

## ENVIRONMENT

# Ideas. Action. Purpose.

## Protecting our Environment

Albertans now rate environmental issues as their top concern. The effects of climate change are all around us — warmer winters, severe storms, receding glaciers, recurring drought, the pine beetle infestation. There's no time to lose in responding to this potentially devastating threat.

The current government argues that taking real action would ruin our economy and lower our living standard. Nothing could be further from the truth. Working together, we can balance the needs of industry and development with the needs of all Albertans to live in a healthy and beautiful environment. In short, we can embrace the burgeoning 'Environmental Economy' and reap the benefits that come with doing so.

### Responding to Climate Change

- The Alberta Liberal plan would produce real reductions in greenhouse gases within five years, by working with industry to put in place a system to capture carbon dioxide emissions from major emitters and sequester these emissions safely underground.
- We would move immediately to achieve an aggressive 'greening' of our electricity sector within 10 years, by harnessing wind and other zero emissions sources to produce enough electricity for every home and farm in Alberta.
- We will replace the natural gas rebate program with a program to help Albertans retrofit their homes to make them more energy efficient. Instead of subsidizing waste, we can reduce use and save homeowners money.
- We will build affordable and energy efficient public transit, including funding new LRT lines and a high speed rail link down the QEII corridor.

### Managing Alberta's Water

Conflicts over water between communities, developers and industry are already heating up. So important is this precious resource, decisions about water allocation must be made through an open and public process — never behind closed doors.

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The Alberta Liberals strongly opposed the transfer of water from the Red Deer River to the Balzac development north of Calgary because we believe the needs of one region can never be allowed to trump those of another. To avoid these types of conflicts and protect our water, we would:

- Map Alberta's groundwater resources, so we understand how much water we have and where it is located
- Protect in-stream flows before allocating any excess
- Meter all connections to public water supplies to encourage water conservation
- Review water-intensive industries to ensure they are using the best available technologies
- End the use of fresh water for oil well injection
- Prohibit bulk sales of Alberta water
- Implement measures to protect Alberta's remaining wetlands, and
- Review provincial testing processes for drinking water

## **Coal Bed Methane**

While coalbed methane opens new energy markets to Alberta, we must proceed with caution to avoid potential damage to our groundwater. The Alberta Liberals would have the Alberta Environment and the Energy Utilities Board (EUB), in conjunction with scientists, set mandatory baseline testing requirements and protocols for groundwater before approving any new CBM wells.

We would also require gas analyses to be submitted for all CBM wells, and require the use of best-available technologies for CBM extraction.

## **Land Use**

Alberta's growth and development pressures are creating an urgent need for better land management. The Alberta Liberals would develop a province-wide land use strategy, in consultation with conservationists, industry, agriculture, municipalities and the recreation sector to ensure wise and efficient use of our land resources.

**Want to know more? Visit [www.albertaliberal.com](http://www.albertaliberal.com) or call us at 1-800-661-9201.**

**Alberta***Liberal*