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Ontario environmental groups release summary of party positions on environmental priorities

Parties to debate their environmental platforms on October 3

Toronto - Today, a coalition of 13 leading environmental organizations released a summary of the Ontario political parties' environmental positions on six key environmental priorities: energy, Boreal Forest protection, curbing urban sprawl, toxics, Great Lakes health and waste reduction. It shows that the need to respond to key environmental issues has shaped party commitments in this election.

The groups have compiled the environmental commitments by the parties so that voters can be better informed on October 10.

"We have seen some real political engagement from the parties on the environmental priorities we identified as needing swift and immediate action," says Dr. Rick Smith of Environmental Defence "But we still need more progress if we are to address some of the most pressing environmental issues of our time."

In an unprecedented initiative launched in April 2007, the 13 member Priorities for Ontario coalition (www.PrioritiesforOntario.ca) released a set of priorities for action on these six key areas and challenged the parties to include these in their platforms. All parties have, in different ways, responded with new public commitments to protect water sources, expand clean energy generation, safeguard Boreal Forests, reduce waste, curb urban sprawl and eliminate toxics

"We've cut through the jargon and clearly summarized each party's environmental commitments so that Ontarians, who we know care a great deal about the environment, can make an informed decision on election day and know what to expect from the party they vote for," said Gillian McEachern of ForestEthics.

The environmental groups are also organizing a four-party debate (Liberals, Progressive Conservatives, NDP and Green Party) to be held October 3 to further explore where the parties stand on key environmental issues and how this will shape their approach to governing the province.

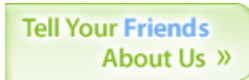
"The debate will allow the parties to speak directly to voters and further distinguish themselves on key environmental issues and to fill in the blanks in their platforms" said Bruce Cox of Greenpeace. "It is an opportunity for voters to get better informed about the issues and the parties' responses to them."

The synopsis of environmental commitments is temporarily available at www.glcommunications.ca/platforms and will available at www.PrioritiesforOntario.ca by the end of today.

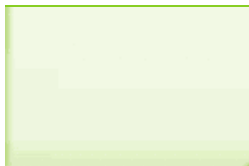
The debate will take place at the Isabel Bader Theatre, 93 Charles St. W., Wednesday, Oct. 3, 2007 from 7 – 9:30 p.m. Contact Jennifer Foulds at (416) 323-9521 ext. 232 for media access information. The public can watch the debate live at www.PrioritiesforOntario.ca.

For more information please contact:

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The 13 environmental organizations that comprise the Priorities for Ontario initiative are: Conservation Council of Ontario, Ecojustice Canada, Environmental Defence, ForestEthics, Great Lakes United, Greenpeace, Ontario Clean Air Alliance, Ontario Nature, Pembina Institute, Pollution Probe, Sierra Club of Canada Ontario Chapter, Toronto Environmental Alliance, and CPAWS - Wildlands League.

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