

January 9, 2006

Dear Federal Leaders:

Re: Election Platform regarding Water

The Manitoba Eco-Network Water Caucus (www.mbeconetwork.org) is a collaboration of environmental non-government organizations working towards the protection of Manitoba's water. While we are provincial in scope, our areas of interest have crossed boundaries, much like a natural watershed.

In this respect, important issues such as the Devils Lake Diversion, the Red River Valley Water Supply Project in North Dakota and the state of Lake Winnipeg have dominated our discussions as they have regional, national and international implications.

We therefore bring to your attention an important ambition initiated by the Federal and Manitoba Governments. The Lake Winnipeg Implementation Committee was given the task to develop a framework to "restore Lake Winnipeg to full health and keep it healthy for our children and their children."

Their final report, released in November of 2005, entitled, "Restoring the Health of Lake Winnipeg: Canada's Sixth Great Lake" calls for numerous actions to be undertaken by the many government agencies that hold responsibility for our water. (This report can be found at: www.redriverbasincommission.org)

The undersigned parties to this letter are supportive of the recommendations contained within this report and notably the suggestion that new financial commitments will be required to carry out this endeavor.

As election-day rapidly approaches, we ask you whether your party supports this important blueprint that calls for federal government commitment to a Healthy Lake Winnipeg Charter calling for a publicly accountable governance structure, new financial assistance, cooperation, and increased scientific investigation.

Now that we have your attention, we would also like to know your position on other questions of importance to our water resources.

- 1) Under what conditions (if any) would your party support the bulk export, diversion and commodification of Canada's water to other nations?
- 2) Will your party reject the imposition of water privatization measures in bilateral and multi-lateral aid and debt relief programs?
- 3) Do you support a participatory review of Canada's Water Act to clarify and strengthen the federal government's role in protecting and preserving water?
- 4) Do you support a participatory review and update of Canada's Federal Water Policy that would lead to the development of a comprehensive national water policy?
- 5) What specific steps would your government take to move Canadian provinces, cities and industries to fully sustainable water management?
- 6) Would your government recommend referencing the Red River Valley Water Supply Project (in North Dakota) to the International Joint Commission?

(background can be found at: www.usbr.gov/gp/dkao/)

We appreciate your time in answering these questions and hope for a prompt response.

Thank-you.

Anishinaabe Turtle Island Protectors
Assiniboine Watershed Network
Beyond Factory Farming Coalition
Citizens for the Responsible Application of Phosphorus
Coalition to Save the Assiniboine River
Concerned Citizens of the RM of Piney & Buffalo Point 1st Nation
Concerned Residents of Winnipeg
Council of Canadians
Council of Women of Winnipeg
Canadian Union of Public Employees - Manitoba Division
Edmonton Chapter of the Council of Canadians
Friends of Bruce Park
Friends of Omand's Creek
KAIROS Cambrian - Agassiz Branch
Kelowna Chapter of the Council of Canadians
Manitoba Wildlands
Mixedwood Forest Society
North American Stormwater & Erosion Control Association (MB)
Organic Food Council of Manitoba
Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba
Quill Lakes' Watchgroup
Red Deer Chapter of the Council of Canadians
Regina Chapter of the Council of Canadians
Resource Conservation Manitoba
Roseisle Creek Watershed Association
Save Our Seine Environment
Stop the Hogs Coalition
Sturgeon Creek Association
The Non-Organization
Wolf Creek Conservation