

Questions For Candidates

Macquarie Electorate

2013 Federal Election



The Blue Mountains Conservation Society is providing a set of questions to candidates in the Macquarie Electorate in the 2013 Federal Election. The answers to these questions will be published.

Instructions: The areas for response are shaded green.

We would like you to complete this document, save it as a pdf and email it back to us. [Word can save documents as a pdf.]

All email correspondence and queries should be sent to Alan Page at webmaster@bluemountains.org.au

Candidate's Name:	Danielle Wheeler The Greens
--------------------------	--

The Questionnaire

- Q1. Under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act the Commonwealth has various environmental protection powers.**

Do you support maintaining the Commonwealth's role in environmental protection?

We would like to see this role enhanced. It is vital that there is a level of environmental protection above the State Government. The deal between the O'Farrell Govt and the Shooters and Fishers to allow shooting in National Parks, currently on hold, shows how vulnerable our National Parks are. Mining presents another very real threat, especially in the Mountains.

The Greens will push for National Parks to be included under national environmental laws so that the federal Environment Minister would need to provide approval before environmentally damaging activities could occur. We have tried to get this legislation through before but the Labor and the Coalition said no. We will continue to fight to protect our National Parks and the biodiversity they house.

Q2. Do you support the Commonwealth having a role in the new Blue Mountains Local Environmental Plan (through requiring a "strategic assessment" of the impacts of the new plan on the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area and Commonwealth listed flora, fauna and endangered ecological communities)?

Yes. The Greens are very concerned that the "one size fits all" approach of the Standard LEP does not give adequate consideration to the unique features and importance of the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area and its surrounds. We fully support an immediate strategic review of the full impacts of the Standard LEP and action from the Environment Minister and Blue Mountains Council to confer protection.

Q3. In your opinion, how bad is human induced climate change?

It is catastrophic. We must act urgently to prevent a 4 degree warming. Currently warming levels will have massive and irreversible negative impacts on the Blue Mountains National Park, the Great Barrier Reef, river ecology, biodiversity, agriculture, water, refugees, human health and quality of life and the economy. The Greens want to see a return to a safe climate of 350ppm CO2 or less. Early action on climate change will ultimately be more cost effective than if we delay.

The Greens Clean Energy Policy outlines a renewable energy target of 90% by 2030. Subsidies to the fossils fuels industry must be immediately transferred to renewable energy options, including research and development. As a wealthy country, we must take the lead on actions against climate change and assist neighbouring countries in doing the same.

The Greens do not accept the use of coal seam gas or nuclear power as transition fuels.

The Greens' Climate Change policy can be found here: <http://greens.org.au/policies/climate-change-energy>

Q4. What three initiatives would you actively support to improve the environment and conserve biodiversity in the electorate of Macquarie?

1. National Parks to be added as a new matter of environmental significance under our national environment law – the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.
2. Transition to 90% Renewable Energy by 2030
3. Abolish the Standard LEP in areas of environmental and agricultural significance.