

Government Relations

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Intro: Lisa Matthaus, OFC - does GR for OFC member groups; background as a long-time campaigner with SCBC, with a focus on forest policy issues (Forest Stewardship Council, e.g.), land use planning and conservation (GBR, e.g.), and climate action (round 1 in 2007-8).

We'll cover...

- How a bill becomes legislation
- Issue Scan
- GR Best Practices

Bill → Legislation



Bill → Legislation



Bill → Legislation



Issue Scan

- **Low Hanging Fruit**
 - Grizzly hunt
 - Ban on cosmetic pesticides
 - Ban big \$\$?

Issue Scan

- **Low Hanging Fruit**
 - **Strong commitments, but complicated**
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graph LR; A[Strong commitments, but complicated] --> B[Kinder Morgan]; A --> C[Site C]; A --> D[Electoral Reform];
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- Kinder Morgan
- Site C
- Electoral Reform

# Issue Scan

- **Low Hanging Fruit**
- **Strong commitments, but complicated**
- **GreenNDP Agreement Issues**

Climate plan that meets BC's legislated targets

EA reform, professional reliance review

Innovation/emerging economy/green jobs





# Issue Scan

- **Low Hanging Fruit**

Endangered species legislation

- **Strong commitments, but complicated**

Land use planning (NDP); watershed planning (GRN)

- **GreenNDP Agreement Issues**

Thermal coal (Libs)

Banning neonics (Libs!)

- **Other Platform/Election Issues**

Fracking/LNG (NDP & GRN)

Var. watershed/drinking water commitments (NDP & GRN)

# GR Best Practices



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# Intention

- Ground in the broader campaign
- What do we want?
- Who will build the relationship?



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Intention: be clear on what you want to accomplish – developing a constructive relationship, getting commitment to action, local champion back in Victoria, etc.

- Good GR is grounded in broader campaign strategy – know when, why and how it's best to start the GR part of your campaign; also, “who” will do it – you may want to have someone less publicly visible on the campaign do the GR
- need to be clear what you want to achieve, and that all who participate share that intention; sometimes people want to meet their MP to lay out a position (strongly), speak truth to power, vent frustrations over other issues...

# Human connection

- Share stories
- Don't "deliver a message"
- Build respect



Human connection: see your MLA/candidates as people who stepped up to public service

This is person-to-person work, not delivering messages "to gov't" or "to the party"; people run for gov't to make the world a better place, but may not share your vision of what that means and how to get there; ask them why they got into politics

# Be prepared

- Research
- Issue
- Leave behind materials



Prep – looking for connections – them to the issue, them to you

Research: Personal – why did they run? Issues that seem dear to them? Hobbies, points of connection you share?

Issue – platform commitments? Statements they/their party have made about the issue? Past engagement? Know your issue thoroughly, but don't use the meeting to get into the weeds; be prepared to respond, or send stuff after

Leave-behind materials – a one-page (lots of white space) briefing note on your issue? Overview of your org, the things you've done (stated positively), with pictures of your supporters?

## Before the meeting

- Agenda and purpose
- Participant roles
  - Lead / facilitator
  - Presenter / expert
  - Note taker
  - timekeeper



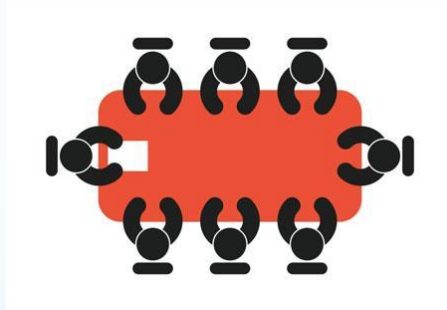
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Meeting request – call/email constituency office, state topic and request succinctly

- Set agenda for meeting – be clear on meeting objective(s), rest flows from this/these
- assign roles for all participants – lead/facilitator, presenter/'expert', note taker, timekeeper

## During the meeting

- Connect with staff
- Scoping
- Stick to the agenda



### Set a positive tone and maintain focus

- Staff can be important gate keepers, always be positive and courteous with them
- Scoping – esp. if it's an initial meeting, feel out what their level of understanding is of your topic; DON'T make them feel stupid or uninformed
- Stick to agenda, watch time – politicians can be great talkers, give a bit of space but not too much; bring attention back to agenda, demo focus yourselves; don't get into the technical or policy weeds, keep it high level, offer to follow up with details if they want them, but don't get derailed from your agenda/purpose

## During the meeting: Solve their problem:

- Frame the issue for them
- Celebrate what's been done so far
- Make space for the solution
- Show them what you're willing to do
- Address challenges directly



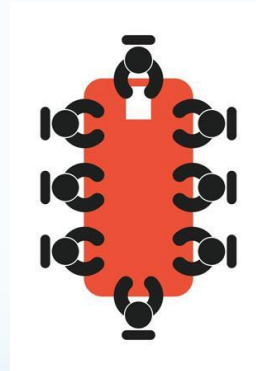
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- Solve their problem: frame your issue in a way that's solving a problem for them; think this through as much as you can in advance, understand what their barrier to action may be, have a suggested way around it
- They may not realize they have a problem, you may have to point out what it is, make linkages they might not see: "your gov't made a commitment to better manage water, and took a great step towards that with the modernized Water Act, but is now allowing X to happen locally"
- If they or their party have taken a positive position on your issue or a related one, praise it, show that you're here to help them demo commitment by achieving it
- If the solution path just isn't apparent right now, make space to have a sincere discussion with them about what a useful way through might be, and what they could do to help with that; you'll ultimately need a face-saving way through this for them
- Highlight what you're willing to do to support them doing the right thing: e.g., speaking positively to your supporters, the media



## During the meeting: Specific ask

- Recognize their limitations
  - Constituents
  - Caucus
  - Party
- Know what part they can play



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- Specific ask: be as specific as possible about what you want them to do, don't leave it as just 'informing' them of your position; if it's a big ask, have small steps outlined
- MPs represent their constituents but also represent their caucus and party, need to be mindful of this when developing asks/meeting objectives; be cognizant of their limitations or barriers they may face while still pushing the envelope; be clear about positive role this person can play
  - Have a good sense of where other influencers – on them or their party – may stand on your issue – if you know a certain group or industry is going to push back, speak to their concerns to demo they either aren't a problem, or they can be addressed in a certain way

## After the meeting

- Follow up and follow through with it
- Make a plan to continue the relationship



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Follow up: propose a follow up action – another meeting? Respond to your request with an email update? Make sure to get staff contact info to follow up

- Think about how you will manage the relationship going forward – can you give them a heads up about something before it happens, so they're better prepared to respond? Send them updates? Send email notes when you see them take a positive step? Flag concerns in a constructive way when you think they may not be aware?