

Draft Interview Questions for Candidates

Segment #1: Meet the candidate

- 1.1 We are going to be talking a lot about your party, your platform, and your policies. Those are all critically important. But ultimately, politics is about people. What would you like voters to know about you and why you are running for election (or re-election)?

Segment #2: Party Specific Questions

Macleans has published an online comparison of each party's election promises at: <https://www.macleans.ca/rankings/2021-federal-election-platform-guide/>

Michelle Cornfield – Liberal candidate:

- 2.1 Canada has failed to meet every target it has committed to for reducing carbon emissions. Yet your government is expanding the Trans Mountain pipeline, which will only increase them. Approving this project makes it almost impossible for Canada to meet its climate goals and the project and is not economically viable given the projected decline in demand for oil. **Will you push your leader to cancel its expansion?**
- 2.2 The Trans Mountain pipeline expansion is projected to cost over \$12B. The Liberal government has tried to justify the project by saying that the income generated would be used to fund climate projects. **Wouldn't you agree that it makes more sense, both for the climate and financially, to cancel the project and use the \$12B to fund climate projects directly?**
- 2.3 In 2020, the government announced \$18 billion in subsidies and public financing for the oil and gas sector. **Will you push your party to end these subsidies and spend that money on renewable energy instead?**

Learn more about the Liberal Party's climate plan at: <https://liberal.ca/our-plan/a-cleaner-greener-future/>

Paul Manly – Green Party candidate:

- 2.4 If re-elected, you are likely to be just one of two Green MPs in the House of Commons. Even if voters elect a minority government, your party is unlikely to hold the balance of power. **What can you and your party do to force the government to take real, concrete action on the climate emergency?**
- 2.5 The Green Party's recovery plan commits Canada to a 60 per cent reduction in carbon emissions below 2005 levels within the next nine years. **How would you achieve such a huge reduction in such a short time?**

NOTE: The Green Party had not released its election platform as of the date these questions were prepared.

Lisa Marie Barron – NDP candidate:

- 2.6** Your leader has expressed support for the Coastal GasLink LNG pipeline although the Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs oppose it. **How does that fit with his stated commitment to consultation with Indigenous communities?**
- 2.7** According to economic and climate experts, it would cost \$80 billion annually to meet the costs of climate action, green infrastructure, and a transition to renewable energy jobs. **How would an NDP government pay for those costs?**
- 2.8** NDP leader, Jagmeet Singh, announced cutting oil and gas subsidies. **How quickly would they be ended and what would that look like?**

Learn more about the New Democratic Party's climate action plan at:

<https://www.ndp.ca/climate-action>

Tamara Kronis – Conservative candidate:

- 2.9** At the Conservative Party convention your party's delegates voted against a motion that stated, "We recognize that climate change is real." And one of your biggest supporters, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, opposes your carbon tax plan. **How can voters trust your party to take serious action on climate change given opposition from your own members and supporters?**
- 2.10** The Liberal party has committed to a carbon tax of \$170 a tonne by 2030, but your party's platform states that it will increase it to \$50 a tonne and no more. **Why?**

NOTE: We sent several invitations to Tamara Kronis to appear on our program and received no response.

Learn more about the Conservative Party's platform on climate change and the environment at:

<https://www.conservative.ca/plan/secure-the-environment/>

Stephen Welton – People's Party of Canada

NOTE: We invited Stephen Welton to appear on our program and received no response.

Learn more about the People's Party of Canada platform on global warming and the environment at:

<https://www.peoplespartyofcanada.ca/global-warming-environment>

Segment #3: Are we in an environmental and climate crisis? What does a crisis response look like?

- 3.1** Over the past few months, BC has experienced raging wildfires, scorching heat, and record drought. It is perhaps no surprise then that, in a recent Angus Reid poll, the environment and climate change were identified as THE top issue for BC voters. **Do you personally agree that we are in the midst of an environmental and climate crisis?**
- 3.2** **On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being lowest and 10 being highest, how urgently do you personally feel we need to act to address climate change?**
- 3.3** **On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being lowest and 10 being highest, how urgent an issue is climate change for your party?**
- 3.4** Over the past 18 months, we have seen what a collective response to a global emergency truly looks like. Governments around the world acted quickly and decisively to address the Covid-19 pandemic. Entire industries were shut down when needed. Trillions of dollars were spent; with little debate about whether we could afford it. Governments tracked and provided regular updates on key indicators. And we largely allowed science to direct our response. The climate crisis demands a comparable response. **If your party forms the next government, what concrete action steps will you take to respond to the climate crisis with the urgency it requires?**

Segment #4: Measuring and reporting our carbon emissions.

If we want to address climate change, we first need an accurate accounting of our carbon emissions.

- 4.1** Canada is a major exporter of oil and gas. These exports are not included in Canada's emissions, they are counted against the country that uses them. But the damage to the atmosphere is the same whether these fossil fuels are burned in Canada, the United States, China, or elsewhere. **Do you agree that, if we are going to take climate change seriously, we need to phase out all oil, gas, and coal exports within the next 10 years if not sooner?**
- 4.2** The federal government doesn't count emissions from our national forests caused by pests or wildfires; instead, it counts them as carbon sinks. For example, in 2019, Canada reported 730 megatonnes of carbon dioxide, but neglected the estimated 275 megatonnes of carbon dioxide emitted from our forests. In other words, we under-reported our emissions by 27%. With climate change, the frequency and severity of forest fires are increasing. **Do you agree that these should be counted in our national totals as emissions and not offsets?**
- 4.2A:** **What would your party do to reduce emissions and protect our forests, particularly old growth forest on federal lands?**
- 4.2B:** **What would your party do to reduce wildfire risks on federal lands?**

- 4.3 If we want to effectively tackle climate change, we need accurate climate models. The Canada Energy Regulator is one of the few organizations in Canada that has the technical expertise and modelling capability to accurately chart a path to achieving our climate goals. Every year they produce a critically important “Energy Future” report. Their most recent model predicts continued growth in oil and gas production to 2039 or beyond, contrary to Canada’s emission reduction goals. This is because their models don’t reflect the goals that Canada has committed to. As a signatory to the Paris Agreement, we committed to emission reduction goals that would limit global warming to 1.5⁰ C. And we are a member country of the International Energy Agency which is calling for a 50% reduction in oil production by 2040 and a pathway to net-zero by 2050. **Do you agree that the federal government should instruct the Canada Energy Regulator to incorporate our national climate goals and international climate commitments into their models?**

Segment #5A: Reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions – Fossil fuels, transportation, and buildings

- 5.1 Canada is the only G7 country whose emissions have grown over the past decade. The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) just issued a code red – we need to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions now, and we need to halt any expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure. **Which of the following actions would your party commit to if elected:**
- a) **cancel the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion?**
 - b) **oppose any new oil-sands projects?**
 - c) **oppose Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) exports?**
 - d) **oppose new coal mines or expansion of any existing coal mines?**
- 5.2 Transportation accounts for about ¼ of Canada’s carbon emissions, and transportation is a federal responsibility. The West Coast Climate Action Network, which includes over 150 climate action groups in the province, is calling for a “Transportation Transformation”. We need to: reduce voluntary vacation and business travel, as well as private, single passenger vehicle use. Build public transit systems that are frequent, convenient, safe, affordable, and efficient. Build rapid commuter-rail and buses systems across Canada to link communities. **If elected, what specific steps would your party take to transition Canada to low-carbon transportation systems that are safe, affordable, convenient, and efficient?**
- 5.2A **Does your party commit to ending the billions of dollars the government spends on fossil fuel subsidies and re-allocating those funds to support the “transportation transformation” we just described?**
- 5.3 Constructing, heating, and cooling our homes and buildings is another major source of Canada’s carbon emissions. The federal government owns or rents many buildings across the country. **What concrete steps would your party take to reduce the carbon emissions in all existing federal buildings?**

5.3A What concrete steps would your party take to reduce the carbon emissions in the construction and operation of all new federal buildings?

5.3B There are millions of older homes in this country that need retrofits to reduce their carbon emissions. These retrofits can cost \$50,000 or more. **What incentives or rebates would your party offer to support home or business retrofits that reduce emissions?**

Segment #5B: Respecting indigenous rights and funding a just transition

5.4 What we do is important. But sometimes how we do it is just as important. The path forward needs to be one of true cooperation and partnership; one that honours and respects Indigenous title and rights. We need a path forward that seeks to make right the injustices of the past and fundamentally breaks with the colonial practices that have marked so much of our politics and economic development for centuries. The federal government has adopted the United Nation's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). UNDRIP and Canada's treaty agreements both acknowledge that Indigenous rights include clean water, the right of movement, the ability to utilize traditional cultural resources and ensure environmental stewardship according to Indigenous traditions. **If elected, how would your party move forward on climate issues in a way that respects and honours Indigenous title**

5.5 We need to act quickly and decisively to minimize the impending damage from climate change. But the Covid-19 pandemic has clearly shown there are significant inequities that need to be addressed as well. Many people are calling for a "just transition". **If your party was to form the government, what concrete steps would you take to tackle the climate crisis in a way that ensures that no one is left behind?**

5.6 Fossil fuel extraction such as coal mining, tar sands development, and mine waste are harming the environment and threatening our future. It has been over a decade since Canada first committed to ending fossil fuel subsidies. Yet in 2020, the Government of Canada announced at least \$18 billion in subsidies and public financing for the oil and gas sector. **Which of the following actions would your party commit to if elected:**

a) end all subsidies, public finance, and other fiscal support for fossil fuels by 2022?

b) end all fiscal support for fossil fuels provided through the Export Development Corporation?

c) redirect those funds to support the switch to renewable energy and funding a just transition?

d) hold big polluters accountable. For example, require oil and gas companies to cover the costs of cleaning up tailing ponds, oil wells and other remediation measures?

5.7 If we are serious about addressing climate change, we need to fund the changes we need to make. According to climate and economy experts, we need to spend 2% of our GDP on climate action and green infrastructure and another 2% on just transition and social infrastructure to ensure no one is left behind, including fiscal support and retraining for those currently working in the fossil fuel sector. That would be about \$80 billion annually. Re-allocating the \$18 billion spent on fossil fuel subsidies would cover nearly a ¼ of that. **What percentage of Canada’s GDP would your party commit to spending on climate action, green infrastructure, and funding a just transition? How would you pay for that?**

Segment #5C: Mandatory requirements, CCS and Carbon Taxes, Dealing with the provinces

5.8 The pandemic has seen our governments issue health orders and take strong actions to shut down non-essential parts of the economy when needed. When it comes to the climate emergency, however, actions taken to date have been almost entirely voluntary. We encourage change. We incentivize change. We offer rebates. We send price signals. But what we have NOT DONE is require change. We need to spell out clear, near-term dates by which certain things must be done. **If elected, what are the top five specific, mandatory measures your party would adopt to combat the climate crisis?**

5.9 One option for reducing our emissions is carbon capture and storage. Supporters say this needs to be part of the solution while opponents say it is just paying oil and gas companies to continue fossil fuel production. **What is your party’s position on carbon capture and storage? Why do you support (or oppose) it?**

5.9A I have read that carbon taxes need to be at about \$110 per tonne or higher for carbon capture and storage to be economically viable; otherwise, it is cheaper for oil and gas companies to just pay the tax rather than spend the money on trying to capture and store the emissions. **What level of carbon tax does your party support and by when?**

5.10 Our constitution gives the provinces control over resource development, building codes, and other areas that play a big part in our carbon emissions. The Pembina Institute recently released a report called “All Hands On Deck: an assessment of provincial, territorial, and federal readiness to deliver a safe climate.” While most provinces saw their emissions drop between 2005 and 2019, Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan all increased their carbon emissions by 10-17%. Those three provinces all received failing marks on most of categories of climate action. **If elected, what steps would your party take to get all provinces on board, so we can collectively and effectively tackle the climate crisis?**

5.10A It is my understanding that the federal government can override provincial jurisdiction if an issue is declared to be “in the national interest”. The federal government justified their purchase of the Trans Mountain pipeline by declaring it to be in the national interest. **If necessary, would your party be prepared to declare tackling climate change to be in the national interest to compel compliance from reluctant provinces?**

Segment #5D: Nature-based solutions, Doughnut Economics, Trust and Right of Recall

5.11 You can't have a healthy economy without a healthy environment. Yet, most governments praise the virtues of economic growth without considering the ecological consequences of that growth. Nanaimo was the first municipality in Canada to adopt the Doughnut Economics framework to guide its official planning process. **If elected, how would your party ensure that our economy meets Canadians social needs while operating within our ecological limits?**

5.12 Nature-based solutions have a key role to play in tackling the climate crisis. **If elected, which of the following would your party commit to?**

a) pass legislation committing Canada to protect at least 30% of our land and oceans by 2030?

b) ensure that Indigenous People have a central role in nature conservation?

c) protect our boreal forest, prairie grasslands, wetlands, salt marshes, and other ecosystems that combat climate change and species loss?

d) pass “Rights of Nature” legislation that provides legal rights and protections to our natural systems?

5.12A **If elected as our Member of Parliament, how would you help protect nature and increase greenspace here in our community?**

5.13 Every party makes big promises during an election. **If elected, how can we trust your party to keep the promises you made to the voters?**

5.13A **Would you pass right-of-recall legislation, as exists in some provinces, giving voters a way to recall elected members who break their promise to voters?**