



## Penticton Indian Band

841 Westhills Drive  
Penticton, British Columbia  
Canada V2A 0E8

Telephone: 250-493-0048 Fax: 250-493-2882

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(April 23, 2025)

#### **snpink'tn Indian Band Condemns Legal Petition Filed by UBC Professors Against Land Acknowledgements and Inclusivity Initiatives**

*Penticton, BC* – The snpink'tn (Penticton) Indian Band strongly condemns the recent legal petition filed with the BC Supreme Court by professors Andrew Irvine, Brad Epperly, Michael Treschow, Christopher Kam, and graduate student Natham Cockram of the University of British Columbia (UBC) on April 7, 2025. The petition seeks to prohibit and restrain UBC from acknowledging its location on unceded Indigenous land, as well as from supporting or promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion.

snpink'tn Indian Band members, as part of the sqilx<sup>w</sup>/syilx/s<sup>?</sup>uk<sup>w</sup>naqínx (Okanagan People) hold unextinguished Aboriginal rights, title, and interests to lands and resources within the *syilx* Territory. Our oral history and certified (carbon dated) research data confirm that our people have lived on our unceded lands since time immemorial long before any white settler, missionary or fur traders came unto our lands. The *syilx* People occupy an area which extends over approximately 69,000 square kilometers. The northern area of this territory stretches from the area of Mica Creek, just north of modern-day Revelstoke, BC and east to Kootenay Lake. The southern boundary extends to the vicinity of Wilbur, Washington and the western border extends into the Nicola Valley.

"This disrespectful petition represents a blatant disregard for truth, reconciliation, and an insult to all *syilx* people," said Chief Greg Gabriel of the snpink'tn Indian Band. "Our rights to our ancestral lands, granted by our Creator and maintained through our ongoing caretakership since time immemorial, have never been ceded. Recognizing this truth is neither political nor negotiable—it is essential to reconciliation and respect."

The actions outlined in the petition directly undermine the principles and spirit of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and British Columbia's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act. Denying the historical truths and rights of Indigenous Peoples perpetuates harmful attitudes of racism and historical denialism.

The snpink'tn Indian Band acknowledges the UBC Board for its leadership in recognizing our unceded lands within its academic framework and curriculum. We urge UBC to decisively denounce this regressive petition, uphold its commitment to decolonization, and take immediate disciplinary action against those responsible under its Discrimination Policy. "Reconciliation requires truth," emphasized Chief Gabriel. "We stand firm against attempts to erase or deny our inherent rights and history. UBC must act now to reinforce its commitment to truth, justice, and respect for Indigenous Peoples."

#### **Media Contact:**

Lesley Gabriel  
Communications Department Manager  
snpink'tn Indian Band  
Email: [lgabriel@pib.ca](mailto:lgabriel@pib.ca)  
Phone: (250) 493-0048 ext: 23