**Green Party Unveils Plan to Support Veterans**

**([COMMUNITY NAME]) September XX, 2015 - [Candidate name]**, Green Party of Canada candidate (**[riding name]**), is unveiling the Green Party’s plan to reverse damaging cuts to services and support for our veterans.

“Veterans in **[community name]** have suffered under Stephen Harper,” said [candidate surname]. “The shuttering of Veterans Affairs offices has left veterans without needed services, and the lump-sum payments to push veterans off government books is shameful.”

Green Party of Canada leader Elizabeth May recently announced the party’s plan to fix a broken Veterans Affairs program, and was joined by Afghanistan war veteran Capt. Trevor Greene and his family.

“Under Stephen Harper, our veterans have experienced a loss of respect and of needed services,” said Ms. May. “The use of lump sum payments have left disabled veterans without income security for their lifetimes. We have sent our military into war zones without planning for the needed services for them and their families on their return. The failure to respond adequately has led to tragic losses at home to suicide.”

Working as a strong partner in what is projected to be a minority Parliament after the next election, the Green Party’s plan calls for:

* reversing damaging changes brought in under the New Veteran’s Charter.
* increasing funding to ensure any veteran with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) who wants a service dog will have access to one. Service dogs reduce PTSD in 82% of the cases, comparing favourably to pharmaceutical approaches.
* re-opening the Veterans Affairs offices.

Capt. Trevor Greene, a Canadian Forces veteran, author and journalist, who survived a brutal axe attack while serving in Afghanistan in 2006, endorsed the Green approach. Mr. Greene has co-authored, with sustainability expert Mike Velemirovich, a book focused on the threat of climate change – *There Is No Planet B; Promise and Peril On Our Warming World*.

“We were one of the top per capita contributors to peacekeeping missions around the world, and now we’re not even close,” said Capt. Greene. “In the early 1990s, Canada sent more than 3,200 peacekeepers to peacekeeping missions around the world. Under Stephen Harper, we have significantly cut back on our involvement in UN peacekeeping missions and now contribute only 122 peacekeepers to UN missions and are ranked a disappointing 67th in the world. That’s disturbing and it hurts morale and our reputation abroad.”

Additional information and details of the Green platform for our veterans can be found in the attached backgrounder.

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**For additional information or to arrange an interview, contact:**

[Local candidate contact info]

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