



michigan league of
conservation voters

The Final Eight Questions for Michigan's Candidates for Governor

The following questions address the crucial issues in this election surrounding green jobs and quality of life in Michigan that have yet to be addressed "on the record" by Rick Snyder or Virg Bernero. This list of questions will be sent out to our members and allies across the state to be asked at future town halls or public events with the candidates.

This list was also sent to the candidates themselves. Whether we hear the answers from our candidates on the campaign trail or in a public letter, we simply wish to know what kind of governor they plan to be on these issues, if elected.

To find out their stances on other conservation questions they have already addressed, please check our head-to-head comparison chart (www.michiganlcv.org/compare) or our Candidate Tracker (www.michiganlcv.org/tracker).

Renewable Portfolio Standard:

The current Michigan economy relies almost solely on imported fossil fuels for energy. As a potential solution to this problem, the state passed a Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) in 2008. This standard demands that we have 10% renewable energy by 2015, as well as an energy efficiency increase of 1% every year. **If elected, would you work to strengthen the Renewable Portfolio Standard and the energy efficiency goal and, if so, what specific steps would you propose?**

Moratorium on Coal Plants:

Right now, 60% of our electricity comes from coal-burning plants, and 100% of that coal comes from other states. By switching to green energy produced in Michigan, we would save billions of dollars, and ensure the protection of our families and our state from the well-known toxic substances that result from coal. **Would you support a strategy of a responsible transition to clean energy production in lieu of the construction of new coal-fired powered plants in Michigan? What is your long-term strategy for Michigan's energy future?**

Wind Power:

Wind power and turbine manufacturing are important factors in the effort to restore Michigan's economy and in preserving her natural resources. Due to the struggling economy, factories across the state have been abandoned. These factories could be used for the production of wind turbines, which would in turn create desperately needed jobs. **If elected, how would you navigate the future of wind energy in our state from its manufacturing roots to its implementation in energy production – both on- and off-shore?**

Comprehensive Water Protection:

The Great Lakes Compact of 2008 took important strides toward the protection of Michigan's water from extraction by outsiders. One point within the Compact that remains unclear, however, is the public trust doctrine, which specifies that all waters of Michigan (including ground and surface waters) are to be protected for the use and enjoyment of the citizens of Michigan. **If elected, will you support legislation that clarifies Michigan's law to include all Michigan waters – both surface and groundwater – in the public trust?**

MDNRE Budget:

Funding for all of the anti-pollution enforcement and conservation activities of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment amounts to less than 1% of the state's annual general fund budget and is shrinking fast. Based on your earlier statements on protecting the Great Lakes and preserving Pure Michigan, **how do you plan on improving MDNRE's current lack of resources given the difficult budget constraints?**

State Park Funding:

Michigan's tourism is occupying a larger and larger share of our state's revenue, with the Michigan State Parks playing an increasingly important role in attracting visitors. Funding for State Parks, however, is inadequate. **If elected, would you work to find room in the budget for preserving our state parks and, if so, how do you plan to ensure their long-term availability to tourists and Michiganders beyond a single budget cycle?**

CAFOs:

Michigan currently has 200 large-scale factory farms, or concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs). These farms currently operate under different environmental standards than other small farmers and even other polluting industries. **If elected, how do you intend to address the different standards under which CAFO's and small farmers operate?**

Sulfide Mining:

Sulfide mining is a practice that has stirred enormous debate in Northern Michigan. The long-term damage to the rivers and streams that are deadened by this type of operation are staggering, yet the big mining companies continue to offer wide-ranging promises of varying degrees. **What is your position on sulfide mining in Michigan?**