



ANNUAL REPORT
2014 | 2015



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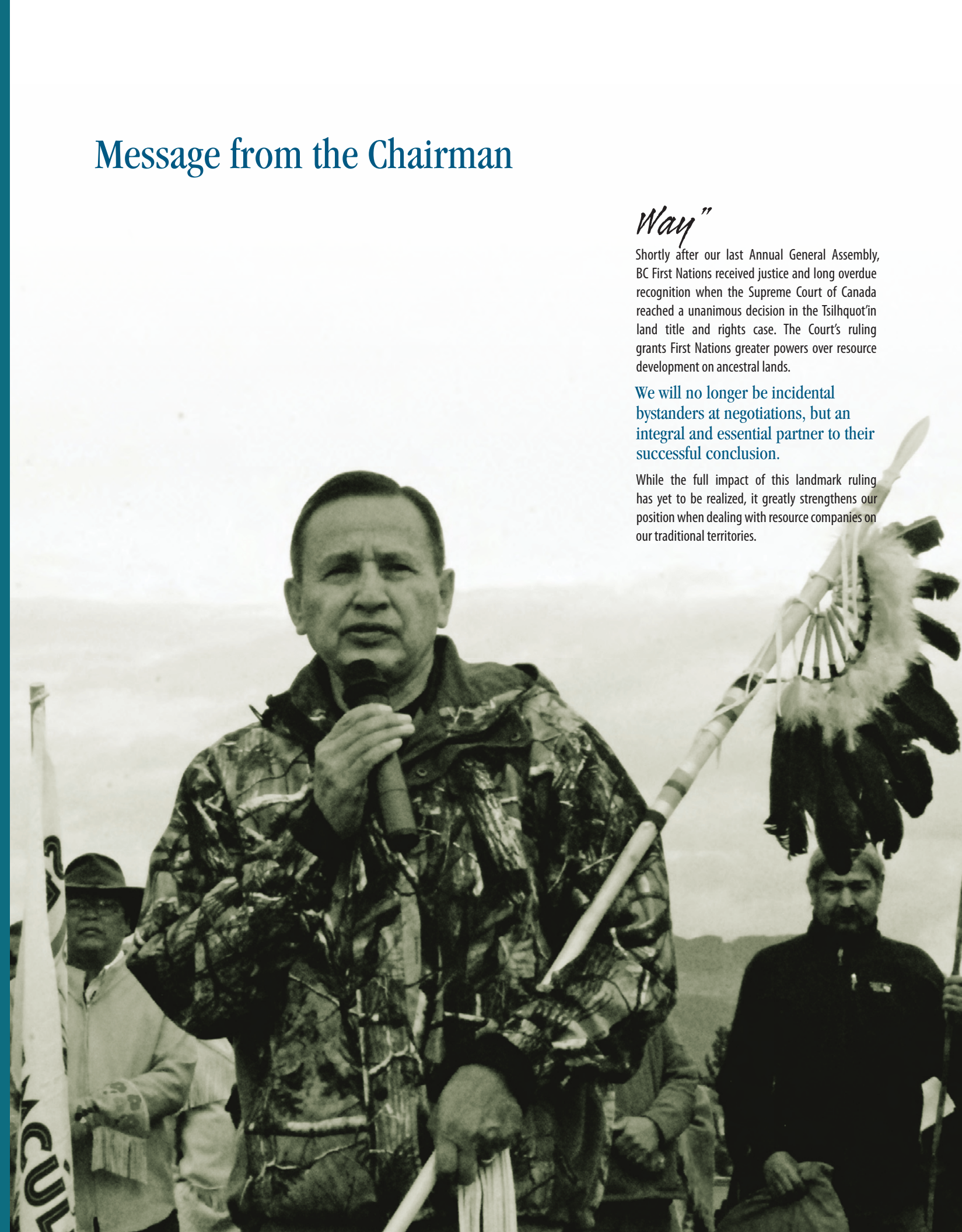
Message from the Chairman

Way"

Shortly after our last Annual General Assembly, BC First Nations received justice and long overdue recognition when the Supreme Court of Canada reached a unanimous decision in the Tsilhqot'in land title and rights case. The Court's ruling grants First Nations greater powers over resource development on ancestral lands.

We will no longer be incidental bystanders at negotiations, but an integral and essential partner to their successful conclusion.

While the full impact of this landmark ruling has yet to be realized, it greatly strengthens our position when dealing with resource companies on our traditional territories.



But perhaps the highlight of the year for the Okanagan Nation was the official opening of the *ke'epelk' stimi* Hatchery in September 2014. This fulfilled our Nation's dream to restore the Okanagan Sockeye salmon fishery. The Hatchery is a shining example of our dedication to live in concert with the land, our mother, and to honour the natural world in the spirit of our ancestors. I thank all who worked so diligently on the project, and all who faithfully attended the salmon fry release ceremonies and Salmon Feast celebrations over the years.

Unfortunately, our success was preceded by the Mount Polley tailings pond breach. The breach sent 10 million cubic metres of water and 4.5 million cubic metres of toxic sludge laced with arsenic, lead, mercury and other dangerous minerals into Polley Lake and Quesnel Lake, endangering crucial salmon runs. It now stands as the single largest environmental disaster in BC history and its full impact will not be known for decades.

Sadly, this disaster could have been averted. Both BC and Canada have weakened environmental regulations and review procedures, and failed to provide adequate enforcement of environmental standards. The federal omnibus bills C-38 and C-45 include reprehensible systems of rubber stamp approvals that shamelessly pander to industry at the tragic risk of environmental devastation.

The latest federal atrocity is Bill C-51. The so called Anti-terrorism Act. This bill fundamentally undermines the right of Indigenous Peoples to exercise, assert and defend our inherent Aboriginal Title and Treaty Rights which are recognized and protected by the Canadian Constitution Act and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Over the past year, in my role as UBCIC President, I joined several peaceful protests against Kinder Morgan's proposed pipeline expansions. On Burnaby Mountain, where they were conducting exploratory drilling, I crossed a police line and was arrested along with twenty four others. If Bill C-51 is implemented, arrests like this will be commonplace.

Our basic right of free expression will be curtailed. Anyone taken into custody could be held based on mere suspicion, without charges, and for longer periods of time. Under Bill C-51, social media monitoring will be pervasive with no significant oversight.

Recently, the Lax Kw'alaams First Nation unanimously rejected a \$1.15 billion LNG deal proposed by a foreign consortium stating: "This is not a money issue: this is environmental and cultural." Under existing legislation, their wishes can be ignored if the federal government deems the project to be in the "economic interest" of Canada. If the Lax Kw'alaams Nation members actively oppose such a decision, they could now be considered "terrorists." Bill C-51 effectively undermines the foundations of Canada and the basic human rights of all its citizens.

Another ongoing grievance with the federal government remains its absolute refusal to confront the problem of murdered and missing Aboriginal women. The question I asked in last year's message to the Nation is even more relevant today:

Why does the federal government ignore this crime against our women and refuse to strike a National Inquiry into this national disgrace and international scandal?

In sharp contrast to the federal government, I would like to acknowledge the international attention and support we have received from the United Nations. In July 2014, the UN human rights investigator, James Anaya, released a 22 page report on Canada that said:

"The numerous initiatives that have been undertaken at the federal, provincial/territorial levels to address the problems faced by Indigenous Peoples have been insufficient."



On March 31, 2015 Victoria Tauli Corpuz, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous People, visited the Okanagan Nation to receive presentations on the issues BC First Nations are facing from AFN National Chief Perry Bellegarde, Chief Robert Louie, the Coalition of Murderer and Missing Women, to name a few, and myself as a follow-up to James Anaya's report.

Much has been accomplished within the Okanagan Nation over the past year, but one issue remains unresolved. Our dispute with the BC government and the Ktunaxa First Nation over land in the Arrow Lakes area has forced us to file a lawsuit challenging the British Columbia treaty process and the province's dishonourable and unlawful conduct.

It is an absolute necessity to protect our land, our language, and our traditions as bequeathed to us by our ancestors. Most of all we must respect each other and ourselves, for we are Syilx, and that can never be taken away from us.

Lim'limpt

Na'isi W'el

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, ONA Chairman

PHOTOS

Previous page: Grand Chief Stewart Phillip addresses those present at the reaffirmation of the Fish Lake Accord.
 This page: ONA Chairman welcomes Victoria Tauli Corpuz to the Okanagan Nation Territory.
 Next page: | ONA Chief and Council quarterly meeting in Westbank, December

Message from the Executive Director

Way"

It is always an exciting time of year to reflect on the past year and look to the year ahead. It is important to take a moment to reflect on our successes and to consider the challenges.

I will take a moment to look at the very last day of the 2014/15 fiscal in which we hosted Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples who listened to presentations about the extraction of resources from our territories at the expense of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. She heard of the federal government, led by Harper, practicing the same discrimination, violation of land and territorial rights and violence as governments in Panama and Peru. The Special Rapporteur listened to the Indigenous women who presented and highlighted the violence against women and the continued call for a national inquiry into the murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls in this country. Having her in our company provided us all with a sense of how our Indigenous Solidarity is paramount at home and abroad.

We are also further reminded of the government's interest in asserting a pan-Indian approach as their efforts to assimilate and have us absorbed into their process. We see this with the reduction of policy and the elimination of First Nations programs and space to support and enhance services for all Aboriginal People.

Anticipating funding cuts as AANDC (education funding and other federal funding envelopes continue to diminish), the ONA administrative

team has worked to tighten up our administrative expenses and we have achieved administrative efficiencies wherever possible. However, we also anticipate that the upcoming year will be full of challenges and opportunities. The administrative team will work collaboratively with each department and ensure that budgets are managed. We will continue to provide the same high standards in financial accountability while delivering efficient and most importantly, culturally sound programming.

Despite these challenges, we continue to move forward with some very exciting initiatives. The Spirit of Syilx Youth Unity Run is celebrating its seventh year. This year we crossed the border into Washington bringing our young people and communities together on both sides of border. The Youth spirit is contagious. Our Youth bring us hope and remind us why we must continue to struggle for Indigenous rights. Many of our Youth at home as well are leading and exploring community initiatives that expand their awareness of the multitude of issues facing our peoples, and getting involved.

The opening of the *ke'epelk' stimi* Hatchery was truly a historical event! The hatchery is a culmination of commitment, dedication and it is a legacy for future generations. This hatchery is a testament to those with vision and what is possible for the Syilx People. We have realized some success of restoring *n'tixw'* (Salmon Chief) to their original habitat and rightful place in our territory and this cannot be underestimated to the power of our unity as Peoples.

The Chief's Executive Council remains committed to the Business Plan and to the Okanagan Governance Development process and the vision these Tribal initiatives embrace – the cultural values of our peoples. This is important work and has a direct impact on strengthening the Nation to meet its vision for access to full Title and Rights including own source revenue. This work is crucial.

Their leadership along with direction from our Elders and Youth underlies and guides the work in Natural Resources, Fisheries and Wellness and it has implications for our continued engagement with government. The CEC continue to provide the mandate and support for Tribal initiatives that will advance the Nation's Title and Rights mandate in a financially accountable manner.

On behalf of the staff, I want to again thank the CEC's continued leadership, vision and commitment. We look forward to continuing our work on behalf of the Nation and serving the people.

This upcoming year will again undoubtedly present challenges but we must continue to fight for our rights. We must stand up not only for ourselves but for all Indigenous People around the world.

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Pauline Terbasket, Executive Director





Title and Rights

TSILHQOT'IN

On June 26, 2014, the Supreme Court of Canada rendered a landmark decision in the Tsilhqot'in Aboriginal title case.

This historic judgement is the first time in Canadian history that a court has declared Aboriginal Title to lands outside of a reserve. The Tsilhqot'in decision of the Supreme Court of Canada affirms that:

- Aboriginal Title is real and meaningful, and can exist over large tracts of land;
- Aboriginal Title includes the vesting of the full beneficial and economic interest in the land to the Aboriginal group;
- Where Aboriginal Title exists, consent of the Aboriginal group is required for the Crown or industry to use that land; and failing consent, the Crown has to meet the test of justifiable infringement; and
- If the Crown authorizes activities on land which are demonstrated to be Aboriginal Title land, projects and permits may be cancelled, and damages owed to the Aboriginal group.

On Sept. 10, 2014, in response to this decision, four key principles were adopted by BC Chiefs for implementation of Tsilhqot'in:

- We acknowledge that all our relationships are based on recognition and implementation of the existence of Indigenous Peoples' inherent title and rights, and pre-confederation, historic and modern treaties, throughout British Columbia.
- We acknowledge that Indigenous systems of governance and laws are essential to the regulation of lands and resources throughout British Columbia.
- We acknowledge the mutual responsibility that all of our government systems shall shift to relationships, negotiations and agreements based on recognition.

- This means we immediately must move to consent-based decision-making and title-based fiscal relations, including revenue sharing, in our relationships, negotiations and agreements.

The Okanagan Nation Alliance's CEC and Councils are committed to continue advancing Syilx title and rights to our ancestral territory, particularly in light of this historic case.

As an initial step forward the ONA hosted a Syilx Nation workshop on implementing the Tsilhqot'in Decision on February 6, 2015 at the Cove in Westbank. The objective of the workshop was to discuss the implications of the recent Tsilhqot'in Supreme Court of Canada decision and how to move forward to implement the decision. The workshop was attended by 72 people from various groups including the Chiefs Executive Council (CEC), the Natural Resource Council (NRC), the Syilx Referral Working Group, community members, elders and youth. Two guest presenters, Dr. Roshan Danesh and Douglas White III, led discussions on the importance of the Tsilhqot'in case and what it means in terms of the legal framework for Aboriginal Title and consultation. The workshop continued with community-focused dialogue with all members present discussing a series of questions in terms of how Syilx people can move implementation forward.



PHOTOS

Okanagan Nation Flag Staffs given to each Chief, made by Arnie Baptiste. | Dallas Good Water and Wendy Hawkes at a Syilx Referrals Working Group meeting.

OKANAGAN NATION ALLIANCE FILE LAWSUIT CHALLENGING BRITISH COLUMBIA TREATY PROCESS

On August 11, 2014 the Okanagan Nation Alliance File Lawsuit Challenging British Columbia Treaty Process. The legal action will directly challenge the much-criticized British Columbia Treaty Process. The case is ongoing.

“The Province doesn’t have the right to simply give away our Title and Rights,” said Grand Chief Phillip. “Overriding our Title and Rights to enter into an agreement with another First Nation is no way to achieve reconciliation.”

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, ONA Chairman

- The ONA’s legal action resulted from the Province’s decision to sign an “Incremental Treaty Agreement” with the Ktunaxa Nation Council to transfer approximately 241 hectares of land near Nakusp in the Arrow Lakes area as part of an early transfer of lands that will form part of a final Treaty
- The Province did not consult with the ONA before signing the agreement, despite the fact that the area includes important village sites, hunting grounds, and cultural heritage sites for the ONA communities and their members
- The ONA made the decision to file the legal action after attempting for over a year to resolve the issue directly with the Province

BC HYDRO – OKANAGAN NATION ENDURING RELATIONSHIP

In 2011 the Okanagan Nation Alliance, along with Upper Nicola Band, signed a final agreement for the Interior to Lower Mainland (ILM) project. This agreement is also referred to as the “Enduring Relationship”. In order to support the collective momentum and leadership demonstrated by the CEC, an Energy Executive Council (EEC) was established. The EEC provides direction to BC Hydro in regards to its projects and activities within the territory.

Over the past year, there have been many accomplishments and milestones achieved. Clear direction was provided by the CEC to the Okanagan Nation Energy Technical Working Group to address BC Hydro’s numerous projects and activities with a deliberate and principled approach. Engaging communities and creating relevant opportunities and initiatives are top priority.

In December 2014, the CEC approved the ONA-BCH Engagement model, an Energy Executive Council, and CEC Energy Lead to ensure our Title and Rights are upheld and supported. The CEC energy lead is Chief Jonathan Kruger.

The EEC meets on a regular basis to discuss the status of the relationship with BC Hydro, assess current projects, and determine the overall goals and priorities upon which to guide the process. The EEC continues to ensure that the relationship that BC Hydro enjoys with the Okanagan Nation continues to evolve and improve. Further, the EEC guides the Enduring Relationship and all BC Hydro activity and projects within Okanagan Territory.

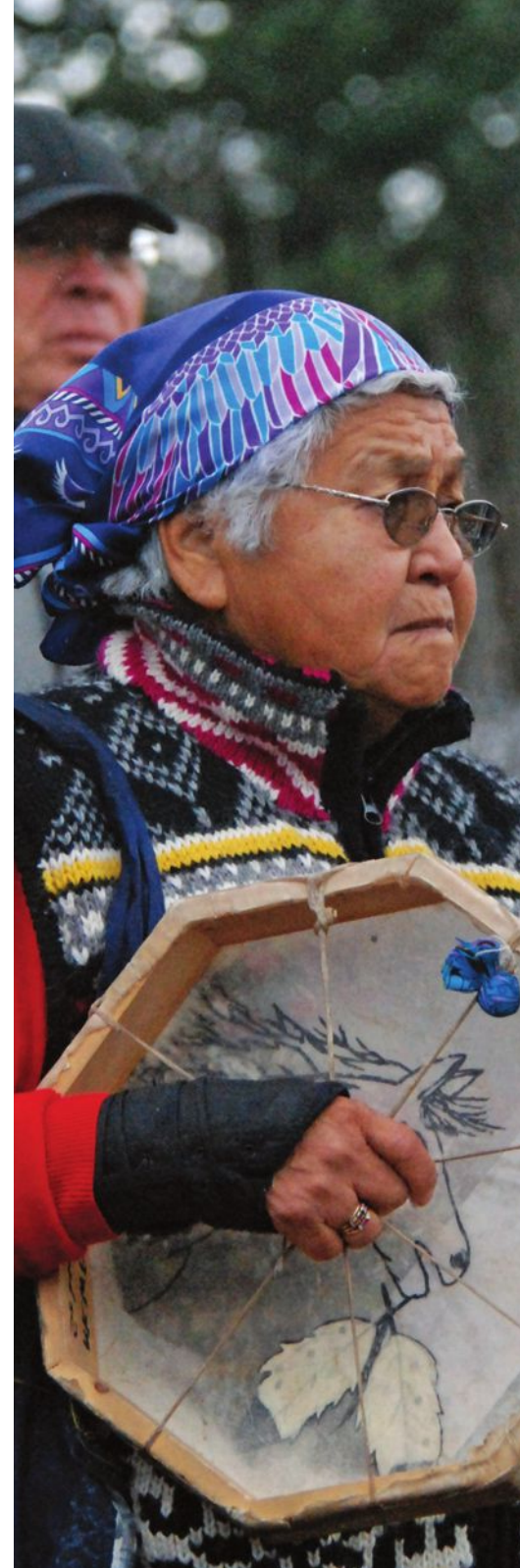
Other duties of the EEC include:

- Conducts quarterly meetings with high level BC Hydro executives ensuring the evolving relationship is on track.
- Participates in an annual Oversight Committee Meeting between Okanagan Nation leadership, the CEO and top executives of BC Hydro
- Guides policy development to address energy matters within Okanagan Territory
- Provides ongoing direction and oversight to the Okanagan Nation Energy Technical Working Group

HIGHLIGHTS

- Enduring Relationship Engagement Model endorsed and implemented
- Wilsey Dam sediment load release postponed until summer of 2016 to allow proper and meaningful Okanagan Nation review
- A technical team has been established to assist the Okanagan Nation Energy Executive Council
- Two Okanagan Nation project review committees established for the Rev 6 and West Kelowna transmission line projects

Approximately 53% of BC Hydro’s power is generated within Okanagan Nation Territory. The large majority of generation occurs within the Columbia River watershed with numerous transmission projects throughout the entire territory.



PHOTOS

Next page:
Elder Sara McLeod of the Upper Nicola Band. | Chief Byron Louis and Chief Harvey McLeod blanket Chief Shane Gottfriedson in recognition of the Fish Lake Accord reaffirmation ceremony.

HEALTH GOVERNANCE

Most notably within Health Governance is that BC First Nations Chiefs gave the First Nation Health Authority (FNHA) a mandate for health but in the last year that mandate has expanded to include housing, child welfare, education and the environment. We are faced with internal conflict as the majority of Nations and Chiefs support this approach. We continue to struggle to balance a need to be engaged in Health and Health planning with a need to challenge this governance approach that devolves fiduciary responsibilities from the federal government. This work should not be at the expense of our Community Health programs nor the Tribal initiatives and approaches.

Therefore, we seek alternatives and more efficient models of health service delivery so there remain resources available. As we work to develop these strategic priorities it is made clear by the ONA CEC that our Title and Rights must remain paramount.

With the transition of health services away from Health Canada to the First Nations Health Authority, the Okanagan Nation’s CEC and Wellness Committee have continued to push to ensure the process remains Nation-based and community driven. We wish to see health services transformed to reflect our indigenous knowledge surrounding wellness which state that health exists within a broader circle which includes not only the individual, but the health of our families, our communities and our land.

OKIB Council member Allan Louis is the CEC representative on the FNHA Interior Region Nation Executive (IRNE). WFN Council member Mic Werstuik is the alternate. Louis provides Syilx input at a table with the other six Interior Nations. He was also successful in being selected to be one of the three Interior seats on the provincial First Nations Health Council.

The ONA CEC will continue to provide the oversight and direction as ONA continues to coordinate regional activities and support local initiatives of the communities to better enhance health services, access and program delivery.

CHILDREN AND FAMILY GOVERNANCE

The Okanagan Nation Alliance called for the Ministry of Children and Families to recognize the rights of Aboriginal Children and Families. The Indigenous Approaches process was created to meet the need for Aboriginal communities to strategize and plan for services for Aboriginal children and families. This process has resulted in direct service that works for Aboriginal families and has resulted in improved outcomes for Aboriginal Children and Families in Okanagan Territory.

This work has gone a long way towards creating coordination and partnerships to deal with generations of failed policies that have harmed generations of Aboriginal children and families and yet it was gutted with no explanation or rationale.

The successes and strong partnerships built have shown that a new era can be realized in the service to Aboriginal Children and Families, that there is a solution to the over-representation of our children in the child welfare system.

“The partnerships built have shown us that there are good people on all levels who want to see Aboriginal Peoples have healthy communities. The barrier is the system; it is time for a change in that system.”

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, ONA Chairman

The ONA has witnessed as Canada has withdrawn from the delegated agencies model. They began last year by withdrawing from our local processes and they are now essentially retreating from delegated agencies. It seems they have just realized that child welfare is not within the AANDC mandate. Meanwhile, the community-based principles, in which our peoples and communities provided the guidance and support all these years, remains suspended as our Chiefs lobby the federal and provincial governments to support our process, while our Enabling Proposal and Syilx Health plan remain unfunded.

FISH LAKE ACCORD

On October 15 Chief Harvey McLeod, Syilx Upper Nicola Band, and Chief Shane Gottfriedson, *Tk'emlúps te Secwepemc*, reaffirmed the Fish Lake Accord and our commitment to each other's Nations on the agreement made back in the late 1700s. An agreement on our shared territory between the two Nations and that shared territory is Fish Lake.

“We want to continue to live up to the agreement of our ancestors and continue to acknowledge the relationship with the Syilx and the Secwepemc and further acknowledge at the same time an agreement with the Upper Nicola and Kamloops Indian Band because, this relationship goes back a long ways back and there was an understanding and protocol on how we were going to work and engage with each other.”

Chief Harvey McLeod

The Upper Nicola Band hosted the ceremony and all of the Okanagan Nation, the Nlaka'pamux Nation and the St'át'imc Nation were invited because one way or another, all Nations are intertwined in family. The youth were included in this ceremony to witness and ensure that they carry on this relationship and understanding. A horse transfer was completed as part of a promise that was made in 2000, and Chief Gottfriedson gifted a head dress to Chief McLeod in recognition of this commemoration.

PHOTOS

Fish Lake Accord reaffirmation ceremony.

Next page:

Councillor Wallace Michel runs with one of the youth from UNB Syilx Health Forum. | Grand Chief Stewart Phillip and Chief Byron Louis wearing their ONA beaded medallions in commemoration of the Hatchery opening, along with OKIB Councillor Alan Louis. | March CEC Meeting at the WFN Elders hall.



CEC 2014

APRIL

- Wanapum Dam Tour
- Enowkin'wix™ Process RDOS (Southern Bands), En'owkin Centre, Penticton
- Health Sub-Committee Meeting
- ON Fisheries Skaha Program Workshop, Penticton
- ONA SPECIAL CEC | Legal Strategic Meeting, ONA Chiefs Gathering Place Boardroom
- Natural Resources Council Meeting, ONA Chiefs Gathering Place, Westbank BC
- ON Fisheries Skaha Program Workshop, Penticton

MAY

- RBD Value It Conference, Two Eagles Golf Course
- ONA SPECIAL CEC | Health and Child & Family, Head of the Lake Hall, Vernon
- BC Aboriginal Business Workshop, The Cove Lakeside Resort, Westbank
- Health Sub-Committee Meeting
- ONA CEC | Special IFPA Meeting, ONA Chiefs Gathering Place, Westbank
- Chinook Ceremony, Sugar Lake, Cherryville
- ONA CEC Meeting, ONA Chiefs Gathering Place, Westbank
- Okanagan Traditional Games & Sports Day, Sen Pok Chin School, Oliver
- ONA SPECIAL CEC & KNC Joint Meeting, ONA Chiefs Gathering Place Boardroom, Westbank
- ONA CEC Meeting, ONA Chiefs Gathering Place, Westbank
- Natural Resources Council Meeting, ONA Chiefs Gathering Place, Westbank

JUNE

- Wellness Committee Quarterly, Penticton Indian Band, Penticton
- ONA SPECIAL CEC | BCH & Revenue Sharing Meeting, ONA Chiefs Gathering Place, Westbank
- Natural Resources Council Meeting, ONA Chiefs Gathering Place, Westbank

JULY

- BC Elders Gathering, South Okanagan Events Centre, Penticton
- ONA SPECIAL CEC | Audit Review, Penticton
- MCFD Minister Cadieux met with ONA Chair Grand Chief Stewart Phillip and Jennifer Houde, DFYH Services Manager
- Health Sub-Committee Meeting
- ONA Energy CEC Lead (BCH & Kinder Morgan) Conference Call
- Natural Resources Council Meeting, ONA Chiefs Gathering Place, Westbank
- ONA Annual General Assembly, UNB Hosted, Douglas Lake, Merritt

AUGUST

- Natural Resources Council Meeting, ONA Chiefs Gathering Place, Westbank

SEPTEMBER

- ONA SPECIAL CEC Session, ONA Chiefs Gathering Place, Westbank
- Wellness Committee Quarterly, Osoyoos Indian Band, Osoyoos
- Special Chiefs Executive Council Meeting, Browns Creek
- ONA Hatchery Grand Opening, Penticton
- Natural Resources Council Meeting, ONA Chiefs Gathering Place, Westbank
- BC All Chiefs Gathering with Premier Christy Clark and cabinet

OCTOBER

- MOU Planning Conference Call
- Syilx Health Assembly, The Cove Lakeside Resort, Westbank
- Fish Lake Accord, UNB Host, Merritt
- Chiefs Executive Council Meeting, ONA Chiefs Gathering Place, Penticton
- ONA SPECIAL CEC | Meeting with Minister of MoFLNR, ONA Chiefs Gathering Place, Westbank

NOVEMBER

- FNHC - Interior Region Caucus, Coast Capri Hotel, Kelowna
- MoE Minister's Invitation - Land Use Objectives South Okanagan, En'owkin Centre, Penticton
- ONA SPECIAL CEC | Meeting with Federal Government, UBCIC Boardroom, Vancouver

DECEMBER

- ONA CEC Quarterly Meeting, ONA Chiefs Gathering Place, Westbank

CEC 2015

JANUARY

- Wellness Committee - Strategic Planning
- Meeting with BC Hydro - NTSA
- FAO-MSU 2015 Global Conference Panel, Rome, Italy

FEBRUARY

- Wellness Committee - Strategic Planning
- Band Operated School Conference - UNB

Community, Capacity, Collaboration

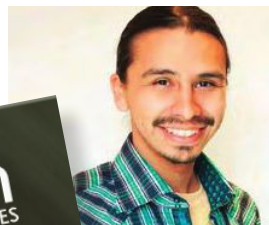
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

- *Nsyilxcen* Lullaby CD
- Syilx Adaptation of *Ages and Stages Questionnaire*
- Syilx Adaptation of *Moe the Mouse* speech and language tool
- Traditional Parenting Curriculum Development
- Fisheries Salmon Series Posters: Chinook, Coho, Rainbow & Steelhead Trout, Sockeye & Kokanee
- *k̓c̓w̓alk̓'st̓im̓* Hatchery Interpretive Signage
- Language and Culture Promotion
 - *Nsyilxcen* Language Shirts for under 10 year olds
 - Salista Syilx Pride Shirts and Hats
 - Language Bracelets
 - Well-being Shirts



COMMUNITY TRAINING, CAPACITY BUILDING

- Wraparound in Indian Country, 25 participants
- Syilx Youth Governance, 12 youth
- Darien Thira – Community is the Medicine training, 33 participants
- Youth Mental Health think tank – engaging hard to engage youth, 35 participants
- RNV brought 10 youth to Colville Confederated Tribes Power of Hope camp
- Freedom, Joy & Maintaining Balance Workshop with Colby Tootoosis
- Emotional Intelligence and Conscience Communication Workshops with Colby Tootoosis
- Wab Kinew presentation, 125 participants
- Power of Hope – train the trainer youth camp, 18 participants
- Tsilhqot'in Decision Workshop
- Stream to Sea program, 9 elementary schools and 1 learning center participated
- Fisheries and wildlife inventory training with the Osoyoos Indian Band
- Numerous cultural activities and mentorships
- Water Workshop in the Arrow Lakes
- Syilx Water Leaders, 31 participants



PARTNERSHIPS

LOU WITH IHA

In 2012 the ONA signed a Letter of Understanding (LOU) with Interior Health Authority (IHA). The ONA and IHA have developed a comprehensive work plan to ensure movement on community priorities, with mental health remaining a top priority. Local community tables were created to assist in local planning.

EN'OWKIN CENTRE

The ONA CEC is committed to the preservation and practice of Syilx language and culture and collaborates with En'owkin on various projects. This year, we worked together to gather Upper Columbia place names, identify cultural heritage values at *Aks'á'at* (White Lake area), conduct a ceremony for the South Selkirk Caribou herd, gather TEK information about Grizzly Bears and White Sturgeon, and do a reburial ceremony for *ses'awses sq̓lx'w'scim* (ancestor bones) at *sm'laip* (Syringa Provincial Park).

CUYSTWI INDIGENOUS WELLNESS PROJECT

This is a community collaboration that looks at health promotion and suicide prevention. This interactive on-line training is in the form of a quest that sends youth through a series of activities that are both on line and within their community based youth groups. There were a total of 21 participants from the age of 10-13 years old who participated.

TREATY TALK'S VIDEO: PADDLING THE COLUMBIA RIVER FROM SOURCE TO SEA FOR PEOPLE AND SALMON.

"With looming changes in the Columbia River Treaty, we explore the possibility of fish passage and vitality of a functioning ecosystem. This documentary highlights the positive efforts of Columbia River citizens who are working to restore historic salmon runs above the Grand Coulee Dam."

This video was done in collaboration with Voyages of Rediscovery, The Upper Columbia United Tribes (UCUT), Canadian Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fisheries Commission, and the Columbia Institute for Water Policy. <https://vimeo.com/voyagesofrediscovery>

BASIN STORIES FILM SERIES

For several years, the Okanagan Nation has been advocating for greater inclusion of Indigenous voices in communications about the Columbia Basin and the impacts of the Columbia River Treaty. In April 2013, the Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) produced a film series called *Basin Stories*, exploring the lives of Basin residents before, during, and after the construction of the Columbia River Treaty dams. One segment is called *Moving Lives: First Nations* and it gives the story from the First Nations perspective. The ONA reviewed *Basin Stories* and expressed concerns about the film series in general and *Moving Lives: First Nations* in particular. The ONA is continuing to work with CBT to modify the series to better reflect the perspectives of the Syilx people, including the *sn̓syckst*. NR researchers assisted in conducting additional interviews with 6 members, reviewing scripts and making recommendations to modify the film series. The work is ongoing.

KNOW YOUR FISHERMAN - SLOW FISH VIDEO IN COLLABORATION WITH SLOW FOOD CANADA

The Slow Fish film evolved organically as the story of Canada's fisher people, from the Pacific to the Atlantic, including an inland fishery success story in the Okanagan and an urban piece from Toronto. Every single story expresses a desire to manage this largely wild food source in an ecologically sustainable way by strengthening the bonds between consumers, producers, and aquatic ecosystems.

Slow Fish Canada video was produced by Kevin Kossowan, member of the Edmonton convivia. http://www.slowfood.com/slowfish/pagine/eng/blog/dettaglio.lasso?id_edit=674



PHOTOS

Previous page:
Well-being shirts | Colby Tootoosis (courtesy Conscious Leadership Coaching) | Hatchery interpretive signage | *Nsyilxcen* Lullaby CD
This page: Virgil Seymour, CCT: courtesy *Treaty Talks* video | Power of Hope Youth Camp in Omak | Shelly Boyd, Inchelium Language House and Pauline Terbasket ONA Executive Director sharing words at the Kettle Falls Salmon Ceremony. | Wab Kinew (courtesy CBC) | Victoria Tauli Corpuz and Dr. Jeanette Armstrong, Research Chair

BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE BURSARY

In 2006, FortisBC established the *Building a Better Future* Okanagan Nation financial award for post secondary students who are committed to building a better future for themselves and their community through education.

The bursary program is open to all Okanagan Nation members who are post-secondary students enrolled at a recognized university or college on a full-time basis, registered in a minimum two-year academic program and are maintaining a 2.5 GPA and are attached by ancestry and identity to the Okanagan Nation.

The 2014 recipients:



Reba DeGuevara, member of the Westbank First Nation currently attending the University of British Columbia majoring in First Nations studies with a goal to pursue a law degree.

Mourning Dove Hall is a member of the Osoyoos Indian Band whom received her teaching certificate from Nicola Valley Institute of Technology. She plans on attending UBCO in the future to complete Bachelors in education.

"I strongly believe that education allows for Indigenous Peoples to further ourselves in a time where we must carry ourselves in a modern sense but also with great regard to who we are inherently as nations."



Mourning Dove Hall and Grand Chief Stewart Phillip





Events and Community Engagement

POWER OF HOPE CAMP | APRIL 25-27

54 participants were hosted at the Silver Lake Retreat in Peachland for a train the trainer youth camp. This was a combined creation of safe spaces for youth to share, learn and do activities aimed to open and inspire the Youth and Staff. The event was collaborative between Okanagan Nation Alliance's R'Native Voice, Power of Hope, and IndigenEYEZ.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE/CONSCIENCE COMMUNICATION | MAY 13 & MAY 16

Hosted on May 13th at the Osoyoos Indian Band, May 16th at Westbank First Nation. The workshop looked at how emotions play a role in our everyday decisions. Opening into freedom through emotion. Understanding how people move through emotions differently revealing predictable behavioral pattern.

SOCKEYE FRY RELEASE | MAY 21

A ceremony led by Calyx for the Sockeye fry was held and they were released along the Penticton Channel as part of the Sockeye Reintroduction Program. There were 12 schools that witnessed/participated in the ceremony and over 350 participants total. Activities were hosted at the PIB ball field with a luncheon and give-away at the En'owkin Centre.

SPIRIT OF SYILX UNITY RUN | JUNE 5-8

170 participants ran from Westbank, BC to Omak, Washington to bring awareness to suicide and violence within the Nation. This year we crossed the border into Washington bringing our young people and communities together on both sides of border.

KETTLE FALLS AND CASTLEGAR SALMON CEREMONIES | JUNE 12-13

This was the 4th year the Inchelium Language and Culture Association, Colville Tribes and Okanagan Nation Alliance planned a joint Columbia River Salmon Ceremony to honour and pray for the salmon. Approximately 90 people attended the Kettle Falls ceremony and 50 people attended the Castlegar ceremony.

38TH ANNUAL BC ELDERS GATHERING | JULY 6-9

The Penticton Indian Band hosted Elders and participants from around the province for the 38th Annual BC Elders Gathering. Vera and Emery Gabriel were the queen and king of this event, representing the Okanagan Nation in welcoming over 3000 Elders and people to the territory.

ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY | JULY 30-31

Upper Nicola Band (UNB) hosted the ONA Annual General Assembly at Nkwala School. The theme of this year's event was *Light our Path in a Good Way, So We Can Find Our Purpose in Leadership*. Highlights included a mountain horse race and honouring past UNB Chiefs. Over 150 people attended this two day event.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP GATHERING | JULY 30-31

ONA hosted over 50 youth at Spaxomin in conjunction with the ONA AGA. Numerous workshops included: *Bridging the Gap* : discussing the relationship between Syilx knowledge and Western Science; *Being Swift About Water*: become stronger water and water aware; *Intergenerational Wellness*; *Sea to Stream*: restoration and sustainability of our Salmon and fish species; *Living In Effort to Be a Balanced Medicine Wheel Being*: in order for our communities and nation to become sustainable, we must work at becoming sustainable within ourselves; Community project: landscaping for the Nkwala School.

kt'ep'alk'stim' **HATCHERY GRAND OPENING | SEPTEMBER 20**

The Okanagan Nation Alliance hosted the Grand Opening of the Hatchery in Penticton. Okanagan Nation community members, dignitaries, the public and media were invited to witness and celebrate this historic event. The 25,000 sq. ft. Hatchery is part of the Sockeye reintroduction program, a long term program to restore the historical range of Sockeye in the Upper Okanagan watershed, Okanagan Lake, and Skaha Lake systems.



OKANAGAN NATION SALMON FEAST *suxa'niwlam* | SEPTEMBER 19-21

The Salmon Feast continues to be one of the highlight events for the Okanagan Nation with more people coming out each year. This year over 500 people attended the 3- day celebration. This event takes place the 3rd weekend in September at *sx'ex'nitk'* (Okanagan Falls Provincial Park). The event brought together people from around the nation to celebrate and honour the Salmon Chief and the Sacredness of the River. This year's logo was designed by Evelyn M. Alec of the Penticton Indian Band. *Lim limpt to x'yulxalqas* and all those that came out to pray.

Stick game champions were Moonlite Supernault, Rosy, and Kodi Gabriel. On Saturday there were 2 canoes that went out on the water to pray, and approximately 34 runners and walkers for the Salmon walk/run. Entertainers for the evening events included Jim Boyd, Herman Edwards, Csetkwe Manuel and other Okanagan Nation singers. On Sunday Wab Kinew attended and spoke. Children's activities were held and the feast and ceremony took place.

WAB KINEW PRESENTATION | SEPTEMBER 22

125 participants came out to Westbank First Nation Gymnasium to listen to Wab Kinew present on *Igniting the Creative Fire from Within*. "Education is the key to the vision of building a country where all people from around the world can live together in harmony and understanding." Wab Kinew

SYILX NATION HEALTH ASSEMBLY | OCTOBER 9

MISSION STATEMENT: *Reclaiming and restoring Syilx ways of being and knowing (worldview) through the development of holistic wellness programs and services grounded in a Syilx-centered framework.*

The Syilx Nation Health Assembly on was attended by Chiefs and councillors from the Nation. Guests included First Nations Health Authority representatives: Joe Gallagher, Chief Executive Officer, Richard Jock, Vice President, Policy, Planning and Strategic Services, Joseph Mendez, Vice President, Innovation and Information Management Services, John Mah, Vice President, First Nation Health Benefits and Lisa Montgomery-Reid, Regional Director. Other guests from Interior Health Authority were: Brad Anderson, Director Aboriginal Health and Shawna Nevdooff, Aboriginal Health Practice lead.

FREEDOM, JOY & MAINTAINING BALANCE | OCTOBER 14-15

Over 20 people attended this workshop presented by Colby Tootooosis. This was a practical 2-day workshop sharing insight and tools for authentically revealing a peace of mind, joyful heart and a sense of purpose.

SALONE del GUSTO, TERRA MADRE | OCTOBER 20-24 TURIN, ITALY

Terra Madre provided an international venue to share our Salmon Recovery story as Indigenous Peoples, and inspire other groups around the world. We were able to share on an international stage the importance of Sockeye as a traditional Indigenous food source for the Syilx People. The ONA was represented by Pauline Terbasket and Collette Louie.

ONA WELLNESS FORUM | NOVEMBER 24 & 25

There were 85 participants from communities throughout the territory. The participants heard updates from ONA Wellness programs, and participated in planning for programs and training workshops such as *Healing from Grief and Loss, Chemical Addictions, Interpersonal Conflict and Health Transformation.*

TSILHQOT'IN INFORMATION SESSION | FEBRUARY 6

An informative session that provided an in-depth understanding of the Supreme Court of Canada's Tsilhqot'in decision. Hosted at the Cove Lakeside Resort in Westbank. This meeting brought together member bands to listen to a number of presentations from Mandel Pinder and to discuss as a Nation the implications and next steps.

PHOTOS

Previous page: Upper Nicola youth look on at the AGA Horse Races held in Spaxomin.
This page: Vera and Emery Gabriel the 38th Annual, Elders Gathering Queen and King (Courtesy of the 38th Annual BC Elders Gathering) | Syilx Jr Girls | Win at the 2015 Jr All Native Basketball Tournament, Nanaimo. | Chief Robert Louie thanking the UN Special Rapporteur | Chief Clarence Louis and runners, Unity Run
Next page: Michelle Mesmain of Slow Food International with Okanagan Sockeye | Penticton Youth: AGA Stick Games | Suzanne Johnson shares nutrition information with Gloria Alexis at the 2014 Wellness Forum. | Youth and participants thanking Wab Kinew for sharing his knowledge. | Upper Nicola past Chiefs were honoured by the community at the 2014 ONA AGA.

SLOW FOOD PRESIDIA OKANAGAN SOCKEYE TOUR | FEBRUARY 23 - 28

The ONA invested both time and resources into touring Michele Mesmain and Marc Griebel through our traditional Territory. This 5-day tour enabled us to showcase our territory and communities to Ms. Mesmain, who will be acting as an international advocate and networker for the Okanagan Sockeye. This exhibition also acted as a great opportunity for community engagement, informing many of our Chiefs, Knowledge Keepers, youth, and other community members about our work with Slow Food, and provided them with the opportunity to engage with this work as well.

SYILX YOUTH RETREAT | FEBRUARY 28

A youth retreat was hosted and attended by 14 Youth and Youth workers from our Nation. Creative facilitation was utilized to develop ideas, and vision in regard to Syilx Governance. The session was facilitated by IndigenEYEZ.

OKANAGAN NATION WOMEN'S RETREAT | MARCH 10

24 women came together to discuss issues affecting them in the community. Statements were made that residential school is still impacting our youth, and the Elders present challenged the community to "step up" to stop violence and abuse in communities. Also, the concept of *St'ett'att* was shared by the Elders present when discussion included our Nationhood and future. The meaning of this word shared by them is *Responsibility, the True Way Our True Walk, Going Forward in That Direction.* This was so moving to be a part of – that we should put important things on the table to discuss.

ELDER AND YOUTH GATHERING | MARCH 27-29

This is one of the key ONA-hosted Nation gatherings that brings together Elders and Youth to build a relationship through the day's activities and to share stories. Elders and Youth engage in meaningful interactions/discussions and are out on the land. This year 80 participants came together at Rock Ridge Resort near Princeton. There were representatives from all 7 member communities who participated in a number of activities, including water, language, and hunting workshops, and site visit to Ochre bluffs.

VICTORIA TAULI-CORPUZ, UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES | MARCH 31

This event, that took place at Sensisysten in Westbank, came at a very significant time in our respective Nation's history. We had an opportunity to formally bring forth, to the United Nations, the difficulties that the Indigenous Peoples in British Columbia are facing today, which are many. This was an opportunity for organizations and individuals to share, first hand, a few words on the challenges and issues that we are facing, as Indigenous Peoples, not only for BC, but for Canada.





Wellness

The Wellness and Safety of our Children, Women, Families and communities remain paramount. Therefore with the guidance and support of the Wellness Committee which is Nation-based the Wellness Initiatives will continue to evolve to ensure their relevance and success to create healthy, safe communities for all our Nation members.

The Wellness department, and its Nation-based initiatives, continues to be guided by the Chiefs Executive Council mandated ONA Wellness Committee. The Wellness Committee is made up of the Health and Social Development directors of the seven member communities. This committee meets at least bimonthly on health, early childhood, children and family topics as well as provides guidance and direction to the wellness programs.

The Wellness team works to provide quality services in a holistic integrated manner to the member communities including direct service, capacity building, training opportunities and resource development and sharing.

The Wellness Department is implementing the newly developed Quality Assurance model this year. This provides standards for service and evaluation methods for Wellness programs. This ensures programs are effective, responsive and developed as per community and family needs. Quality assurance shows commitment to building a culture of continual quality review and revisions.

The work that is undertaken is based on guiding principles and goals that ONA stays focused on to ensure we have strong roots with which to carry out our work for the people.

PHOTO
Dyawen Louis, Nickie Joe and Kenzie Manuel overlooking Omak Lake

OUR ROOTS OUR COMPASS

The work that is undertaken is based on guiding principles and goals that ONA stays focused on to ensure we have strong roots with which to carry out our work for the people.

The work includes:

Traditional Wellness: develop a Syilx Traditional Wellness Framework to complement all of our wellness programming and work to ensure Cultural Safety

Strong Governance/Process: develop data management options to ensure evidence-based decision making

Capacity Building: where ever possible, to train and mentor Syilx people

Sustainability: explore options to ensure funding for services are secure, streamlined and predictable, moving away from proposal-based funding and reducing reporting requirements

For the 2014-2015 year the ONA Wellness committee has remained focused on Nation Wellness priorities identified by communities in the 2010 Syilx Nation Health Plan and 2012 Syilx Child and Family Plan. The updated priorities and goals below have been identified by the Wellness Committee and CEC in February 2015.

CHILD AND FAMILY VISION

Aboriginal Early Childhood Development (AECD)

- Increase and streamline funding sources for AECD
- Increase availability and accessibility for child care
- Child care is a poverty-reduction mechanism
- Implementing the Syilx Early Childhood Development Framework
- Increased assessments and therapeutic support for children with special needs
- Increased capacity in Aboriginal Early Childhood Education
- Implementing an integrated service delivery model

Children and Youth

- Children and Families must always remain a priority
- Implementing the Syilx Child and Family Plan
- Increased programming for youth ages 7-12 and 18-29
- Implement our Syilx Youth Mental Health Strategy

MENTAL WELLNESS

- Increase access to mental wellness services (i.e. through a better referral process)
- Increase awareness of mental health and its manifestations in our communities
- Develop Syilx traditional/cultural solutions to complement pharmaceutical/clinical options
- Develop after-care services for community members returning from rehabilitation/detox
- Increase services for youth struggling with mental health

PRIMARY CARE

- Increase coordination of services to ensure holistic care (i.e. primary care coordinators)
- Increase accessibility to mainstream services through a stronger and more localized LOU

ELDERS CARE

- Education on how to treat our Syilx Elders with respect and compassion
- Increased professional staff on-reserve to help Elders
- Support programming, such as visiting or community garden programs, to ensure Elders are not lonely and remain a vibrant part of our communities
- Create long-term solutions for their care, such as culturally-appropriate nursing homes

PHOTO

Syilx Youth Running through Main Street, Loomis Washington





SERVING THE PEOPLE

The ONA Wellness Team remains committed to focus on connecting with communities, our Youth building capacity and providing mentorship and training for Youth workers. This collaboration will demonstrate the shared responsibility we have for all our Youth to ensure no one is left behind.

FAMILY DECISION MAKING (FDM) PROGRAM

The program remains stable this year with a FDM Team Lead and 2.5 FDM staff.

- 48 Family Decision Making Circles were conducted
- 19 Follow up Circles
- 206 Family members and supports participated
- 38 Family Plans were developed
- 19 Alternate placements were found for children
- 24 Plans of care for children and youth were developed

R'NATIVE VOICE PROGRAM

We had some new faces join the program in Upper Nicola and Okanagan Indian Band. We delivered program in 5 out of the 7 communities. In Upper Similkameen we continued with our Family Nights. Youth Elder Retreat was a huge success this year our Youth and Elders thoroughly enjoyed the event.

- RNative Voice has provided a means for our Youth to build relationships, as well as a sense of Nationhood
- The program provides Syilx cultural knowledge and perspectives
- Had new Youth participants
- RNV program delivered in 5 of 7 communities with 93 Youth participants overall
- Hosted Power of Hope camp
- Training and network development for all community youth workers
- RNV brought 10 Youth to Colville Confederated Tribes Power of Hope camp

OKANAGAN NATION RESPONSE TEAM

Over the last year the Okanagan Nation Response Team (ONRT) focussed much of their time supporting communities through trauma, providing prevention in relation to suicide and suicide behaviours and developing team member capacity. The team faithfully travelled to communities throughout the Nation offering their time, expertise and support. Each team member had a lot of opportunity to utilize their individual skill base to Youth, adults and Elders. All team members have increased their confidence and ability to take lead roles in crisis response, debriefing and prevention delivery.

The fifteen ONRT Team members received training on three separate occasions which covered suicide/trauma assessment, ONRT roles & responsibilities, ethical responsibilities, program duties & responsibilities, *captik'li*, suicide signs & symptoms refresher and team building.

- 15 team members received training
- 3 on separate occasions

ONRT responded to:

- 6 tragic death
- 5 violence
- 6 suicide attempts
- 5 suicide ideation
- 34 response follow-up/referrals
- 1 suicide completion
- 9 debriefing (individual and group)

Community Delivery:

- Grief & Loss:
 - 9 OKIB participants
 - 12 OIB participants
- Suicide Awareness:
 - 120 Nation Youth
 - 13 OKIB Band School

ABORIGINAL CHILD & YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH WELLNESS PROGRAM

- Worked with 27 children/youth from the South Okanagan
- Children and Youth main issues were anxiety, depression, ADHD, FASD, Grief/Loss, Trauma, PTSD
- Organized Wraparound in Indian Country Training, 25 participants
- Organized and delivered 4 groups for children/youth with mental health issues

ABORIGINAL EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

- Completed 14 site visits, supporting early years programs and staff
- Developed culturally appropriate adaptations to early childhood tools, *Moe the Mouse* and *Ages and Stages Questionnaire* and shared with communities.
- *Nsyilxcən Lullaby* CD developed and shared with communities

PHOTOS

Previous page: Mourning Dove Hall and her son singing for the runners at the Unity Run.

This page: Girls zip lining at the Youth Elder gathering. | Women's Retreat | Unity Run participants are greeted at the USA border. | Youth wearing the Salista t-shirts at the ONA AGA. | Syilx baby.



Natural Resources

The Natural Resource department staff along with our Natural Resource Council continued to be very busy this past year working on many diverse projects and issues facing the Nation. These projects build our Nation's capacity and involvement with matters that concern our stewardship and responsibilities over our lands and resources.

One of the main focuses this past year has been the water strategy, which is a long-standing Chief's Executive Council directive designed to improve and enhance Syilx water governance.

In addition we are also working on several research and wildlife projects. As part of moving these important projects forward we continue to build working relationships with provincial government biologists to help explore and build upon a necessary shared decision-making process for wildlife and ecosystem management in Syilx territory.

NATURAL RESOURCES COUNCIL

The purpose of the Natural Resource Council (NRC) is to work collectively on all major natural resource issues to address impacts, benefits, and management concerns, while reinforcing the Okanagan Nation's collective interests on our traditional territory and related waterways.

The membership of the NRC includes two representatives (one political and one technical) from each of the Okanagan member communities, a Traditional Ecological Knowledge representative, and a representative of the Okanagan Nation Alliance.

Councillor Mike DeGuevara, Westbank First Nation, and Chad Eneas have been co-chairing the council. The Council is working on the development of standards and policies for resource management which was tasked to them by the ONA Chiefs Executive Council. These standards and policies will provide the necessary capacity for the ONA and member communities to develop and implement strategies to strengthen land use decision making and resource management. This work is ongoing.





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xā[?]xā[?] knaqs ck^wisk^wsts
y[?]at a[?] cx^wi^wait.*

RECOGNIZE WATER AS A SACRED ENTITY
AND RELATIVE THAT CONNECTS ALL LIFE.

OUR SYILX WATER

i[?] k^wu^w syilx i[?] siw[?]k^wta

In July 2014, the Assembly endorsed the Syilx Water Declaration that was put forth by the Natural Resources Council, which will be a living document. Syilx communities have always recognized and nurtured a strong connection toward *siw[?]k^w* (water).

“The Okanagan Nation has accepted the unique responsibility bestowed upon us by the Creator to serve for all time as protectors of the lands and waters in our territories, so that all living things return to us regenerated. When we take care of the land and water, the land and water takes care of us. This is our law.”

(Syilx Water Declaration excerpt/AGA Res. No. #3/2013)

The Syilx Water Strategy will support the Declaration and will assist the Nations’ efforts to address numerous water issues and describe how to properly protect, and manage water use and allocation in a respectful and holistic way for both Syilx communities and the broader community.

The water strategy will be accompanied by organizing various activities and partnerships to support the strategy which will be initiated by a focused Water Strategy meeting in 2015. One of the main events for the upcoming year will be to host a partnership event for World Rivers Day. All of this activity will be culminating in a Syilx Water Strategy conference, taking place in October, 2015. This multi-stakeholder conference will bring together Syilx leaders, government officials, scientists, industry representatives and water advocates to begin a dialogue on Okanagan water management, and to explore how to institute this strategy both locally and regionally.

Ultimately this work provides an opportunity to articulate the Syilx vision on land management, land stewardship, land protection and the Syilx ways of protecting and respecting *tmix^w*.

PHOTO
White Lake





WILDLIFE

HUNTING AND WILDLIFE

We have provided, and are continuing to discuss the need for change to provincial hunting regulations. Finally, we are still looking for ideas and ways to more fully engage Syilx Youth, Elders, hunters, gatherers and trappers in community wildlife management issues and projects, and so help to more fully integrate traditional protocols into wildlife management decisions for now and into the future.

We met with hunters and gatherers in several member communities to explore and learn about significant wildlife and hunting issues such as the need for Syilx-based hunting regulation, declining deer and moose numbers, and the negative effects of wildlife barrier fences.

MONITORING

Research and monitoring for BC Hydro in the Arrow and Kinbasket reservoirs in collaboration with LGL Ltd. and CBA consulting firms and the Okanagan Indian Band to assess the relationship between reservoir operations and the plants and animals that use their edges and shallows. These included the monitoring of heron, songbirds, *ʔar'sik*^w (painted turtle), snakes, amphibians, ungulates, insects, and other species including plants.

WETLAND RESTORATION

Launched a focused Syilx action plan, which includes hands-on wetland restoration and enhancement projects in the Okanagan-Similkameen Basins in collaboration with Environment Canada, the Okanagan Basin Water Board, and others including Transport Canada and the TD Friends of the Environment Fund.

Projects included fencing at several wetlands, re-establishing *ʔar'sik*^w passage through a barrier fence at Penticton Airport, *ʔar'sik*^w and other wildlife monitoring on Penticton Indian Band lands, and preliminary planning for further wetland restoration projects.

GRIZZLY BEAR RECOVERY

Kiʔlawnaʔ has been an integral and critical part of Syilx culture and its presence in Syilx Territory is an indicator of the health of Syilx land and people. At least three remnant trans-boundary grizzly bear populations within Syilx Territory need immediate action to assist them from disappearing due to low numbers and habitat isolation.

This year some initial work to assist the grizzly bear was funded by Environment Canada. This funding has enabled us to gather traditional ecological knowledge, review potential bear hazards, and build the supportive relationships needed to recover *Kiʔlawnaʔ* (Grizzly) in Syilx territory – an animal relative deemed at risk by the Chiefs Executive Council.

The ONA will continue in 2015 to develop supportive relationships with other nations, governments and organizations that are needed to ensure that *Kiʔlawnaʔ* will remain, occupy and thrive in its traditional areas.

SPECIES-AT-RISK

The ONA is currently guiding research in the *Aksk'aʔt* (the White Lake Basin area) as this area has been determined to be of extremely high cultural significance by the Syilx people. The past year a species-at-risk resource assessment continued.

British Columbia's Woodland Caribou include three ecotypes, all of which are at risk of disappearing. The Southern Mountains (SM) ecotype is listed as threatened under Canada's Species-at-Risk Act (SARA). The number of Mountain Caribou in BC has declined from about 2500 animals in 1995 to about 1700 today, with several of 15 sub-populations reduced by 50% or more, and some smaller populations lost entirely.

The ONA took critical review of Canada's Recovery Strategy in order to ensure that the caribou is properly protected.

RESEARCH

UPPER COLUMBIA PLACE NAMES

Initial work began in 2014 to gather place names in the Upper Columbia in collaboration with the Colville Confederated Tribes and En'owkin Centre. One hundred and seven (107) place names have been identified to date. Next steps will be to create place names maps and do a short video for each place name.

Aksk'aʔt (WHITE LAKE AREA)

The ONA continues to do archaeological assessments and monitoring at the Dominion Radio Astrophysical Observatory (DRAO) site near Penticton in order to protect heritage values and continued traditional uses of *Aksk'aʔt* (White Lake area) by Syilx People.

In 2014, the ONA developed a working draft Memorandum of Understanding between ONA and National Research Council Canada (NRCC) in order to foster a mutual understanding of the archaeological resources and cultural heritage values in the White Lake Basin. The NR department proposes to be continuously included in activities at the DRAO site that could have impacts within *Aksk'aʔt*. Activities at DRAO undertaken in 2014-15 were an electrical line replacement which required excavation for an underground electrical trench and the installation of the CHIME Pathfinder telescope.

FISHERIES RESEARCH

Two fisheries research projects took place. One was exploring the history of salmon-derived nutrient supplies in Arrow Lakes Reservoir and the other was to understand the Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and cultural importance of Upper and Mid-Columbia River white sturgeon.

REFERRALS WORKING GROUP

The Natural Resources department began to facilitate an ongoing Referrals Working Group in the fall of 2014. The Referrals Working Group is a group of technical people (Referrals Technicians) from each of the member bands that come together to work towards collaborating on referrals response, understanding shared needs, and working together to help each other best answer referrals, with the over arching goal of better supporting Syilx Aboriginal Rights. This Working group was supported by the Natural Resources department and holds monthly/bimonthly meetings.

RE-LAUNCHING OF VOICES ON THE LAND WEBSITE

The Voices on the Land website has been an ongoing initiative since 2012. This website, containing information relating to past works and place names data, drastically needed an upgrade. The re-launching of the website will occur in July 2015.

PHOTOS

Previous page: ONA Wildlife technician monitoring.
This page: Wildlife technician Nelson Phillip points out bear scratchings. | Elder Richard Armstrong





Fisheries

The ONA's main focus continues to be on Salmon recovery in the Upper Columbia and Okanagan sub-basin. Throughout the Thompson, Columbia and Okanagan Basins there are 57 fish-related projects that are also taking place.

HIGHLIGHTS

- 614,108 Okanagan Sockeye salmon entered the Columbia River in 2014, above initial forecasts of 382,000. This is the highest on record since 1938. It is estimated that 85% of the return is from the Okanagan. 490,800 Sockeye migrated over Wells Dam.
- About 130,000 Okanagan Sockeye were harvested in Canada and the US with harvest sharing about 70% US catch and 30% Canadian harvest.
- 2012 harvest year raised awareness and benefited the trans-boundary harvest negotiations
- 8,500 Sockeye salmon were distributed to Okanagan Nation member communities
- Grand Opening and first year of operations of the *k'c'p'alk's'tim'* Hatchery

- International promotion of the ONA and our Okanagan Sockeye salmon initiatives at international forums including presentations made by Executive Director, Pauline Terbasket at Slow Food's Terra Madre (Turin, Italy)
- Toured Ms. Michele Mesmain (Slow Food International) through Syilx territory as part of the continued process toward receiving Slow Food Presidia designation for Okanagan Sockeye salmon. Also acted as an opportunity for community engagement, to assist in community. This designation will not only promote our work with Okanagan Sockeye on an international stage, but also recognizes our work as a trans boundary initiative.
- The ONA continues to have the largest Stream to Sea Program in BC supporting 10 schools, with 14 tanks within the Okanagan



PHOTOS

Previous page:
The first Okanagan fry in the troughs at the new Hatchery.

This page:
Pit tagging Sockeye at Ok Falls. | Fertilizing eggs at the Hatchery. | Sockeye eggs | Seine fishing on Osoyoos Lake. | Salmon Series Posters: Chinook, Coho, Rainbow & Steelhead Trout, Sockeye & Kokanee





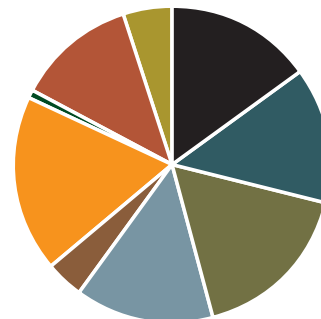
OKANAGAN SOCKEYE










In terms of salmon recovery, 2014 had one of the largest returns of Sockeye to spawn in the Okanagan River with about 145,000 above Osoyoos Lake and about 15,000 above Skaha Lake. We expect there will be a bumper crop of fry entering Osoyoos Lake and along with the hatchery release spawners the highest amount Sockeye fry into Skaha Lake.

SALMON HARVEST

Discussions continue on harvest sharing with the United States. About 130,000 Okanagan Sockeye were harvested in Canada and the US with harvest sharing about 70% US catch and 30% Canadian harvest. Of the Canadian harvest the majority of catch was for the Okanagan food and economic fisheries with opportunities for recreational fishing.

COMMUNITY FOOD DISTRIBUTION



		%
OIB		15
PIB		14
USIB		5
LSIB		12
UNIB		18
WFN		17
OKIB		14
other		1
ONA		4

PHOTOS

This page:
Okanagan Nation fisheries crews bringing in food fish for distribution to communities.

Next page:
Habitat restoration in progress. | Field technician: habitat restoration, LSIB's No Man's Land.

SALMON PASSAGE

We continue to work with the Colville Tribes on Upper Columbia salmon recovery, advocating for salmon restoration above Chief Joseph Dam and Grand Coulee. The main message is not *if*, but when salmon are able to migrate back into Canada into the Arrow Lakes. This will be a priority for the ONA and CCT in 2015. We are slowly making progress on salmon restoration and passage above Wilsey dam at *Swa'wii* on the *Spallumcheenum* (Shuswap River).

SKAHA DAM FISH PASSAGE CONSTRUCTION AND MONITORING

2014 marked the first year the fishway at the dam was operational. In previous years, Sockeye were opportunistically able to migrate past the dam depending on how the gates at the dam were operated. There were several options considered and the simplest approach was taken – add the boards as originally designed. So far the design worked for 2014 Sockeye migration and we will continue to monitor for 2015.

SHINGLE CREEK DAM REMOVAL & FISH PASSAGE PROJECT:

ONA is partnering with PIB and the Colville Confederated Tribes to remove the concrete dam on Shingle Creek to allow for fish passage. The Colville Confederated Tribes have donated their time to this project. The work will include the removal of sediment accumulated behind the dam, removal of the dam and the installation of four inverted vortex rock weirs to return the stream to its equilibrium gradient and provide riffle-pool habitat. Environmental monitoring during construction will be done by PIB members. Landscaping and revegetation (planting) will occur post-construction. Revegetation will be done through the En'owkin Centre.

HABITAT

Our habitat program continues to grow and support both the restoration of Okanagan Sockeye salmon and our communities. We completed works in the Similkameen, Oliver area and Penticton Channel.

LOWER SIMILKAMEEN INDIAN BAND'S NO MAN'S LAND REMEANDER AND WETLAND RESTORATION

In the Similkameen the LSIB's *No Man's Land Remeander and Wetland Restoration Project* is an attempt to restore a historical creek to its original pathway, and enhance the wetland and riparian habitat conditions along the creek. The project is part of a larger vision to restore the *No Man's Land* floodplain conditions to as close to historical function as possible. Multiple fish and wildlife will benefit from the restoration, including *x'umina?* (Rainbow Trout), *x'a?4q'ilam'* (Yellow-Breasted Chat), *ncsacʕayna* (Blotched Tiger Salamander), *p'ask'aqs* (Great Basin Spadefoot), and *q'elq'alsnina?* (Western Screech Owl).

THE OKANAGAN RIVER RESTORATION INITIATIVE'S PENTICTON CHANNEL RESTORATION PROJECT

ORRI created two nature-like spawning beds especially designed to provide high quality salmon spawning habitat (7,500 m²). These features were designed to provide high quality spawning, especially for Sockeye and Chinook salmon, as well as rearing habitat for juvenile Steelhead/Rainbow Trout and Burbot. We have already measured many successes of this work including:

- Sockeye and Kokanee were observed spawning on the beds 2 weeks after construction
- The new spawning areas were used at maximum capacity
- Juvenile trout were observed using the created boulder cluster
- There was an overall decrease in Eurasian Water milfoil in the restored reach

The ONA looks forward to 2015 with continued use and progression of our hatchery and lab facilities, upper Columbia Salmon recovery and of course, harvest of Okanagan Sockeye.



OKANAGAN SELECT

Since 2011-2012, as part of Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (PICFI), and CEC Mandate ONA has been exploring the potential political, economic and cultural advantages of engaging with many strategies and approaches that will sustain a viable Fishery.

Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) recognizes the need to diversify and be competitive, so that our goals of incorporating Indigenous and sustainable principles are aligned with our Syilx responsible harvesting practices. To support our assertion of Syilx responsible stewardship our endeavors have begun to reach out to a number of organizations as partners and NGOs that would assist us in this renewed Food Sovereignty journey.

This has extended our uptake of activities of networking with regional, national, and international members, particularly presenting on our trans-boundary fishery work to interested parties, developing media that communicates our initiatives, and looking to develop alternative markets for niche-based products.

We have developed the canned Sockeye product, Indian Candy and a maple smoked product. These products are in limited quantities and are in line with our sustainable fisheries model.

The Okanagan Aquatics enterprise remains a part of the Inland Salmon Producers Association (ISPA) which assists us with coordinating our production and increasing salmon market share in the Okanagan. As the food fisheries recover for Okanagan Sockeye, our partnership with ISPA will ensure the markets we develop can be maintained.

The ISPA has developed a pilot project, the River Select Fisheries Cooperative that would bring three First Nations Commercial Fishing Enterprises (CFEs) from the interior of BC together. The CFEs are Upper Fraser Conservation Alliance, Harrison Salmon Producers and the Okanagan Aquatic Enterprise, and represent 28 First Nations that are affiliated with six different Tribal groups and also span six distinct river fisheries.

ISPA's vision statement is "to promote inland salmon fisheries, the river fishing cultures, and the high quality natural and wholesome salmon that is produced, as certifiably sustainable, healthy, and good value." In the development of the co-operative initiative, it established the River Select trademark and also developed its Charter of Sustainability that is intended to govern the fishery for the members of the cooperative.

The River Select brand has been developed and is currently selling two products: River Select Sockeye and Pink frozen Indian Candy.

Another one of our key partners this past year has been Slow Food. The Okanagan Sockeye artisanal fishery has received international recognition, through Slow Food International. The Okanagan Sockeye Salmon that is currently on the Ark of Taste was nominated to receive a Presidia designation by Slow Food. This designation would give Okanagan Sockeye an international audience and assist in communication efforts to promote the Sockeye program not only as local wild food in the market place but more principally and importantly is Indigenous Food Sovereignty.

As part of the Presidia process the ONA hosted a tour for Slow Food International's Michelle Mesmain, February 23-27. The purpose was to acquaint her with who are the Syilx Peoples, the member communities of our Nation, and the involvement and purpose of ONA Fisheries and CEC mandates in particular with regards to the rejuvenation of Okanagan Sockeye salmon stocks.



The economic fishery continues to assist the ONA in meeting numerous objectives. The fishery has provided ONA biologists opportunities to present at many forums and involve themselves in many online conversations in supporting local production, Indigenous leadership, involvement of community and small scale producers.

This has been an exciting endeavor for ONA to pursue and develop the strategic plans and proposals that support our community's access and planning for a future that will feed the Syilx Nation. We will continue to evaluate our pilot economic fishery working on developing a local sales market, sharing our story about the recovery of Sockeye in our territory and developing successful partnerships.



KŁ cp'alk' stimi HATCHERY

Completion of the Nation's KŁ cp'alk' stimi Hatchery and associated lab located on Penticton reserve is a major milestone in the development of the ONA Fisheries Department. The Hatchery facility is part of a long-term program to restore the historical range of Sockeye in the upper Okanagan watershed, Okanagan Lake and Skaha Lake systems. The hatchery's grand opening celebrations took place on September 20, with a ceremonial *spitsn* cutting.

The ONA and its subsidiary company, Okanagan Aquatic Enterprises Ltd., have worked in close collaboration with the Grant and Chelan Public Utility Districts in Washington State, the Penticton Indian Band, and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, among others, to bring this project to reality.

We are one of the largest technical Fisheries organizations in BC with more staff in the region than both the federal and provincial agencies. The hatchery employs 5 full time staff with on-call opportunities during the busy times (i.e. egg picking, ponding, feeding and cleaning).

The 25,000 sq. ft. hatchery has the capacity to rear up to 8 million Sockeye salmon eggs which will be released annually as fry into Shingle Creek. It is estimated that over 1.5 million fry will be released at the end of May / beginning of June.

The goal for 2014 was to collect and fertilize 3.0 million Sockeye eggs. This number was determined based on this being the first operational year of the KŁ cp'alk' stimi Hatchery in Penticton and suggestions from COBTWG. These eggs were taken from broodstock that was captured using beach seine methods in q'awsitk[™], 2-3 kilometres upstream of the town of Oliver, BC.

The beach seine was maneuvered by a crew of 8 to 12 people each day from the 14th to the 24th of October, 2014. Captured fish were identified and enumerated; Sockeye were enumerated based on sex and size. Ripe females and males in good condition were retained for transport to the holding pens, proximate to the egg take site. Fish were transported to the holding pens as soon as possible after capture, in flow-through, tube-shaped bags, attached to a frame to prevent twisting and ensure a constant supply of fresh water. Sorting and transport of Sockeye was performed by trained and experienced personnel to minimize handling-induced stress

and damage to gametes. A total of 1,157 female and 1,239 male Sockeye salmon were retained for gamete collection; 1,105 female and 1,239 male salmon were spawned on site.

A new laboratory building is one of the key components of the Hatchery. This new facility provides dedicated space for carrying out the ongoing laboratory investigations that provide information for the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) Fisheries Department biologists. The laboratory has processed samples from 23,511 fish and provided data on lengths, weights, diet, age, and origin from all life stages.

In addition, a virology laboratory was opened that has enabled the ONA to do disease testing independently from the DFO. This year the ONA was able to use the test developed in our laboratory to confirm that the Hatchery fry were not infected with virus prior to being released into the Penticton Channel.

We will continue to refine our expertise to ensure the Syilx have the expertise to increase their role in fisheries in the territory.



Hatchery Grand Opening *spitsn* cutting





Excerpt, Okanagan Water Declaration, July 31, 2014

i?_siw?k^w sx^wlx^waltət.

WATER IS OUR RELATION.

i?_ł_yfayfát stim siw?k^w i?_ylmix^wmntət.

WATER BONDS US TO OUR ANCESTRY, OUR DESCENDENTS AND OUR LAND.

k^wu_yfayfát i?_k^wu_sqilx^w kscpúta?stm áfi? ylmix^wmtət i?_siw?k^w.

WATER MUST BE TREATED WITH REVERENCE AND RESPECT.

áfi? i?_ńx^włx^włtañtət lut kstañmúsmñtm, áfi? kscetxístim yfayfát i?_stim.

OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH WATER IS NOT TAKEN LIGHTLY, WE ARE RESPONSIBLE TO ENSURE THAT OUR RELATION CAN CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN THE HEALTH AND RESILIENCY OF OUR LAND AND ANIMALS.

I?_siw?k^w ńx^włx^włtañs i?_tmñx^wúla?x^w uł yfayfát i?_stim

WATER IS THE LIFEBLOOD OF OUR LAND AND OUR ANIMALS AND WE AS SYILX PEOPLE

kscsux^wstm i?_siw?k^w xá?xá? knaq^s ck^wisk^wsts yfát a?_cx^włx^walt.

RECOGNIZE WATER AS A SACRED ENTITY AND RELATIVE THAT CONNECTS ALL LIFE.

i?_siw?k^w yfát ta?kín kł_kscx^włx^walts i?_tmñx^wúla?x^w uł kł_tmix^w.

WATER COMES IN MANY FORMS AND ALL ARE NEEDED FOR THE HEALTH OF LAND AND FOR THE ANIMALS.

mipnúntm i?_sxa?xá?s i?_siw?k^w kł_yfayfát i?_stim.

WATER IS OUR MOST SACRED MEDICINE, WATER NOURISHES, REPLENISHES, CLEANSSES AND HEALS.

łá_ck^wulmstm i?_siw?k^w kscha?stím uł kscetxístim.

ANY USE OF WATER SHOULD BE AN ACT OF REVERENCE AND A COMMITMENT TO OUR RESPONSIBILITIES.

yfayfát i?_sx^włx^waltət, fapná? uł cñ t_spñkin, áfi? k^wu_s?uk^wna?qínx.

OF ALL LIFE. NOW AND TO COME, AS SYILX PEOPLE.

i?_siw?k^w cx^wuy tł_tmñx^wúla?x^w tł wist uł lut kscwsñcuts tł_stim.

WATER COMES FROM THE SKY AND THE HIGHEST PLACE YET IT NEVER WILLFULLY RISES ABOVE ANYTHING.

i?_taýx^wút mi ctyap, nañmł tł_yfát tł_stim, misk^wœck^wáct.

IT WILL ALWAYS TAKE THE LOWEST PATH IN ITS HUMILITY. YET OF ALL THE ELEMENTS, IT IS THE MOST POWERFUL.

k^wu_scúnma?stm i?_siw?k^w k^wu_k^wcœck^wact uł qmñqamł.

OUR SACRED WATER TEACHES US THAT WE HAVE GREAT STRENGTH TO TRANSFORM THE HIGHEST MOUNTAIN WHILE BEING GENTLE, SOFT AND FLEXIBLE.

iwá łá_tqœqip ksksxñmíxa?x ití?. kł?ułx^w, tqiltkñs, km mlx^wuyñs.

WATER WILL ALWAYS FIND A WAY AROUND OBSTRUCTIONS, UNDER, OVER AND THROUGH.

k^wu_kscúnma?stm ksc^włlnustm xi?míx stim.

IT TEACHES US ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE.

łá_ctyap i?_siw?k^w lut stim łá_ctilx^wsts uł k^wu_ksxíla?x ití?.

WATER MOVEMENTS, PATHWAYS RESILIENCY AND POWER TEACH US WHO WE ARE AND WHO WE CAN BE AS PEOPLE.