

Protecting water is a priority for the Green Party at the national, state and local levels

Background

Water is the source of life. El agua es vida. The Green Party seeks to safeguard the well-being of future generations and restore ecological systems. Clean and available water is a critical priority which government can and must secure for all people.

The threats to our waters are many, from depleted aquifers, to the pollution of surface waters, to the degradation of oceanic waters that have been treated as international waste dumps. There is no time, and no water, to waste. In response to these growing threats, arising from both climate change and failed governmental policies, the Green Party needs to establish clear policy positions and establish a framework for action to secure the implementation of those policies. This proposal provides the clarifications and action approvals required by Resolution 195 that established the EcoAction Committee.

Proposal

The National Committee of the Green Party of the United States (1) provides the principles listed below as guidelines to Green Party candidates and organizers to increase the visibility of water issues in Green campaigns and increase our ecological focus in electoral and political activities and (2) expresses its approval for the series of actions defined herein that the EcoAction Committee will take to implement these guidelines.

I. Principles for water policy:

Greens and Green Party Organizations should:

Work together with our neighbors in making decisions on water issues that recognize the stake that future generations have in those decisions; (Future Focus)

recognize our dependence on a finite supply of fresh water, the importance of oceanic waters and the aquatic life that provide oxygen and food for the planet; and to respect the integrity of ecosystems and the natural patterns of water; (Ecological Wisdom)

support the rights of indigenous peoples and other nations to maintain clean, affordable water resources; (Personal and Global Responsibility, Social Justice)

assure that elected officials who make decisions on water use, pricing and quality represent the community of varied users, water specialists and the environment; (Grassroots Democracy)

acknowledge the diversity of plant and animal life dependent on long-enduring ecosystems and to recognize the necessity of water systems to all life; (Respect for Diversity)

prevent the usurpation of public rights through privatization of the water resource by multi-national corporations; (Decentralization)

prioritize affordable drinking water over industrial uses, recognizing that access to water is a basic human right; and to consider the impact of all water policy decisions on poor people, impoverished neighborhoods, rural communities and family farmers; (Social Justice)

support local municipal growth policies in the context of existing water supplies, and to maintain a working relationship between urban economic development and local rural agriculture. (Community-based Economics and Economic Justice)

2. EcoAction Committee Tasks.

The Green National Committee concurs with the the following series of actions that the EcoAction Committee will pursue to take action upon those guidelines. Regarding water policies, EcoAction Committee will: provide policy proposals on water and watershed issues in support of Green candidates and to increase the visibility of water issues in political campaigns. support the development of local, renewable energy sources that minimize consumptive water use, destruction of watersheds and water pollution. support legislation that promotes urban conservation, efficient agricultural use and the integration of land use with water supply. support enforcement of indigenous treaties, paramount water rights for indigenous nations and the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo regarding land and water rights. participate in regional and state water plans and urban development plans to balance growth with renewable supplies. help all party members to work with public interest groups on developing bills in state legislatures and in Congress that increase the responsible use of water. support legislation in Congress to fund public water planning and investments in upgrading and improving water infrastructure, levees and hazardous waste dumps. raise public awareness on water and water pricing issues and educate the public about the water crisis that is already affecting our nation and the world, and to make brochures, handout, and other educational materials on water issues available to Green candidates and other Greens. advocate for an increased environmental responsibility in all municipalities such as the Environmental Advisory Commission of the Pasadena, CA municipal government.

Regarding Green electoral opportunities, EcoAction Committee will: provide policy analysis and proposals for Green Candidates. review and publicize Green candidates for water authorities, arroyo flood control entities and other local offices.

Regarding outreach to Greens and other organizations, EcoAction committee will: provide a hub for the exchange of views and summarizing of ongoing work on water with other individuals, organizations and public officials. reach out to groups already working

to link the Resolution on their websites through the Committee's GPUS website. develop brochures for use at public events, conferences, public planning input meetings and develop forums as appropriate addressing water issues.

Regarding legislative advocacy the EcoAction Committee will: will increase access to legislative proposals addressing water issues at the Federal and state levels. assist with analysis and recommendations pertaining to proposed legislation on water issues.

3. Recommended supporting actions.

The Green National Committee and EcoAction recommend that the following supporting actions be considered throughout the party, connecting Greens at all levels with the support structure the EcoAction is putting in place.

I Notification to Greens and state parties and discussions of Resolution

National Committee Delegates should report this resolution to their state organizations and review how it can be integrated with local actions.

State Green organizations are urged to make the resolution and associated implementation plans available to all local Greens.

Local Green organizations should connect candidates and activists to EcoAction's efforts where appropriate.

A. Individual Greens working in advocacy groups can present the EcoAction Committee brochures at public events, conferences, public planning input meetings and develop forums as appropriate addressing water issues.

B. Individual Greens can contact individuals and organizations that represent significant stakeholders- family farmers, land grants, urban planners, hydrologists, environmental groups, local groups addressing water pricing and other infrastructure issues, indigenous organizations focused on environmental issues, local city councilors, state legislators, community organizations and neighborhood associations.

C. Local Greens can recruit candidates for local positions on water boards and other governmental entities dealing with water management.

D. State parties can develop periodic reviews of the progress and problems of activities and prioritize activities based on their resources available and evaluate local political forces and their positions and their potential role in the accomplishment of concrete goals and policies support to individuals and groups working on water issues.

TIMELINE

Work on implementation will commence immediately on approval of this proposal and is seen as an ongoing task. A Green Party Water Connection (hub) will be established within 60 days of approval.

Resources Contact: Martin Zehr, 415-337-5773, m_zehr@hotmail.com

The primary GPUS resource will be the EcoAction Committee. However, success depends on mutual cooperation from all Green Party entities with water issues.

This implementation will also require that a web presence be established on a GPUS owned system and accessible to the public, the content to be maintained by EcoAction Committee in accordance with the current Green Party platform and the principles in this document. References

Water Planning: Middle Rio Grande Water Assembly

<http://www.waterassembly.org>

Commodification of Water: Blue Covenant: The Global Water Crisis and the Fight for the Right to Water – Maude Barlow

Freshwater: The World's Water 2008-2009: The Biennial Report on Freshwater

Resources by Peter H. Gleick