



Colorado People's Climate Justice Platform: Bird Dogging Guide

2018 Midterm Elections

Thank you for your interest in taking action in order to promote a just transition to a clean energy future! Please use this guide as a resource as you discuss climate issues with your candidates and elected officials in order to solicit a stance on the issues.

What is Bird Dogging?

Bird dogging is a tactic to get the politicians talking publicly about issues on the record. To become a bird-dogger, individuals show up at candidate's events and ask them pointed questions about fracking or ask them to commit to safer setbacks. As a result, candidates are faced with answering questions on the record holding them accountable for their words and actions. In addition, individuals at the candidates' events learn about the issues presented.

Here are some tips on successful bird-dogging:

- Prepare pointed questions and have your questions ready (see questions below)
- Know the candidates' position to avoid soft-ball questions and to have them to provide more information on their stance
- Arrive early: this is important if the candidate is popular or it is late in the elections
- Bring several people and spread out in the audience: this might allow everyone in the group to ask a question

- Ask your question early: sometimes the audience will wait to raise their hands immediately
- Take video to have accurate record and can allow us to effectively follow through on promises

PEOPLE'S CLIMATE JUSTICE PLATFORM

- 1) What is your stance on investing in fossil fuel infrastructure and how will you work to mitigate the impacts of climate change in Colorado?
- 2) My question is, where do you stand on the Paris Climate Agreement and if elected, would you join more than 400 U.S. mayors in the Climate Mayors agreement?

Lead In #1

As you know, Colorado is already feeling the devastating impacts of climate change. According to [Colorado's Climate Change Vulnerability Study](#), statewide temperatures have increased an average of 2 degrees over the past 30 years and snowmelt and peak runoff is occurring as much as 4 weeks earlier -- exacerbating wildfire conditions, costing the state of Colorado thousands in lost economic activity and threatening the way of life for farmers and Coloradans across the state.

Potential Questions

- 1) My question is, given the negative impacts of climate change on Colorado's economy, wildlife and way of life, what is your stance on investing in fossil fuel infrastructure and how will you work to mitigate the impacts of climate change in Colorado?
- 2) My question is, where do you stand on the Paris Climate Agreement and if elected, would you join more than 400 U.S. mayors in the Climate Mayors agreement?

Lead in #2

According to the [American Lung Association](#), Metro Denver ranked in as the 10th most ozone polluted urban center in America in 2017, while Fort Collins wasn't far behind at 15th in the nation. Ozone is a well known lung irritant that can cause breathing problems and in many cases premature death. Unfortunately, emissions from vehicles, factories and wildfires alongside rising temperatures has made the ozone problem even worse for more than 100,000 Colorado children with asthma and more than half a million adults with respiratory ailments such as COPD and asthma.

Lead In #3

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Potential Questions

- 1) Given the EPA's plan to roll back the Clean Power Plan, which effectively gutts protections originally preserved under the Clean Air Act, what is your plan to ensure that transportation and infrastructure investments create opportunities for growth, without creating more harmful emissions?
- 2) Given the EPA's plan to roll back the Clean Power Plan, which effectively gutts protections originally preserved under the Clean Air Act, what is your stance on Colorado's fossil fuel dependence and how will you take advantage of Colorado's abundance of clean and carbon free, renewable energy sources?

FRACKING

Lead In #1

A recent study shows that 30-40% of oil spills from fracking in the Greater Wattenberg Area of the Denver-Julesburg Basin resulted in groundwater contamination over a 7 year period from from 2007-2014. For example, 43% of all operator spills result in groundwater contamination. 3.1% of all operator spills result in surface water contamination and 2.4 billion square feet of surface has been contaminated by 1,000 O&G surface spills. (Source: Study: 1,000 spills in Weld County, CO). Even more alarming was a report from the Denver Post, which indicated that over a 3 year period, Colorado experienced more than 1,000 fracking related spills of diesel fuel, oil, toxic chemicals and other contaminants, some of which were known to have polluted groundwater.

Potential Questions

- 1) Given all of this, and the fact that as we speak, fracking operations occur near schools and playgrounds as well as drinking sources, do you support a moratorium on fracking and how will you work with legislatures to ensure Colorado's health and safety is prioritized over dangerous fossil fuel extraction?
- 2) Considering, according to the Denver Post, there is a 5.8 million+ dollar deficit in the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Council's budget, which leads to lack of inspections

at drill sites, how would you work to mitigate the effects of this situation, especially as the COGCC is still handing out permits as we speak?



Thank you for your support of climate, jobs and justice!