

SAME OLD, SAME OLD IN BC POLITICS

BC Liberals (45%) Retain Solid Lead Over NDP (31%) and Green Party (17%)

MacPhail (53%) Continues to Lead Campbell (39%) in Job Approval



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Vancouver, BC – A new Ipsos-Reid poll shows very little overall change in the BC electorate since our last survey in May. The BC Liberals (45%, up 1 point from May) currently lead the NDP (31%, up 3 points) by 14 points among decided voters in the province. Meanwhile, the Green Party remains in third place at 17 percent (down 1 point) followed by BC Unity at 4 percent (down 1 point).

While the overall ballot numbers are stable, the BC Liberals have made progress in the Interior/North region of the province. In the wake of their Coquihalla reversal, the Liberals have regained ground lost to the Greens and BC Unity. The Liberals sit at 47 percent (up 13 points from May) in the region, followed by the NDP (27%, down 1 point), Greens (16%, down 7 points) and BC Unity (3%, down 5 points).

“Whether it was canning their Coquihalla plans or being viewed as doing a good job responding to the forest fire situation, the Liberal’s will welcome these gains in the Interior,” says Ipsos-Reid Vice-President Kyle Braid. “The Liberals needed to shore up their support in the Heartlands to avoid being labeled a Lower Mainland party.”

Joy MacPhail will end her term as NDP leader with the approval of a majority (53%, up 2 points from March) of British Columbians. MacPhail’s approval as NDP leader continues to surpass Campbell’s approval rating as Premier. Four-in-ten (39%, down 3 points from March) British Columbians approve of the job Campbell is doing as Premier.



These are the findings of a BC Ipsos-Reid poll conducted between September 2nd and 9th, 2003 among a representative cross-section of 800 British Columbian adults. These data are statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional, age and sex composition reflects that of the actual BC population according to 2001 Census data. With a provincial sample of 800, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the overall results are within ± 3.5 percentage points of what they would have been had the entire adult BC population been polled. The margin of error will be larger for population sub-groups.

BC Liberals (45%) Retain Solid Lead Over NDP (31%) and Green Party (17%)

The BC Liberals currently have the support of 45 percent of decided and leaning voters in British Columbia. This puts the BC Liberals 14-points up on the second place NDP, who stand at 31 percent support. The Green Party maintains a strong third place showing at 17 percent, followed by BC Unity at 4 percent. These results exclude the 20 percent of BC residents who have no party preference or are undecided.

The overall results show a great deal of stability in the BC electorate over the past 12 months. Liberal support has fluctuated between 41 percent and 45 percent over this period (43% Sep 02, 44% Dec 02, 41% Jan 02, 44% Mar 03, 44% May 03, 45% Sep 03). NDP support has fluctuated between 28 percent and 34 percent (28% Sep 02, 31% Dec 02, 34% Jan 02, 30% Mar 03, 28% May 03, 31% Sep 03). Green support has shown the least fluctuation of all, ranging from 17 percent to 19 percent (19% Sep 02, 17% Dec 02, 18% Jan 02, 19% Mar 03, 18% May 03, 17% Sep 03).

Despite the overall consistency, the results this quarter do show the BC Liberals making progress in the Interior/North region of the province. The BC Liberals have improved from 34 percent support in May to 47 percent support today. The Liberal's gains have come at the expense of the Greens (16%, down 7 points) and BC Unity (3%, down 5 points). The NDP (27%, down 1 point) have remained stable in the region.



There are several regional and demographic differences in this quarter's results.

- The BC Liberals do best in the Lower Mainland (48%) and Interior/North (47%) compared to Vancouver Island (34%). The Liberals also do better with men (50% vs. 40% women), non-union residents (51% vs. 33% union) and upper income households (57% vs. 38% lower).
- The NDP do best with union households (41% vs. 27% non-union) and lower income households (37% vs. 26% upper).
- The Greens do best on Vancouver Island (25% vs. 16% Interior/North, 14% Lower Mainland), with younger residents (24% vs. 13% older) and lower/middle income households (19% vs. 10% upper).

MacPhail (53%) Continues to Lead Campbell (39%) in Job Approval

As Joy MacPhail prepares to hand over the reins of her party, she exits with a stronger job approval rating as NDP leader than Gordon Campbell has as Premier. Five-in-ten (53%, up 2 points from March) BC residents approve of the job MacPhail is doing as NDP leader, compared to four-in-ten (39%, down 3 points from March) who approve of Campbell as Premier. MacPhail's approval includes 16% "strong" approval and 37% "moderate" approval. Campbell has 9% "strong" approval and 29% "moderate" approval.

A majority (59%, up 3 points from March) of BC residents currently disapprove of Campbell's performance as Premier, including 41% who "strongly" disapprove. One-in-three (32%, unchanged from March) disapprove of MacPhail's performance, including 16% who "strongly" disapprove.

- MacPhail's approval is highest with union households (60% vs. 50% non-union) and Vancouver Island residents (66% vs. 52% Lower Mainland, 45% Interior/North).
- Campbell's approval is highest with men (44% vs. 33% women), non-union households (43% vs. 29% union) and upper income households (49% vs. 28% lower). Campbell's approval is much higher in the Lower Mainland (43%) and the Interior/North (38%) than on Vancouver Island (27%).



Ipsos Reid

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