

# Where is the Green Party on fracking?

By PETER BECKER

The territorial Green Party, led by Kristina Calhoun, as well as the federal leader, Elizabeth May, have made it clear to Yukoners the party stands against unconventional oil and gas extraction or fracking.

However, the public watches the most prominent Yukon Green Party politician and ex-federal party president, city councillor John Streicker, continuing a multi-year lobby campaign in favour of gas fracking the Yukon, unopposed in the Green Party.

On Jan. 31, 2014, John Streicker submitted a proposal to the legislative frack committee for it to recommend regulations for fracking and to proceed with gas fracking (*Star*, Feb. 17).

Streicker advises that regulations determine the outcome of shale fracking development.

In reality, independent science and regulators experienced in truth everywhere are clear that shattering unconventional shale geology locks in and involves increasing destruction, with only room for corrupt and corrupting oversight. (google: streicker says frack the yukon).

Streicker has created an image of owning well-rounded science qualifications. He does hold a mapping-related geodesy and geomatics masters degree which involves

poration/Northern Cross Yukon) for their openness and willingness to dialogue on a contentious and often polarizing topic.

"Both groups agreed that there is a need for the public to be engaged in an open and informed discussion about the oil and industry, including the benefits and risks of various oil and gas industry activities such as hydraulic fracture stimulation (fracking), and how Yukon's regulations govern these activities."

The referred-to synergy contract from Oct. 5, 2012 (google: synergy yukon contract) between YCS/NCY and forwarded to YG/VGFN, officially brokered by him and fellow gas promoter Darielle Talarico, was soon after abandoned as deceptive and wrong by the YCS.

Analysis of documents requires selected parts to be quoted fairly. This I have always shown to be committed to carry out. Not out of context, but to make context accessible to citizens in their righteous assertion to hold political power and its hired experts accountable.

Let's look at key synergy code words Streicker uses consistently in his campaign and most recent proposals.

The words "polarizing" or "polarized" in the dictionary refer to opposing extremes in aspects or geography or views, for example. However, most of the critique on

lobby playbook.

John Streicker has a history of lobbying for fracking. In a *Whitehorse Star* commentary from Aug. 2, 2013, he raised the expectation that regional energy needs would be met by local natural gas production: "And this convoluted path brings us back to natural gas, because it is a potential local energy source."

## COMMENT

It is fiction, as oil majors like CNOOC are not obliged to accommodate local needs or heat Yukon homes.

Streicker posted on a Green Party blog, "Our prime alternate energy potential is natural gas."

On Oct. 4, 2013, in a mass email to frack critics in Yukon, he stated in summary: "I have never liked making 'fracking' the line in the sand."

All of it leads to fracking, as Yukon does not have proven conventional oil and gas reserves that are known or significant (google: oil and gas potential yukon geological survey).

During the shale oil frack session of the Canada North Summit in Whitehorse, on Oct. 16, 2013, John offered advice on selling fracking:

"... How you build sustainability in thinking around this (frack-

less, let their guard down and even adopt his phrases.

John Streicker's claim that the Yukon government is listening to his advice may have proved right on Feb. 12, 2014.

On this day, YG issued a press release stating it has entered into a services agreement with the B.C. Oil and Gas Commission also for the purpose of "... working collaboratively on common issues such as trans-boundary oil and gas basins and regulation development." (*Star*, Feb. 18).

This applies to shale formations such as the Horn and Liard Basins as well as for the Whitehorse Trough.

In short, it is a regulatory go-ahead for fracking before the select committee has even made its recommendation. This makes the committee look more biased and pathetic than before.

Some of the public, in comments to the committee and media, appear under Streicker's spell. They imply the proven harms under risks.

Synergy and Streicker have concerned citizens driving the frack lane by demanding that fracking not occur until regulated or supposedly proved safe or beneficial. Not wanting it, but inviting it – unbeknownst to them.

This is what YG wanted: to frack this year, and Streicker facilitated it. Both know full well that frack reg-

speak up, but it's not idle gossip now. Streicker is the born-again synergy man, pushing on the community the repulsive program of fracking the Yukon.

Streicker's lead role in disconnecting the community from the real dangers of fracking can't be separated from remarkable anecdotes during and alongside the hearings.

The plain words of Fort Nelson First Nation chief Sharleen Gale in the legislature lobby, "Don't let it happen here," would have been much needed for truth finding inside the hearing dominated by a one-way frack ticket.

Outspoken critics of the process display a fatal flaw or perhaps lack courage. Their submissions and press releases do not admit how corrupt the process is, and the biased selection of presenters. They thus endorsed the process, and the value of critical evidence that emerged, nonetheless, was diminished.

As a city councillor, Streicker continues to stall a frack-free resolution for Whitehorse, which receives its water supply from the Whitehorse Trough. It had been targeted for fracking before a YG moratorium in 2012.

In other cities, a frack-free resolution simply reflects the will of the people to protect their drinking water. The jurisdictional and logistical problems against a frack-free ordinance portended by Streicker



mostly GIS skills.

But these skills are, at best, narrow in relation to the subject.

However, he does have political skills, including those of public speaking and writing, which are relevant for his oil and gas lobby efforts.

The format of his proposal follows closely the Synergy Alberta model using cloaked terms that, when added up after the fact, become plain in their message and intention of a one-way frack lane.

The oil industry-developed synergy method and organization has played a major role south of the 60th parallel to silence and strong-arm communities.

This happens by way of narrowing consultations to few or just one player.

By his own account, this narrowing is how Streicker worked with the Yukon Conservation Society, evidently for the purpose of controlling consultations.

The introduction of his frack Yukon proposal to the Yukon legislative frack committee from Jan. 31 starts off by reminiscing on this, stating:

"In the fall of 2012, I approached the Yukon Conservation Society (YCS) to discuss gas development in the Yukon. (At that point in time, EFL Overseas was not yet on the scene.)

"To begin with, I would like to commend both YCS and NCY (China National Offshore Oil Cor-

fracking the Yukon has been based on mainstream science from independent academics in the field of petroleum engineering, geology and economics such as Dr. Ingraffea or David Hughes; and been received in the public in this way.

Demagogic is Streicker's application of a benign-sounding "open and informed discussion", which in reality is one that excludes hearing the public.

In November 2012, Premier Darrell Pasloski physically waved the Synergy Yukon contract in the legislature while claiming that consultations with YCS had met his obligations to consult with the public.

"Open and informed discussion", as borrowed from Synergy Alberta practices, is the language frame by which a process is contained. It is thus limited to oil and gas scenarios and expertise without possibility of recognizing a "no" or alternatives in the evidence.

This has defined the activities and hearings carried out by the so-called "Select Committee Regarding the Risks and Benefits of Hydraulic Fracturing".

The committee title carries forward from Streicker's 2012 Synergy Yukon contract. "... benefits and risks of various oil and gas activities such as hydraulic fracture stimulation (fracking)."

The frack committee is now as well playing out every other note of Streicker's long-standing frack

ing) ... If you got this resource there, are you trying not (to) do boom and bust by trying to find some ways to mete it (shale fracking) out in a fashion that would be more palatable for the communities themselves ...." (google: streicker strategizes fracking; pay attention to sound level in the uncut 90-second clip re. Tim Coleman, N.W.T. oil and gas director who provides the location references, N.W.T. Sahtu region and North Dakota Bakken Shale).

In his Jan. 31 proposal for fracking, Streicker does not mention a single one of the harms proven by the Society of Petroleum Engineers, including well failure rates of about one third over 20 years.

Close to the end of his conclusion, Streicker states: "Regulation for both fugitive emissions and pollution should exist for all natural gas operations, whether fracking is involved or not."

He does not allow a sliver of the finality in the unconventional gas extraction reality in other regions already learned, where massive environmental degradation is occurring regardless of best practices and regulations.

The mechanics of his submission are simple and effective, the choice of words sophisticated.

People take with a grain of salt what neo-conservative governments and the oil industry say to promote oil and gas fracking.

But when the Green Party candidate does it, many are defence-

ulations are not interlinked to reality, and are proven enablers of destruction and fiction.

This is recognized by three Canadian provinces with moratoria in place, but not by Streicker. The endless synergy commentary he inspires is not an arbitrary derailment.

For those who want to keep Yukon intact, it would be simpler to say that the many proven harms and biased review process demand a ban.

To understand Streicker's influence, one needs to know that he is a Facebook champion with thousands of friends and likes.

Yukoners who've been away for a while might have a more objective sense of how big the problem is.

Streicker has taken on a strange guru status. Elected and hired officials have stated in public: "I am a Streicker fan."

Nobody seems to recall what he charmingly talked about aside from elevating politics above the ordinary as the one leader who unites opposites in a new age.

After his election to city council in 2012, five personalities, recognized in the community, published a laudatio, or praise page in the papers. Nobody had ever heard or seen anything like it before. A public person was shifted into a cult figure in down-to-earth Yukon.

Aside from the author of this Socratic piece, there have been community elders critical of Streicker's actions too fearful or tactical to

have not occurred, nor for Yukon First Nations with frack-free resolutions already in place.

Streicker often has intervened with the impeccable timing of a fixer. He is right there with well-crafted frack rescue narratives when other gas lobbyists are in trouble, after Talarico's piece in the *Star* on July 26, 2013, was ripped apart, after the YG issued a drilling moratorium for the Whitehorse Trough, after YCS walked from his synergy contract, during September 2012, when he refused to sign a widely supported Yukon anti-frack petition and advised others not to sign it, when citizens and engineers brought a frack-free resolution to city council, when the CAPP representative could not answer questions at the Canada North Summit 2013, after negative evidence emerged during the 2013/14 select committee proceedings.

The Sierra Club's executive director at the time, Carl Pope, secretly raised \$26 million from Chesapeake Energy. He promoted hydraulic fracturing. When the Chesapeake bribe surfaced, the public revolted. Frack promotion and bribery are no longer supported by the Sierra Club, after Pope was made to leave in January 2010.

The facts I've outlined may not be the first nor the last high-profile episode of a Manchurian gas candidate.

*Peter Becker is a Whitehorse energy consultant.*