

JONATHAN WILKINSON

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, NORTH VANCOUVER

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North Vancouver Constituent Update



Preparing for the unavoidable reality of future wildfires

As Canadians continue to process the horror and heartbreak of the wildfires of 2023, a survey by the non-profit Angus Reid Institute found that more than half of Canadians say they are expecting even worse fire conditions in the future.

More than 15 million hectares across Canada have been ravaged by fire this year - more than double the previous record of 1989 and shattering the 10-year average of 2.5 million hectares.



We need to invest in and focus on ways to adapt to the unavoidable reality that climate change is contributing to these conditions – **and to make our communities prepared and resilient while simultaneously doubling down on Canada's actions to reduce the emissions behind climate change.**

ADAPTATION STRATEGY

In June, the Federal Government released **Canada's first National Adaptation Strategy that aims to better prepare the country and to set a shared path for greater resilience to climate change.** It is the product of two years of intense engagement with provinces, Indigenous governments, key experts, stakeholders, and other partners across Canada.

It lays out an agreed-upon framework to take proactive measures to reduce climate impacts before they occur, build and maintain resilient infrastructure, improve health outcomes, protect nature and biodiversity, and support a strong economy. The Strategy also identifies common goals, objectives, and targets to focus the efforts of governments and communities across these key areas, and to help ensure future investments are targeted, coordinated, ambitious and effective.

In Canada, the primary responsibility for response to natural disasters such as wildfires and floods rests with provinces and territories. Local and regional adaptation plans are in place in many parts of the country and are well positioned to set priorities and advance action based on highest risks and local circumstances. At the national level, a series of action plans are being developed to better coordinate execution and improve support for local actions – while respecting the jurisdiction and responsibilities of different orders of government and rights holders.

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"WHOLE-OF-CANADA" APPROACH

Success in achieving the National Adaptation Strategy's goals and objectives will require a whole-of-Canada approach: municipal, regional, provincial, and territorial governments, Indigenous peoples and governing bodies, the private sector, professional associations, organized labour, academic institutions, researchers, scientists, communities, and individuals. We will all need to be part of the solution.

The role of the national government in a country as vast as Canada is to engage, coordinate and provide resources and financial support. Since 2015, the Government of Canada has invested more than \$6.5 billion in adaptation. When disaster relief is factored in, federal investments exceed \$10 billion with further significant investments required.

One can never say to the thousands of Canadians who lost their homes that enough is being done. They've been profoundly and forever impacted, but we must and will continue to do everything we possibly can. Canadians should expect nothing less of their leaders at all levels and of all political stripes in the face of this critical challenge.

Swim the Strait update



In conversation with swimmer Scott Rees after his successful crossing of the Salish Sea, he shared with us that his effort to bring attention to visual impairment, and especially to assist in providing dog guides to more people, was "a great challenge and a very successful fundraiser."

His original goal was to raise \$10,000; he ended up raising a whopping \$156,500 – absolutely astounding! Constituents have our thanks for stepping up and supporting Scott.

Scott swam the 30 kilometers in 10 hours and 55 minutes.

While the swim itself was challenging, it was more or less what he expected. What he didn't anticipate, he explained, was how the swim would result in something swimmers refer to as 'salt mouth,' which causes significant discomfort in the mouth and throat due to exposure to salt water. He said this was the hardest part of his recovery.

Scott will continue to swim recreationally and so far, doesn't have any other major swims planned. He wanted to thank everyone for your tremendous support in sharing his story and for opening your hearts and your wallets for this cause.

Breaking the mold to get ships built

Seaspan is a respected employer on the North Shore, with over 2000 people in its workforce. Each one of these individuals has a role in ensuring Seaspan delivers on its contracts to build the complex modern vessels necessary to upgrade Canada's Naval and Coast Guard fleets. Seaspan's part in breathing new life into our ocean-going fleets is essential, with decades of good, well-paying skilled jobs right here in our community.

Who fills those jobs? Meet Liz Neufeld, a 33-year-old welder and one of hundreds of certified tradespeople on site at the foot of Pemberton Street. Liz has a unique position at the shipyard, operating the Welding Centre of Excellence. Inspired by her brothers and supported by her family, Liz had her heart set on joining the trades since high school. She pursued the education and training necessary, completing years of apprenticeship, and time on the job with Seaspan to prove herself against the high standards required in shipbuilding.

Liz is now responsible for guiding and training new welders entering the shipbuilding industry at the Centre of Excellence, ensuring their welding skills meet Seaspan standards. She can relate to the pressures that come with the opportunity to train at the Centre of Excellence and can appreciate how tough this trade can often be to master. Liz feels privileged to be able to help people of all backgrounds, ages and genders achieve the goal of becoming Seaspan-certified welders. "That's the most rewarding part of my job," she expressed recently on a visit to the shipyard.

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Being a female in her field, she kind of breaks the mold of the typical welder. **Her advice for young women considering the trades is two-fold.**

“Explore your options” she encouraged. “There are programs that exist at BCIT and similar schools, such as the Trade Discovery Program, where you can test the waters of different trades and find the best fit for you.” Within the program at BCIT, she found huge support to help women pursue the trade they choose.

Liz’s second piece of advice? **“Don’t let the idea of a male-dominated industry intimidate you.”** All it takes are the skills necessary to complete the job and the drive to become accomplished in any trade or field to achieve a level of success like hers. And according to her employer, the shipyard

is proactive in assuring inclusivity in its hiring and training, committed to employment equity and to eliminating barriers to assure a workforce that truly reflects our community.

Liz is far from the only woman working at the shipyard. With more women entering the trades every year and women’s participation in the economy having reached an all-time high, what was once a completely male-dominated domain has evolved into an industry where all genders are welcome to build their careers. Thank you, Liz, for your leadership, providing a role model with the tools necessary to prosper in the shipbuilding industry.

Standing up for human rights

On September 16th, communities all around the world commemorated the 1-year anniversary of the death of Mahsa Amini in Iran. Just one year ago, the world was witness to the tragic murder of Ms. Amini by the Iranian morality police – a crime that sparked country-wide protests. What began as a female-led movement, quickly grew into a united front of Iranian people taking to the streets to demand respect for women’s rights, freedom of speech and freedom of expression. While the demonstrations were generally peaceful, the response of the regime was not, and since the beginning of the protests, over 21,000 people have been detained and are being judged in what the Canadian government considers sham trials.

The government of Canada has condemned the Iranian regime’s response to the protests every step of the way. We have not only imposed significant sanctions on the country and its key leaders, but the Liberal caucus in BC has also undertaken the political sponsorship of prisoners jailed in the protests. I have personally sponsored four individuals. I speak out on behalf of Dr. Hamid Ghareh-Hassanlou and his wife, Farzaneh Ghareh-Hassanlou; Mohammad Rakhshani, a 16-year-old teenager

whose brother is also detained; and rap artist Toomaj Salehi, whose songs convey messages of social justice. While we have seen the death penalty revoked for the Ghareh-Hassanlou and Toomaj Salehi, they all remain in prison at great risk to their physical and mental health. We continue to call on the regime to withdraw all charges and release these individuals.

Canada’s sanctions against the regime are some of the harshest in the world. We have announced sanctions against 31 entities and 135 of Iran’s top-ranked officials responsible for state-ordered violence against protestors. Many of those sanctioned are key players in the IRGC and the Revolutionary Court. We aim to sanction those directly responsible for the violence and atrocities committed against the people of Iran by the current regime.

I have been working closely with Iranian Canadians across the lower mainland to assure open communication, support for the community when and where needed, and to gather facts as events unfold. I spoke recently with Dr. Ghareh-Hassanlou’s former medical school classmate and have encouraged my Caucus colleagues to continue to speak the names of all those we have sponsored, keeping them in our thoughts and our hearts.



The Government of Canada remains steadfast in its support of the protestors, of the Woman, Life, Freedom movement and of the people of Iran who continue to fight for equal rights, freedom of speech and justice. Let us take a moment this month to pay tribute to so many courageous Iranians who have lost their freedom and their lives in the pursuit of justice and equality. As we remember Mahsa Amini and usher in October, Women’s History Month, Canada will continue to stand with women in the ongoing pursuit of justice and equality in Iran, in Canada, and around the world.

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Canada's modern nation-building opportunity

Nation-building projects begin with a vision. Without it, obstacles can seem like impassable mountains – much like the Rockies did to Canada's railway builders in the 19th century. It was the vision of a prosperous future enabled by the railway that powered them forward against seemingly impossible odds.

Today, Canadians are facing a nation-building opportunity for the 21st century that is unprecedented in scale and importance. Once again, a compelling vision is essential to mobilize and inspire the 'all-of-Canada' effort necessary to achieve this project's ambitious – perhaps audacious – goals.

During the summer, against the backdrop of the worst wildfire season in BC's history, I released "*Powering Canada Forward*," the government of Canada's vision document for the modernization of Canada's electricity sector. This massive and complex undertaking will form the backbone of our strategy to achieve Canada's climate goals and to safeguard a prosperous future for this country.

Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, clean electricity is a critical step in driving down the greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change, while seizing the massive economic opportunities enabled through the shift to a global low-carbon future.

THE FUTURE WE DESIRE

An inspiring vision captures the imagination by focusing on the future we desire: a clean, net-zero electricity system by 2035, and the doubling or tripling of supply by 2050, that retains Canada's strategic clean electricity competitiveness and meets increased demand as we plug our cars, homes and industries into the grid.

The metaphor of the obstacles the Rockies posed to the railway in the 19th century is helpful. The mountains we will need to overcome are slow approval processes, labour shortages, supply chain upheavals, jurisdictional politics, competition for critical minerals and geopolitical uncertainty – to name a few.

Realizing the vision will require exceptional policy coherence, investment mobilization, technological flair, and the commitment of all levels of civil society. The required public funding is mind-boggling and is needed, while government simultaneously addresses a housing supply and affordability crisis in addition to rising health care costs. The challenges are enormous and not for the faint of heart.



HEAD START

The good news is that Canada already has a head start. In this country, we are fortunate to possess an electricity grid that is already more than 80% non-emitting. Canada as a country has the advantage of being several steps ahead of many – including our American friends – in this respect.

It is important to recognize that every province, every territory, every Indigenous community has unique circumstances, challenges, and requirements. There will need to be different pathways to achieving the clean grid of the future. And it is critical that we work collaboratively and boldly to ensure that electricity in every region of this country is reliable, affordable, non-emitting and abundant.

Clean energy is at the heart of achieving our environmental and economic ambitions.

The vision document I released in August represents an invitation to Canadians to engage in this conversation and to help us all shape our path forward. This isn't a matter for government alone. We all have a stake in the outcome of our latest and most important nation-building exercise.

[CLICK HERE TO READ THIS DOCUMENT](#)



Redistribution for North Vancouver



Every ten years, the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission

redraws federal riding boundaries to ensure the House of Commons accurately reflects population changes across the country.

The Commission is mandated to re-align riding boundaries so that “the population of each electoral district shall ‘as close as reasonably possible’ correspond to the province’s electoral quota” – which boils down to an average of 117,126 people for Lower Mainland/Fraser Valley ridings.

British Columbia faces unique challenges in this: our population distribution pattern is highly uneven and has altered considerably since the reconfiguration of 2012.

And the province’s rugged physical geography in many areas determines the possibilities for adjustment to electoral boundaries. Further, BC is home to many Indigenous communities with reserve lands that are not contiguous. To enhance representation and engagement, the new boundaries attempt to locate adjacent Indigenous communities within one electoral district.

How does the new distribution affect us in North Vancouver?

Well, earlier this summer, the Commission finalized the new boundaries, and each of the three North Shore ridings will see changes.

As folks will know, at present, the eastern segment of the District is part of “Burnaby North-Seymour” riding, while the rest of the District and City municipalities are fully contained within the riding of “North Vancouver.”

The riding I have represented for the past eight years will soon be called “North Vancouver – Capilano” and will include the Ambleside neighbourhood of West Vancouver all the way to 21st Street, below the Upper Levels highway.

The new eastern boundary of this riding – previously defined by the Seymour River – will shift to the line defining the edge of the City of North Vancouver, and much of Lynn Valley will be incorporated by “Burnaby North – Seymour” federal electoral district.

I will continue to provide information to keep you up to date about impending changes.

[CLICK HERE](#) to see the current and revised boundaries for North Vancouver.



Something to bear in mind...

I enjoy hiking in the back country and consider myself fortunate to live so close to the North Shore mountains. **It is no secret that we live in what is considered bear country.** Walk nearly any trail or back alley at this time of year, and you might come across the remnants of bears scavenging as they fatten up for winter – well picked berry bushes, a pile of bear scat on the trail or, sadly, overturned bins with partially-eaten plastic bags and food waste strewn about.



Consequently, we bear the responsibility of being considerate neighbours to our bear companions. **To address this, the North Shore Black Bear Society, a non-profit committed to increasing our knowledge and understanding of bears, suggests:**

- Freeze odorous food scraps before adding them to your green bin the morning of collection (fats, grease, fish, bones, egg shells, etc);
- Wrap your remaining food scraps in newspaper; layer with yard trimmings in your organics bin, or store inside;
- Scrub bins regularly with a water and vinegar solution;
- Diapers must have the solids flushed, be well wrapped and stored indoors until collection day;
- Wash all food containers;
- Keep bins locked away in a secure space, only putting them out the morning of collection;
- Refrain from leaving food on window sills or in vehicles.

These measures aren’t designed to ensure only human safety, but are also meant to protect the well-being of our local bear population. **Once bears have entered residential areas, relocating them is almost never a viable solution; they will simply return to where they know there is food.**

By nature, black bears are known to be “peaceful, polite, and predictable” so by following these tips, we’ll not only help keep our community safe, but do our very best for our black bear neighbours. Every encounter with a bear on the North Shore should be reported to the North Shore Black Bear Society.

A journey through history

Drive, intelligence, kindness, and creativity propelled Claire Zhong, a 17-year-old resident of North Vancouver and member of my Constituency Youth Council, to the top of the list for a prestigious program developed by the Vimy Ridge Foundation – the Beaverbrook Vimy Prize, an immersive 10-day exploration of the history of the two European world wars. Claire’s journey of discovery took her through France, Belgium, and the Netherlands this past August, where she visited museums, monuments, cemeteries, and historic sites marking events that have profoundly shaped global history.

Claire’s journey was about embracing the past to understand the present and future. Through the North Vancouver Archives, Claire had unearthed a poignant link to a

British-born bricklayer named Edgar Arthur Hugh, who had emigrated from England to North Vancouver as a young man. In 1914, at the age of 31, Hugh enlisted as an engineer to contribute to the war effort. His name is carved into the Canadian Vimy Ridge Memorial. Gone but not forgotten, over a century later, fate would have Claire standing in front of his name in France, reflecting on the sacrifice, bravery, and heroism that war demands of communities.

Claire’s journey to Europe, her connection to Edgar Arthur Hugh, and her eloquent reflections symbolize how our understanding of history may shape a more enlightened tomorrow. Claire wasn’t just an individual but a representative of her hometown, carrying its values and aspirations across borders and time.



[CLICK HERE](#) to read the biography and poem about Edgar Arthur Hugh written by Claire

I recognize the critical role that youth organizations like the Constituency Youth Council and institutions like the Vimy Ridge Foundation play in nurturing the potential of young Canadians. By investing in opportunities that promote growth, learning and expanding perspectives, these platforms provide an essential bridge between classroom education and real-world experiences.

I invite you to learn more about the North Vancouver Constituency Youth Council and join some of these conversations. Please visit my website to learn more.

In The Community



Celebrating Pride with colleagues Sajjan, Miao, Noormohamed, Boissonnault and Weiler.

Announcing Chenkw Emút project National Housing Co-Investment funding with Elder Bob Baker



Graciously welcomed at the Philippine Days Festival 2023



Mentoring youth as we serve North Vancouver constituents.



- ✉ Jonathan.Wilkinson@parl.gc.ca
- 🐦 @JonathanWNV
- 📘 JonathanWilkinsonNorthVancouver
- 📷 @JonathanWNV

www.jonathanwilkinson.libparl.ca

COMMUNITY OFFICE
#201–310 East Esplanade, North Vancouver, BC V7L 1A4
(604) 775-6333

HILL OFFICE
Confederation Building, Room 258,
House of Commons, Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
(613) 995-1225