment plants across the west in cities like Regina, Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Calgary and Edmonton. Cities are investing in these new plants because of the long-term, comprehensive benefits they provide – such as recycling of phosphorous, reduction of ammonia, and removal of nutrients.

It is important that we work together moving forward, recognizing that it is not a case of either taking immediate action to reduce phosphorous or taking longer term action for more comprehensive wastewater treatment. The NDP can, and will, pursue both.

**2. Will you and your party commit to increasing MCWS's budget to rebuild the department's core capacity to monitor and manage Manitoba's valuable freshwater resource? To which other MCWS programs would you direct further investment?**

Our NDP government has taken many steps to support and protect the health of our lakes through surface water management. Manitoba's Surface Water Management Strategy is innovative and strategic, simultaneously reducing the amount of nutrients in our lakes, providing additional flood protection, protecting wetlands, and helping prepare for periods of drought.



The NDP has recently supported a no net loss of wetlands policy. This new approach will ensure that producers or development that wants to drain water to make their lands more productive are responsible for providing the relevant amount of land or making financial contributions so that there is no loss of wetlands, nor the benefits they offer, from artificial drainage. This potential revenue stream has a built in mechanism to ensure that all funds collected, in cash or in kind, are immediately used to help keep water on the land and ensure that the quantity of wetlands in Manitoba is not reduced.

Our Commitment to invest \$10 billion in core infrastructure includes almost \$1 billion for water control infrastructure. While this supports major projects such as the Lake Manitoba/Lake St. Martin outlet channels, Manitoba's NDP recognizes that a more holistic approach to flood protection and water management provides more benefits to Manitobans.

That is why we are committed to continuing forward with the major infrastructure but also allocating a portion of those funds to more innovative, local approaches that manage water on the land – serving to fulfill elements of both our flood protection and drought strategies. Water is a precious resource and all Manitoban's have a role to play ensuring that it is respected and managed appropriately. By doing so we maintain ecological integrity, protect our lakes, and remain leaders in innovative approaches to climate change.

We will work to ensure that the appropriate resources are in place to provide the necessary monitoring and program supports. With the Conservatives promised half billion in cuts, the appropriate supports for CWS are fully at risk.

In this election we also committed \$500,000 for lake science for organizations such as the International Institute for Sustainable Development. Knowledge is power, and the more we learn about Lake Winnipeg the more we can take scientific and evidence based steps towards restoring its health.

### **3. Will you and your party commit to rapidly re-introducing a comprehensive bill offering even stronger protection for Manitoba's wetlands?**

A re-elected NDP will re-introduce legislation supporting the no net loss of wetland benefits policy. This important legislation should have been passed, but Pallister's Conservatives were more concerned to play politics rather than moving forward with this key protection for wetlands.





Manitoba has a moratorium against drainage of permanent wetlands. Seasonal wetlands are of very high ecological value and protecting against any loss of these critical wetlands is a priority for the NDP.

An NDP government will act quickly to pass that legislation and develop regulations that ensures the principle of wetland protection is not compromised. Any licenses granted for drainage of a seasonal wetland must only move forward where there is a clear economic or social benefit in doing so, and where it is demonstrated that such drainage will not result in a net loss to our valuable seasonal wetlands. While the NDP is committed to ensuring, at minimum, that there is no net loss of wetlands we will also move forward with new investments in order to expand the capacity of our permanent and seasonal wetlands.

The NDP understands the far reaching benefits of these ecosystems and is dedicated to protecting them. Moving forward, we will ensure that real benefits are achieved and the resources are in place to ensure the policy, and the law, is abided by.

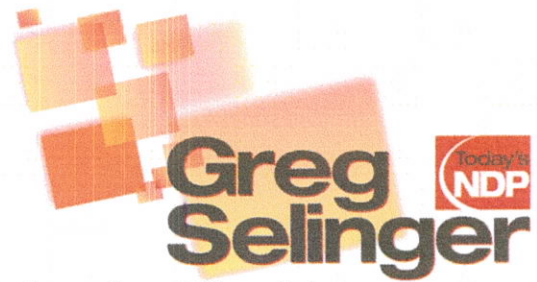
As details are developed in regulations, we will ensure that seasonal wetlands are afforded strong protected and that drainage will only be allowed for significant economic or social benefits and that when it is allowed it will trigger a compensation process that ensures that no ecological benefits are lost. We are also committed to publicly consult with groups such as the Lake Winnipeg Foundation on the regulations.

Given their delay of this important bill, the NDP believe that Pallister's Conservatives will not make this a priority and though they may wish to make it easier to attain a drainage license, they have little concern for ensuring that Manitoba's wetlands are protected.

**4. How will you and your party develop and fund a collaborative, events-based monitoring program? Will you also commit to regular annual reporting of collected data?**

The NDP has committed to develop a water quality report card for Lake Winnipeg in collaboration with scientific, community and institutional partners. Data that are collected will be made available to researchers and planners, and will be publicly available. Progress reports will be published on an annual basis.

This election, we have also committed to boost scientific research to help protect Lake Winnipeg with \$500,000 in increased funding.



**5. Do you and your party support the establishment of an independent Office of the Environmental Commissioner of Manitoba?**

Yes. The NDP recently introduced an Environmental Bill of Rights, another critical piece of environmental legislation blocked by Pallister's Conservatives. That legislation provided for the creation of an independent Environmental Commissioner. A re-elected NDP will re-introduce that legislation and support the formation of the Office of the Environmental Commissioner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "K. Bellamy", with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Keith Bellamy  
NDP Provincial Secretary