

# Executive Summary of the Evaluation and Ranking Document of Three Main Candidates for the Kootenay-Columbia Federal Riding

Evaluation and Ranking Document Completed by  
The Foundation for Democratic Advancement  
(October, 2008)

Purpose: Determine a ranking and grades for the four main candidates for the Kootenay-Columbia Federal Riding, in terms of the better representative of Kootenay-Columbia region and Canada as a whole.

This determination is an outside perspective to give the residents of the Kootenay-Columbia region an informed different perspective of the candidates running in the Kootenay-Columbia Federal riding.

The views in this Evaluation/Ranking are the views of the FDA. Also, the Determination is an example of a way to assist in the selection of political candidates--through evaluation and ranking.

## The 2008 Three Main Candidates for the Kootenay-Columbia Canadian Federal Riding:

Jim Abbott (Conservative)

Betty Aitchison (Liberal)

Leon Pendleton (NDP)

\* Ralph Moore for the Green Party of Canada was removed from this evaluation by his own admission that he is not a viable candidate: “I don’t see myself as the best person to represent Kootenay Columbia. My learning disabilities that protected me from indoctrination would interfere with the demanding role of a futurist MP. I see my role as a catalyst to wake up the dozing masses.... I suggest we all vote for Leon Pendleton as he has already demonstrated his philosophy by his lifestyle.” Aaron Orlando, *The Revelstoke Times Review*, September 2008.

The FDA and its members are in no way affiliated with any of the candidates in this study.

The study represents an independent assessment of the three main Kootenay-Columbia candidates based on objectivity, transparency, and non-partisanship.

Methodology for Evaluation and Ranking of Kootenay-Columbia candidates:

Evaluate the candidates as representatives of the Kootenay-Columbia region—backgrounds and visions.

Evaluate the policies of the respective political parties.

Key policy areas to be evaluated:

Economy: (sound, fiscal management of public revenue and expenditure, and fair distribution of government expenditure to all sectors of Canada.)

Environment: (more responsible, sustainable management of the Canadian environment)

Foreign policy (sound, responsible use of Canadian resources and citizens overseas)

Weighting:

Because the candidates are mere extensions of the parties, and party policies are significant in terms of what the candidate offers for the region and Canada as a whole, policies are given two-thirds weight over the background of the candidates.

Overall: Establish the basic priority of the Kootenay-Columbia as a whole, and use the basic priority to evaluate and rank the candidates in terms of their backgrounds and visions.

The basic priority of the Kootenay-Columbia as a whole in terms of the federal representative:

Leadership—identifies issues and act on them, vision, strength to carry through, independent yet team player, and strong communication with public.

Methodology for Ranking:

Rank each candidate for the basic priority, and then rank overall based on a combination of the results for each candidate section.

The policy sections to be evaluated correspond to the basic priorities for policy:

1. sound, fiscal management of public revenue and expenditure, and fair distribution of government expenditure to all sectors of Canada
2. more responsible, sustainable management of the Canadian environment
3. sound, responsible use of Canadian resources and citizens overseas

Evaluate the policies of the political parties in each policy section based on a comparison of the political parties' policies in light of the basic priorities and comparative soundness.

Chief Evaluators:

Stephen Garvey, President and CEO of the FDA

Simon Brown, retired Charter Accountant, and FDA associate

Evaluator:

James Clark, Mountaineer, local East Kootenay resident

**Information sources:**

Media articles and analysis of candidates.

Political parties policy statements, including policy promises.

Relevant questions answered by representatives of the political parties—question and answer of Betty Aitchison on September 27; telephone interview of Leon Pendleton on October 1, 2008; various question and answer with David F. Rooney, Constituency Assistant to Mr. Abbott from September 29 to October 3. FDA attendance at the all candidates forum in Cranbrook on October 4, and meeting of the candidates.

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## Background of Candidates

### Evaluation:

Basis for evaluation: Leadership--identifies issues and act on them, vision, strength to carry through, independent yet team player, and strong communication with public.

Score	Abbott	Aitchison	Pendleton
Garvey	8/10	4/10	7/10
Brown	8/10	4/10	7/10
Clark	8/10	6/10	7/10
Total	24/30	14/30	21/30

Rational: Abbott has very strong political experience; Pendleton has a diverse background which through his own initiatives shows conviction and leadership; Pendleton and Aitchison have never been political representatives; Aitchison's background limited to strong volunteer experience and longtime involvement in the Liberal Party.

## Vision for Kootenay Columbia and Canada:

### Evaluation:

Basis for evaluation: Leadership--identifies issues and act on them, vision, strength to carry through, independent yet team player, and strong communication with public.

Score	Abbott	Aitchison	Pendleton
Garvey	5/10	3/10	8/10
Brown	7/10	4/10	8/10
Clark	7/10	4/10	8/10
Total	19/30	11/30	24/30

Rational: Pendleton has a very strong vision for the Kootenay-Columbia region; Abbott's vision limited to party policy and pro-development; Aitchison's vision limited to assisting local representatives/leaders.

# Policies

## Economic

### Evaluation:

Basis for evaluation: sound, fiscal management of public revenue and expenditure, and fair distribution of government expenditure to all sectors of Canada

Score	Conservatives	Liberals	NDP
Garvey	5/10	7/10	6/10
Brown	7/10	6/10	4/10
Clark	5/10	7/10	6/10
Total	17/30	20/30	16/30

Rational: Conservatives wavering over threat to the Canadian economy; Conservatives commitment to stay with their direction may be best in a recession; Liberals have very good idea of shifting tax to sources of pollution; Liberals and NDP infavour of facilitating economy in difficult times; Liberals tax shift may not be beneficial.

# Environment

## Evaluation:

Basis for evaluation: more responsible, sustainable management of the Canadian environment

Score:	Conservatives	Liberals	NDP
Garvey	6/10	8/10	4/10
Brown	6/10	8/10	4/10
Clark	6/10	8/10	6/10
Total	18/30	24/30	14/30

Rational: Liberals more diverse, well-developed environmental policy than other parties; NDP weak environmental policy platform.

## Foreign Affairs

### Evaluation:

Basis for evaluation: sound, responsible use of Canadian resources and military personnel overseas

Score:	Conservatives	Liberals	NDP
Garvey	5/10	5/10	6/10
Brown	6/10	6/10	6/10
Clark	5/10	5/10	5/10
Total:	16/30	16/30	17/30

Rational: Similar foreign policies, except more humanitarian emphasis by the NDP; concern that the parties are committed to pushing western democracy on other countries through Nation Building/interference; poor representation at Canadian consulates by Conservatives; Conservatives and past Liberal governments have failed to meet the 0.7% of national income to international aid.

## Overall Totals

Score:	Abbott	Aitchison	Pendleton
Candidates	43/60	25/60	45/90
Policies	51/90	60/90	47/90

Policies have 3 times more weight than candidate information

Candidates	43/60	25/60	45/90
Policies	102/180	120/180	94/180
Totals:	145/240	145/240	139/240

## Ranking:

1. Aitchison (Liberal) (60.4%)
1. Abbott (Conservative) (60.4%)
2. Pendleton (NDP) (57.9%)

Aitchison was ranked higher than Abbott, because the Liberal policies scores were greater than the Conservatives (66.6% to 57.9%)

## Analysis:

Despite Aitchison's low scoring in the background and vision sections, she made up for it in the policy sections due to the strength of the Liberal economic and environmental policies compared to other parties, and 2/3's weighting of the policy section compared to the candidate section. (73.3% Liberals to 58.3% Conservatives and 50% NDP.)

In contrast, Pendleton's high scoring in the background and vision section was reduced from the NDP's lower scoring for policies compared to the other parties.

All three candidates received an overall grade of 66.6% (C+) or less for the policy section.

All three candidates received an overall grade of 60.4% (C) or less for both the policy and candidate sections.

All three candidates are within 2.5% of each other. However, Aitchison in the policy section has a 10% margin over Abbott, and 14.4% margin over Pendleton.

## Conclusion:

All three candidates are very close in overall result, with a 2.5% difference separating them.

Therefore, other specific factors likely need to be considered when choosing between them.

If the public is interested in strong leadership and vision, then they should choose Mr. Pendleton, who scored 80% for vision and 75% overall as a candidate. (Mr. Abbott scored 63.3% for vision and 71.6% overall as a candidate, and Mrs. Aitchison scored 36.6% for vision and 41.6% overall as a candidate.)

If the public is interested in political experience, then they should choose Mr. Abbott who scored 80% for background including political experience.

If the public is interested in the economy and environment, then they should choose Mrs. Aitchison and the liberals who scored 73.3% compared to 58.3% for the Conservatives and 50% for the NDP.