

Getting Political: Questions for the Provincial Candidates

The Niagara Escarpment runs through part of southern Ontario but its western and eastern portions extend into the United States. The Canadian part of the Escarpment is the responsibility of Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, which means our provincial political representatives should be concerned about this natural wonder. The biggest part of the Escarpment, from Niagara Falls to Tobermory, has been designated a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve, which surely must make it of interest to our federal politicians as well.

The provincial election will be on **June 7, 2018**. For complete information about election procedures, see www.elections.on.ca

We invited some community groups and each major political party to suggest a question to ask your candidates before you make a final decision about how to vote. Their questions are below, arranged in alphabetical order according to the name of the organization. Please note that these questions were submitted before the resignation of Progressive Conservative Party leader Patrick Brown.

What are you prepared to do to ensure the Niagara Escarpment's natural and life-sustaining features are ensured for the enjoyment of the next Seven Generations living here in Ontario? **Robert Patrick, Coalition on the Niagara Escarpment** www.niagaraescarpment.org

What steps will your government make to meet Ontario's Biodiversity Initiative (part of the 193-country International Agreement) to protect 17 per cent of Ontario's land by 2020? We are currently at 4.41 per cent in southern Ontario where most of the rare and endangered species are located. **Robert Barnett, Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy** www.escarpment.ca

What would your party do to protect rural communities being threatened by the adverse social and environmental impacts of aggregate pits and quarries, and how would you level the playing field for communities forced to defend themselves from these threats? **Graham Flint, Gravel Watch Ontario** www.GravelWatch.org

Will your party say, categorically, that it will not allow fracking in Ontario? Yes or no. **Green Party of Ontario** www.gpo.ca

What are you/is your party going to do to permanently lower my hydro bill? **New Democratic Party of Ontario** www.ontariondp.ca

What is the position of each political party on the importance of protecting and preserving land within the Greenbelt from sprawl and development? **Ontario Liberal Party** www.ontarioliberal.ca

What does your Party commit to doing to restore the declining trust in the Ontario government, and what specific changes will your Party implement to make life better for families? **Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario** www.ontariopc.com