



# Jonathan Wilkinson

NORTH VANCOUVER'S MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

December 2019

## Our Collective Climate Challenge

On Oct 21 residents of North Vancouver re-elected me to be their representative in Ottawa. This is an honour and a role I take extremely seriously.

In November, I was asked by the Prime Minister to take on the role of Minister of Environment and Climate Change. I am grateful to Prime Minister Trudeau for entrusting me with this important task. As someone who entered politics largely because of the climate issue, there is no portfolio I would rather be asked to lead at this critical time.

While I am energized by both the significant challenges and the opportunities of this new role, I also want to say what a great privilege it has been to serve as Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard.

Over the past four years our government protected ~14% of Canada's ocean space – up from just 1% in 2015. We banned oil and gas activities, mining, dumping and bottom trawling in Canadian Marine Protected Areas. Through the modernization of the Fisheries Act, we restored lost protections to fish and fish habitat, enshrined new safeguards and protections into law, hired almost 300 new science staff, and put in place the \$1.5 billion Oceans Protection Plan – the largest investment in our country's history to make our oceans cleaner, safer and healthier.

We made significant investments in habitat restoration with the \$150M BC Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund, enabling direct partnerships with communities, industry and Indigenous-led initiatives to support sustainable management of our fisheries. We announced a full renewal of the aging Canadian Coast Guard fleet, and we have been working with Coastal First Nations to develop rights and reconciliation agreements for the sustainable management of area fisheries and marine resources. Working with Canadians from coast to coast to coast, I believe we made very significant progress on marine protection, sustainability and economic opportunity.

As I reflect on my new portfolio, I recognize there are some very, very

difficult issues we must tackle. The vast majority of Canadians have communicated clearly that they want their government to aggressively address the climate crisis. We also know that there are folks in some regions of this country – Alberta and Saskatchewan in particular – who have legitimate questions and concerns regarding how we address this challenge, and about the nature and timing of an energy transition. These are all matters that must be thoughtfully addressed.

While I am very much a North Vancouverite, having lived in this community for over 20 years - where my wife and I have raised our two daughters - I grew up in Saskatoon. I certainly continue to feel close to the concerns and aspirations of those who live in the Prairie provinces. As Minister of Environment and Climate Change, I intend to reach out broadly to seek to define pathways that will enable success in the fight against climate change, in a manner that can also enable opportunity for all regions of this country.

The reality is that we – as Canadians and as citizens of a global community – are at a pivotal juncture. We must take bold action to address the existential threat that is climate change. However, we must ensure we do so in a thoughtful manner that enables continued economic prosperity for all Canadians.

As Minister of Environment and Climate Change, I look forward to working actively on these issues. This will certainly not be simple – but the task is a fundamentally important one that we must tackle together. I look forward to working with Indigenous leaders, industry, environmentalists, all levels of government and indeed with all Canadians to advance our shared interest of building an environmentally and economically sustainable country.

Finally, I want to once again say a very heartfelt thank you to the citizens of North Vancouver for your continued trust in me to represent our community's interests in Ottawa.

My best and warmest wishes to everyone for a joyous holiday season, and for a happy and greener New Year.

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