



BC ELECTION 2020
QUESTIONS FOR POLITICAL PARTIES

With the COVID-19 crisis, governments around the world are looking at ways to reboot their economies while making them more resilient and sustainable. While **mining** contributes to B.C.'s economy, it can also bring significant costs to taxpayers and long-lasting environmental impacts if poorly managed. The transition to clean technologies (e.g. wind, solar, batteries) will increase the demand for certain metals and minerals, many of which mined in B.C. Our job is to do it right and responsibly, and not repeat the mistakes of the past.

In 2019, we launched the BC Mining Law Reform (BCMLR) initiative to promote changes to mining laws and practices to ensure they are environmentally sound and bring long term benefits to affected communities and all British Columbians. The network is a not-for-profit, public interest initiative which today includes nearly 30 local, provincial and national organizations from a wide range of sectors, collectively representing tens of thousands of British Columbians.

We are asking each political party to answer the following three questions before Sunday, October 18th, at midnight. Answers from each political party will be shared with our network partners throughout the province, as well as on our online platforms during the week of October 19th, 2020, in accordance with B.C. electoral laws. Feel free to provide your answers in a separate document to be sent to info@reformbcmining.ca, or to fill-in this online survey if you prefer. Thank you in advance for your collaboration.

QUESTIONS (see <u>online survey if you prefer</u> and <u>fact sheet for more information</u>)	ANSWERS (YES / NO / PARTIALLY - PLEASE EXPLAIN)
<p>1. Increase community input, influence and collaboration in decision making before mining occurs - B.C.'s current mineral staking system does not respect private property or First Nations rights, and leaves little room for local communities to influence tenures. <i>Will your party support updating the Mineral Tenure Act (MTA) like Ontario, Quebec, and NWT in recent years, including the need to modernize the Act to be compatible with today's values and the BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples' Act (DRIPA)?</i></p>	<p>Yes - We believe that the Mineral Tenure Act and the Mines Act need to be modernized, to reflect more holistic natural resource management and land use planning, to strengthen protection of the public interest, and to implement DRIPA and be consistent with our duties to Indigenous Nations. We would work with stakeholders in consultation to review and implement changes to these ends.</p>
<p>2. Protect waters and sensitive areas from mining activities - As British Columbians, we value nature, fresh water and healthy ecosystems. There are some areas that should be off limits to mining and other industrial development, especially for the disposal of toxic mine waste. <i>Does your party support land-use planning and the creation of no-go zones for mining activities to put the safety of communities and watersheds first? Will you require mines to fully treat their wastewater</i></p>	<p>Partially - The B.C. Greens recognize that mining is a critically important sector for our economy and our clean energy future. The B.C. Greens commit to prioritizing land use planning that</p>

and put an end to approving mines that would require such water treatment in perpetuity?

protects watersheds, and we intend to do this through the following: implementing the Water Sustainability Act to secure the environmental flows needed to sustain healthy and functioning rivers, lakes and watersheds; conducting comprehensive watershed planning in conjunction with First Nations, communities, government agencies, stewardship organizations and industry and including watersheds as part of a landscape-level ecosystem-based management approach to development; and, allocate \$50 million to create a dedicated Watershed Security Fund that will create sustainable jobs in communities across BC in watershed restoration, monitoring, technology, training, and education. We commit to working with industry experts to determine best practices for water treatment and creating rigorous standards and monitoring systems that uphold them.

3. Enforce the polluters-pay principle and ensure long-term benefits -
We recently learned that the Tulsequah Chief mine will cost taxpayers upwards of \$100 million for clean-up and long-term maintenance and monitoring. The BC Chief Inspector of Mines' reported a \$1.2 billion unfunded taxpayer liability for contaminated mine sites cleanup costs in the Province. *What is your party's position on implementing full bonding for mine clean-up to ensure that the polluter actually pays, including in the event of mine waste spills and for the perpetual monitoring of mine waste sites?*

The BC Greens' have pushed for remediation to the Tulsequah Chief mine for years at the legislature, and we were in favour of the recent funding allocated to the work as an initial step. But there's a history in our resource sectors, not only in the mining sector, where the reclamation and cleanup from a site is left to taxpayers. That is an unacceptable situation, and needs to change. We believe that companies need to pay for externalities and environmental damage and would be supportive of strengthening rules for upfront bonding to ensure polluters actually pay. We know that mining practices need to be cleaned up and the industry needs to operate

more responsibly if we are to seize the opportunity that minerals and metals provide in the clean energy economy. There are significant opportunities to better harness innovation to improve practices and environmental impacts of mining, and this is one area that the province could lean into, in keeping with the recommendations from BC's first Innovation Commissioner, to partner with industry and academia to spur development of technological solutions. We also need to ensure that government is doing its job as a regulator and that it is not simply trying to enhance competitiveness at the expense of accountability -- and we still have significant progress to make on that front to ensure companies are undertaking more responsible mining practices in BC.

Thank you! info@reformbcmining.ca