

Howe Sound becomes UNESCO Biosphere Region

Just a few months ago, as a result of the determined efforts of a group of dedicated individuals on the North Shore, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) conferred the internationally-recognized designation of Biosphere Region on the Howe Sound area.

Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound Biosphere Region (AHSBR) is an area of breathtaking natural beauty, distinct biodiversity and geography, and rich Indigenous cultures. Átl'ka7tsem is the name of Howe Sound in the Coast Salish language of the Squamish (Sk̓w̓wú7mesh) people. The area is also known as Nexwnéwu7ts, or Txwnéwu7ts.

In a Biosphere Reserve, lands and waters are designated into three zones: Core areas comprise strictly protected ecosystems. Buffer zones adjoining the core areas are used for activities that reinforce ecological practices like scientific research, education and training. Transition zones support the greatest use and activities, and foster socio-culturally and ecologically sustainable development.

Biosphere reserves are not parks or conservation areas, however, and they need stewardship to assure their protection. Biospheres are places where people are inspired to find ways to live and work in harmony with nature, enjoy the region's natural, cultural and social resources and benefit from activities that feed a sustainable economy. UNESCO designation means the area will be under scrutiny to nurture, protect and use the region and its resources to assure an enduring and livable environment within the parameters of sustainable development.

The new Biosphere Region covers a 218,723-hectare swath of land and sea encompassing the entire Howe Sound watershed. Its zoning boundaries begin near Point Atkinson (Sk̓'íwitsut) in West Vancouver, running north to Black Tusk (T'ekt'akmúyín t'l'a In7inyáxa7en) near Whistler, and as far west as Gower Point on the Sunshine Coast.

The core area traverses five BC Provincial Parks, one BC Provincial Conservancy, and several marine refuges. AHSBR is dotted with iconic landmarks such as **Mt. Garibaldi (Nch'kay)**, a diamond-shaped peak towering over the Squamish landscape, **the Tantalus (Tsewílx')** glacier, and **the Squamish Chief (Siám' Smánit)**, a sacred site for the Indigenous peoples who share this territory.

The AHSBR becomes the 19th biosphere region in Canada. The designation of this Biosphere Region is aligned very much with the commitment of the federal government to enhance and increase nature protection across the country – to work to protect 25% of Canada's lands and oceans by 2025.



The Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative will utilize a unique governance structure that will use existing legal frameworks for protection and management of the region. It is anticipated that collaboration on this initiative, including environmental organizations and federal, provincial and Indigenous oversight will enable the development of innovative, environmentally sustainable and culturally appropriate approaches to development that may take place within its boundaries.

There are presently 701 sites in 124 countries that have been designated Biosphere Regions by UNESCO. These designations support the **UN Sustainable Development Goals** and help to inspire collaboration, stewardship, sustainable practices, education, research and monitoring of some of the planet's most remarkable places.

Personally, I had the opportunity as Fisheries Minister and as Environment Minister to be involved in early discussions relating to this initiative. The work itself, however, was undertaken by local folks who were committed to ensure protection and preservation of this remarkable area.

"I am very pleased that our very own Howe Sound is now one of these precious sites – I would like to publicly congratulate Ruth Simons and all those who put so much into making this happen."

To begin exploring the Biosphere Region, check out the AHSBR website at howesoundbri.org

Vaccination is our best protection

Canada has made enormous progress with respect to COVID-19 vaccination. The fact that more than 90% of eligible British Columbians over the age 11 of have stepped forward to be vaccinated, has played a huge role in preventing some of the worst potential effects of COVID-19. As of mid-November, children from 5 to 11 years of age are eligible for vaccination.

However, for some there is still hesitation to be vaccinated. These folks are seemingly not yet convinced of the efficacy or safety of COVID-19 vaccines.

For those in our community who have been waiting because they do have such concerns, I would urge you to share your views and have a discussion with your medical practitioner. At the end of the day, our decisions both collectively and individually should be based on science and data.

At this time, that science shows that individuals are 50 times more likely to be hospitalized with COVID-19 if they are unvaccinated. Unvaccinated people who become ill with COVID-19 are also 46 times more likely to die from the virus.



Beyond one's concerns of personal safety, I would also ask those who have not yet chosen to be vaccinated to **consider who you protect when you are vaccinated:**

- your elderly mother
- your best friend who was just diagnosed with cancer
- your buddy's kid who has only one kidney
- your child's teacher who has 25 students in her class
- your sister who is a nurse
- your cousin who works in a long-term care home
- your neighbour who is an emergency room doctor

We all need to do our part to stop the worst impacts of COVID-19. That means, as a first and very important step, ensuring that we all get vaccinated.

Get your shots – please, register today:
2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/register

In The Community

First Pumpkin Walk on Grand Boulevard



Laying a wreath on Nov 11



Sutherland Backpack Buddies donation from Telus



Our constituency office has fully reopened.
Please stay COVID-safe. Get the jab.

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HOLIDAY EDITION 2021

North Vancouver Constituent Update



From environment to natural resources: a natural evolution

Let me start by wishing everyone a very happy – and hopefully relaxing – holiday season with family and friends. This is most certainly a time of year for reflection on some of the obstacles we have surmounted and the things in our lives for which we are grateful.

Certainly, we in BC and in Canada have experienced significant challenges in recent times. We find ourselves at the end of a what has proven to be a very challenging year, full of changes and new demands. Many folks in BC have faced catastrophic fires, floods and disruption to their lives, all on top of a pandemic we expected would be over. As I consider my role as your Member of Parliament and as a government minister looking forward into 2022, I wish that all of us may experience a calmer, healthier and happier New Year.

I've made no secret over the past couple of years that I've been honoured to have had the opportunity to serve as Canada's Minister of Environment and Climate Change. Fighting climate change while promoting economic opportunity is the main reason I entered politics in 2015.

I have a deep affection for the Environment portfolio – and great pride in what we accomplished over the past couple of years on climate change, biodiversity, plastics and other important matters.

My task at Environment had been to lead the development of an aggressive policy and regulatory framework. That is now in place, in the form of **Canada's strengthened climate plan**. The imperative now is to shift from plan development to fulsome implementation – in a manner that both reduces emissions and sets up our national and regional economies to thrive in a low-carbon future.

This is a critical challenge for all countries, but particularly for countries like Canada, where the oil and gas sector plays a significant economic role. And that is what I believe prompted the Prime Minister's decision to ask me to take on a new role as Canada's Minister of Natural Resources. Broadly speaking, it is in many ways a natural evolution.

"I've long said that, in the modern world, the environment and the economy must go hand in hand. And now the Prime Minister has asked me to work on demonstrating that's more than just a sound bite."

The Department of Natural Resources needs to be on the front lines of making that happen. It has the mandate and resources for implementing programs involving energy production and consumption. It is, at its core, an economic portfolio – one that has many levers to affect a thoughtful and effective economic transition.



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WORKING SHOULDER TO SHOULDER

While Canada's energy sector is an important economic driver, it is also currently the country's largest contributor to our unacceptably high per-capita emissions. **Earlier this year, our government made it the law that Canada's GHG emissions be dramatically reduced by 2030.** Our goal must be to work collaboratively with oil and gas, and other key industrial sectors – including steel, cement, auto manufacturing and others – to ensure they are part of a process that both reduces emissions and builds a sustainable and prosperous economy for the future.

Clearly there will be challenging conversations ahead. I am confident that my background and experience will assist me as this work gets done. I began my career as a federal-provincial specialist representing Saskatchewan – one of the provinces likely to be most affected by this discussion. Later, my career as a CEO and senior executive in the clean technology sector provided an understanding of some of the workings of Canada's key natural resource sectors - energy, mining, and forestry.

WIDE RANGE OF OPPORTUNITIES

My new assignment as Minister of Natural Resources provides an opportunity to work with the natural resource sector on economic opportunities that are available through a thoughtful transition – including:

- renewable energy
- energy efficiency retrofits
- zero emission vehicles and associated refueling infrastructure
- biofuels
- critical minerals
- carbon capture
- hydrogen
- low carbon building products



There will be more that have yet to be imagined. Two of the programs that the public is perhaps most familiar with – the 2 Billion Trees initiative and the Canada Greener Homes Grant program – now fall under my portfolio, and I am eager to get to work to assure these and a number of other innovative solutions come to fruition.

I spent a week at COP26 – the United Nations climate conference in Glasgow, Scotland – in November with my successor as Environment Minister, Steven Guilbeault. I participated in discussions with ministers from around the globe to share ideas, suggest solutions and draw up agreements on how best to move forward in sustainable ways with the resources we have, as well as with new and innovative methods, uses and products that will assure our path leads to a prosperous net zero future.

As Steven and I have discussed at length, and as our joint interactions with other countries at COP26 underlined, the efforts of the departments of Environment and of Natural Resources are like two sides of the same coin – working collaboratively toward the same vital objective: to build a future for our children that sustains both a healthy environment and a prosperous economy.

MONOVA: Museum of North Vancouver opens in The Shipyards

After years of anticipation and planning, the new Museum of North Vancouver has moved from dream to reality. The new facility is open and welcoming residents and visitors to explore the diverse histories that come together in our community.

Federally, from the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund, MONOVA received \$3 million for the museum construction and fit-out. Additionally, the Canadian Heritage Museum Assistance Program for COVID Emergency Funding provided \$100,000 to adapt exhibits for more suitable distancing measures, as well as to implement a Digital Pathways project allowing greater access to the Archives collection.

MONOVA consists of two separate and complementary facilities – the incredible new Museum of North Vancouver in The Shipyards at the foot of Lonsdale and the archival collections, research and exhibits at the Archives of North Vancouver in Lynn Valley.

Last year, I visited the evolving building site soon after the rebranding to the contemporary and urbane MONOVA moniker. According to Director Wesley A. Wenhardt, the MONOVA word-mark represents North Vancouver's tall trees and mountain peaks down to its rivers,

creeks and valleys. It rises above, then dips below, an imagined horizon line – providing a graphic representation of this dynamic landscape.

Wesley went on to explain that the vision of MONOVA is to engage, strengthen and inspire the community and its visitors by creating experiences that explore the past, present and future of North Vancouver and its people. This vision is rooted in values that reflect inclusiveness, relevance, creativity, excellence, integrity, and community building and engagement. And as might be expected by a modernized approach to community history and story-telling, MONOVA can be experienced on many levels, and several platforms, including:



- Museum of North Vancouver (115 West Esplanade)
- Archives of North Vancouver (3203 Institute Road)
- Educational programs
- Online experiences
- Outreach programs

My most recent visit, as the building was set to open, was inspiring, with the staff excitedly preparing to finally welcome the public into this light and airy space encapsulating our shared experiences of this place we call home.



MONOVA
For more information about MONOVA visit: monova.ca

Canada Summer Jobs just the boost youth employment needed

Each year, Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) provides meaningful employment for young people aged 15 to 30 throughout the country. CSJ is an important program that helps to provide work experience to local youth while also supporting local organizations in providing important, sometimes critical services. Applications for 2022 will open very soon.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused catastrophic losses in jobs that would normally be available to young Canadians. With additional funding allocated to all ridings in Canada, CSJ was able to boost youth employment at a time when it was most needed – doubling the number of funded jobs usually available in pre-pandemic years.

In North Vancouver, CSJ's 2021 program engaged 111 employers, who in turn hired 275 eager workers from May through September. Employers were as varied as church-run children's camps, gymnastics clubs, community

service organizations, childcare facilities and student painting companies. This amounted to a dollar value of \$1.5 million injected into our own community – and provided learning experiences, services and programs that may not have otherwise been possible.

One example is Soaring Eagle Nature School. This outdoor, experiential education program bases its activities in the natural world. Soaring Eagle was able to hire a new coordinator in the summer of 2021, better supporting North Vancouver summer camps to provide kids with meaningful nature experiences in our beautiful, mountainous surroundings. Mike, the CSJ grant employee, now has ongoing work with Soaring Eagle. As a small business operating independently, they appreciated this support, as did dozens of other small operations across North Vancouver, including private, not-for-profit and community organizations.



A sampling of the variety of jobs made possible by CSJ grants locally:

- The Edible Garden Project's Loutet Farm, administered by North Shore Neighbourhood House, hired market garden workers to assist with the growing, harvesting and community sales of fresh vegetables every week all summer long.
- Hollyburn Family Services engaged special needs and social services assistants.
- Boys and Girls Clubs of BC took on day camp leaders.
- North Shore ConneXtions Society added a cultural activities leader and a community recreation coordinator to their team.

Please check the Employment and Social Development website for detailed information and to access the application process. Perhaps your small business or community organization might both benefit and contribute through CSJ.

Refugee resettlement in North Vancouver

The situation in Afghanistan resulted in many anxious calls and emails to my local office. Constituents expressed concern for the whereabouts of friends and relatives or inquired about how they could help.

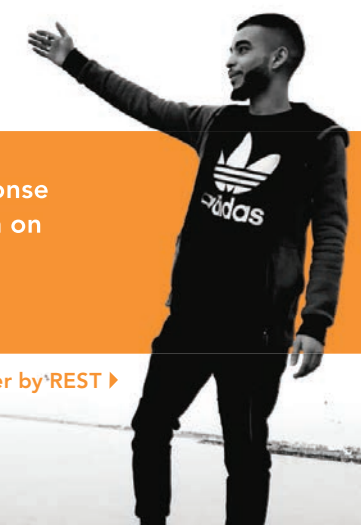
The response to the crisis is similar to that during the Syrian exodus in 2015, when a small boy's body on a Greek beach prompted a group of people on the North Shore to form the Regional Ecumenical Sponsorship Team, or REST. Eight North Vancouver churches and friends from the community committed to sponsor some of the many refugees seeking safe haven at the time.

Despite being an ad hoc group managing donations through St. Agnes Anglican Church, REST has assisted in sponsoring more than 30 individuals from several unstable areas of the world. The group has encouraged sponsorships by additional churches, a jamatkhana, a synagogue and private individuals.

Which brings me back to the plight of so many Afghan nationals. Canada committed to resettle up to 40,000 vulnerable Afghan citizens, who will undoubtedly contribute deeply to our diverse Canadian weave of bright, hard-working new arrivals. REST is one of the local groups helping to resettle people in need of safe haven; there are others across the North Shore doing similar work. Interested in contributing to this effort?

Please explore Canada's response to the situation in Afghanistan on the Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada website.

Mousa, welcomed to North Vancouver by REST ▶



Ocean Ambassadors Zero Waste project

The Ocean Ambassadors has been a force for environmental progress on the North Shore for years. This organization, led by Alison Wood but powered by the involvement and commitment of students from across the North Shore, was the driving force last year behind eliminating the use of plastic bags in Edgemont village.

More recently, in an effort to decrease the use of plastic – and plastic pollution – Ocean Ambassadors launched the "East of Seymour Zero Waste Takeout Program." I was pleased to be at the program kick-off on a very rainy October Saturday afternoon.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an explosion of waste from takeout food and online shopping. This new Zero Waste Takeout Program will encourage residents in and around Deep Cove and Dollarton Highway, to enjoy takeout meals and drinks in reusable containers and to-go mugs. Deep Cove is the first community in Canada where all restaurants and cafes have committed to offer takeout in reusable containers.

Programs such as this one support the concept of a circular economy, where waste is eliminated or diverted from landfills as much as possible through reuse, recycling, repurposing, repairing and refurbishing items once thought to be throw-aways. The concept



of a circular economy is critical to the future of our local communities and to our planet. We simply must look to far better utilize the resources of our planet, if we are to arrive at a more sustainable future.

The Deep Cove program is the North Shore pilot for utilizing "Reusables" to eliminate the use of plastic single use items. It's a big step forward for the North Shore. Those in the neighbourhood interested in signing up please visit: reusables.com/pages/sign-up-for-reusables

"I want to express my congratulations to Alison Wood, the North Vancouver founder of the Ocean Ambassadors, and to all involved in pioneering programs to reduce single-use plastics."

Check out their website at oceanambassadorscanada.org