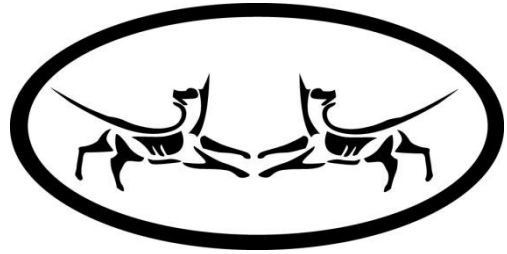


PIB PRESS RELEASE

Snpink'tn Indian Band

p: (250) 493-0048

a: 841 Westhills Drive, Penticton, British Columbia, Canada V2A 0E8



MEDIA CONTACT INFORMATION:

Snpink'tn Indian Band Communications

Lesley Gabriel

PIB Communications Lead

250-493-0048

lgabriel@pib.ca

RELEASE DATE:

February 27, 2025

Snpink'tn INDIAN BAND partners with the Okanagan Nation Alliance, Province of BC and City of Penticton to RESTORE FISH PASSAGE into Okanagan Lake

Dateline: snpink'tn, February 27, 2025

The snpink'tn Indian Band (snpink'tn), the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA), Province of BC and City of Penticton together with project partners including the Habitat Conservation Plan, TD Friends of the Environment and the Habitat Subcommittee of the Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee have united to restore fish passage to Okanagan Lake after almost 100 years of access restrictions for fish.

The construction of multiple dams along the Columbia River system coupled with habitat loss and development almost wiped out all salmon species from the Okanagan. The syilx people have been fighting to bring the salmon back from the brink of extinction for decades. Years of advocacy, partnership development, public education and a tremendous amount of hard work have led to one of the greatest success stories in history – the salmon are back!

“Our collective success has been a series of processes all coming together, like keeping the water flowing in the river, restoring the habitat that we had available and then adding more habitat over time” says Chief Greg Gabriel “everyone in our Nation has been supportive of this important work and many have worked directly with the ONA Fisheries department to get the work done”

This remarkable project will open up over 350 square kilometres of habitat for salmon, a keystone species which is vital to the health of the Okanagan ecosystem. The project will see the development of a naturalized fishway which completely bypasses the Okanagan Lake dam, allowing fish to ascend into Okanagan Lake unimpeded. The fishway will allow the dam to remain perfectly operational, provide an adjustable invasive species migration barrier and do so without any increased flood risk to infrastructure or public safety.

Elder Richard Armstrong (*caylx*) has been responsible for conducting ceremonies to support the return of the salmon for years “together we have brought the salmon back, our hard work, our prayers and our ceremonies.” Said *caylx* “I will be happy to see my relative salmon swimming around the dam and up into the waters and lands that their great ancestors had access to, a proud moment for us all”.

For more information, please call the snpink'tn Indian Band at (250) 493-0048

###