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## Message from the Chairman

As I reflect back on the past year, what stands out is the ways our people have bravely defended our Aboriginal title and rights and upheld their sacred duty and inherent obligation despite many obstacles put forward by the federal government. It is this spirit of resistance passed on to us by our ancestors that has safeguarded the survival of our people.

In June 2012 many First Nations participated in the Black Out, Speak Out National Day of protest but the federal government ignored thousands of Canadians and brought Bill C-38 into force. Still our people did not stop fighting. There were numerous letters to government, open letters to the people of Canada, protests and court challenges. It was our people who raised the alarm and brought attention to Enbridge's poor track record failing to adequately clean up oil spills on existing pipelines. The Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipeline and tanker proposal will put our shared environment in peril. If successful, the pipeline would traverse BC's most inaccessible and difficult terrain, crossing hundreds of pristine rivers and streams through whale habitat, fishing grounds and other sensitive marine areas. This does not even account for the disturbance caused by these pipelines crossing over sacred ground within these Territories.

The federal government has relentlessly forged ahead on Bill C-45 further gutting environmental protections and regulations by removing habitat protection and federal responsibility for protecting lakes and rivers. This decision in part sparked the **Idle No More**: a grassroots movement. In our own territory, the federal government refused to be signatory of our negotiated MOU on the CRT with ONA but then turned around and signed an Incremental Treaty Agreement with the Ktunaxa that jeopardized the MOU and takes aim at Syilx jurisdiction over disputed lands that abut the Ktunaxa's claims. Both government and the Ktunaxa acted in bad faith, engaging in tripartite discussions while knowing full well that signing of the Incremental Treaty Agreement was imminent. The CEC has considered legal options and anticipates that this is an issue we will be dealing with in the upcoming year.

In addition to assailing our constitutionally protected Title and Rights, the federal governments also made a 40% cut to Aboriginal representative groups and Tribal Councils funding,

as stated in the UN joint statement, the government did not consult or collaborate with First Nations. Further, they tried to centralize the Indian Studies Support Program (ISSP), another attempt to control and move decision-making away from First Nations. Support for ISSP came in the form of another report on First Nations' poverty – 50% of First Nations children are living in poverty. This is no surprise to our communities – this is one program that really addresses the issue as it supports our young people to pursue education and improve the quality of their own lives. We will not stand by as the federal government tries to dismantle this program. Syilx people have long contended that all programs and services



must be nation driven and community-based.

Even though this has been a difficult year, here in the Okanagan we are in the process of realizing a Syilx Fish Hatchery on the Penticton Indian Band. This hatchery will be near completion August, 2014. We can pause and share this proud moment, a legacy to "those yet to come" as our collective efforts and willingness to collaborate, stay nation-focused and united, has lead us to returning **Chief Ntyxtix • Salmon** to our waterways. Further, examples of nation collective initiatives are embodied in this Annual Report.

The fight to stop the Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline is not over. It really has likely just begun. This is an issue I anticipate will continue to dominant our agenda both at ONA and UBCIC. It is imperative that as First Nations people, we continue to work together. The BC Chiefs Conference 1969 asserted that "United we stand, divided we perish!" Nobody embodied this sentiment more than the late Elijah Harper. His courage, tireless commitment and deep sense of political integrity showed us that one person can make a difference – to "Remember where we come from". We shall be eternally grateful to Elijah Harper for the tremendous contribution he made, in spite of great personal sacrifices, to defend the sovereign interests of the Indigenous Peoples of the *tmx'ulax'*.

*ʔaʔsi Wł*

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, ONA Chairman



## Message from the Executive Director

The Idle No More movement is a testament to the spirit of Indigenous peoples. It effectively mobilized Aboriginal people across this country while building alliances with other Canadians. This movement has re-energized sovereignty and has led to a resurgence of Nationhood not only here in the Syilx territory but for all First Nations. It has brought with it hope that together we can stop the federal government from asserting its regressive policies aimed at legislating away the “Indian” problem.

Remember Hold the Line, Browns Creek,  
Remember OKA,  
Remember 7 Peaks,  
Remember Restigouche,  
Remember Burnt Church...

This past year AANDC announced a new funding model for the Tribal Council program (TCP). Along with the announcement came a 40% funding cut to TCP and other federally funded programs. These funding cuts did not come as surprise but they were deeper and far more reaching than expected and as a result of these cuts ONA will face infrastructure cuts in 2014 - 2015. Harper announced new funding for First Nations Economic Development, the Urban Aboriginal Strategy and First Nations Education while making cuts to other nationally funded First Nations programs – funding initiatives that will be driven by criteria developed in Ottawa without consultation or meaningful input by First Nations people.

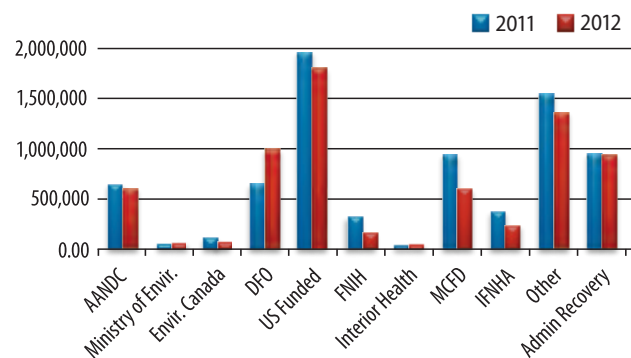
Until discretionary funds become available, ONA is forced to be a proposal-driven entity. However, there are shortfalls and uncertainty as the Chief’s Executive Council (CEC) move their legal, policy, negotiations, governance assertions and activities forward. The Legal War chest has been exhausted but ONA has no other option except to challenge the Ktunaxa Nation’s Incremental Treaty Agreement with the federal government. Further, like many First Nations in the Interior, we are standing with the Tsilhqot’in in their opposition to Taseko’s New Prosperity Mine and asking for Intervener Status in this case. That said, in the short-term fiscal constraints can weigh on the operations. These important title and rights initiatives can easily become fiscally problematic if not closely monitored and managed.

As you will note in the chart below, funding fluctuates annually and each department must manage these changes. This fiscal reality is not likely to change for most government dependent First Nation entities.

In spite of these cuts, the CEC mandate has not changed! They continue to assert their Aboriginal Title and Rights and fight for a fair share of benefits derived from our lands and resources. These assertions include the BC Hydro envelope which has over 14 projects on Syilx Territory; Energy companies that want to engage with the CEC on the local and national front to establish working partnerships; the Columbia River Treaty Renewal 2014 consultation which resulted in a Bilateral Negotiation with the CEC and the province of BC; the Parks Canada funded Syilx feasibility study that was tabled in February 2012, to mention a few.

At home, the CEC agreed to the importance of developing Inter-Band communication tools and protocols. The goal is to develop a unified Syilx position that will form the basis of all negotiations and/or legal actions. The Syilx Information Sharing and Research Protocols is one example. Syilx knowledge is fundamental to all negotiations and to the advancement of title and rights. The knowledge of our lands, the captik’ł, and an understanding of the Syilx way is our collective strength. Those who have come before us have generously shared this knowledge and protected the resources with an expectation that we will safeguard this legacy and share it with “those yet to come”. This work is being discussed and continues to be central to the work of the ONA Natural Resource Council.

ONA continues to work toward the development and delivery of Child and Family services that can strengthen and support families “our way”. Our goal is to have an Enabling Agreement in place and celebrate this at the 2014 AGA. ONA is in the process of developing protocols with the Ministry of Children & Families and the Urban Aboriginal Organizations. These protocols would strengthen relationships off-reserve and return jurisdiction for all Aboriginal Child and Family matters in our territory. The principles embraced by our ancestors to care for the people and the land remains the vision of our Syilx leaders.



It is through this vision that the Nation saw to realize the bringing back of the salmon, and to ensure the success of the program, a new hatchery will assist in carrying that dream farther. While negotiations with the Public Utilities Districts has been onerous for the Hatchery Project Team, ONA has secured a commitment for full funding for this important capital project! As part of the effort to address salmon harvest issues and to develop tribal relations the CEC met with the Yakima Nation and as a result, a Columbia River Tribal Elders meeting is planned for 2013 - 14. This past year saw an increase in salmon stocks and as part of our communication efforts we were pleased to announce completion of the *Our Salmon, Our People* video that highlights the Syilx story of Salmon recovery in the Okanagan and its impacts on our people.

ONA's lease at Carrington expired February 2013 and working with the CEC, it was decided that ONA will consolidate all three of their Westbank locations into one facility.

Together we will overcome the challenges of 2013 - 14. Idle no More, along with our own Nation Gatherings: the Unity Run, the Youth Leadership Forum, the Salmon Fry Release, Quarterly Forums and the AGA, where we see our young people and elders engaged, reminds us of the resiliency and perseverance of our people.

“If you want to go to a place you’ve never been before – you have to think in ways you’ve never thought before.” Ken Blanchard

Lim’limpt

*swikin?st*

Pauline Terbasket, Executive Director



# Syilx Nation Title and Rights

Syilx Title and Rights embody every aspect of our living world “all our relations”. The health, education, language and culture, environmental protection, economic and social prosperity, of our citizens is all encompassing of our collective work and unity defines our sacred birthrights. It entrusted to us to protect our inherent rights and title lands for our children and future generations. The communities and Chiefs of the Okanagan Nation have stood together firm, with clear and unwavering strength this year in the face of some of the most monumental external threats to our collective title and rights.

With great conviction the Chiefs Executive Council has remained steadfast in their directives, mandates and actions to advance, protect and assert Syilx Title and Rights as this report highlights. These actions include the support provided by Chief Dan Manuel as lead on the complex BC Hydro files; the leadership of the Southern Okanagan Nation Bands on the National Parks Syilx Feasibility Study; the reshaping of decision processes around Columbia River Treaty; challenging attempts by the governments of Canada and BC to transfer lands in Okanagan Territory to our neighbours under a pre-treaty agreement; social, cultural and community advocacy; critical ongoing research; development of land governance processes; press statements to BC and Canada on shameful policies and strategies that attempt to discriminate, diminish and try to undermine our collective Indigenous rights and as the proper title holders of our Territory.

The Okanagan Nation under the leadership and direction of the CEC has energetically asserted themselves in every venue, challenge and struggle to protect the collective title and rights of the Syilx Nation at an unprecedented rate. They have unilaterally demanded that definitive government processes be designed by us to address our interests and have successfully achieved new processes that seek to move towards deeper control and engagement in government decisions. Through these activities the fulsome strength of the Okanagan Nation standing together is being felt and understood in every venue, the Syilx voice is heard.

## COLUMBIA RIVER TREATY (CRT)

The Columbia River Treaty (CRT) is a series of 30-year term water flow and storage agreement with the United States (originating in 1964) that created three Canadian dams and turned natural river systems of the Kinbasket and Arrow Lakes into massive artificial water storage reservoirs exclusively for flood control and power generation in the US and Canada. The CEC were united in leading the efforts to engage with the Secwepemc and Ktunaxa Nations to identify and pursue common Indigenous rights, interests and goals in the Columbia River Basin. The CEC successfully coordinated a

number of technical and political forums this past year and devised a draft terms and processes to address some of the biggest joint issues related to the upcoming Columbia River (Water Storage) Treaty renewal decision.

## KTUNAXA NATION INCREMENTAL TREATY AGREEMENT

However, most disappointedly, nearing year's end of the process, the CEC discovered that Ktunaxa Nation had signed an Incremental Treaty Agreement (ITA) with the federal and provincial governments claiming title and rights to lands transferred to them within the Okanagan territory (Wesley Bench a 242 ha land parcel adjacent to Nakusp), undermining the common perspectives and First Nations momentum developed through the newly established Columbia Basin Indigenous Peoples' Forum north of the 49th. The CEC directed the ONA to establish an immediate issue team that responded immediately and repeatedly to both governments and the press. The team notified the Ktunaxa and the federal government that the Incremental Treaty Agreement is viewed as an act of bad faith against Syilx people and that a legal remedy will be pursued. This will be an ongoing issue in the upcoming year.

## IDLE NO MORE

Idle No More supporters demonstrated in cities and towns across this Nation. Chief Theresa Spence courageously went on a hunger strike because one year after the international media attention on Attiwapiskat, living conditions had not improved in her community. Aboriginal people, environmentalists and other allied groups across Canada came out in support. The UBCIC published *Standing for What is Right*, a recognition of the courageous, principled and inspirational stand of First Nations and grassroots to strengthen, assert and exercise our inherent, constitutionally-enshrined and judicially-recognized Title, Rights and Treaty Rights in our respective territories. Idle No More demonstrated to the federal government that even if they effectively shut down the voices of the AFN and other Aboriginal representative groups, they would not quell the anger of the people. Indigenous people from across Canada were energized by resoluteness of Idle No More and the tenacity of Chief Theresa Spence.

Locally, there were three successful Idle No More events in the Okanagan on December 21, 2012 in Vernon, Kelowna and Penticton. Then on January 4, 2013, over 85 people gathered at the Osoyoos border crossing. Okanagan people have participated in the on-going Idle No More protests including the third at Enbridge Public Hearing in Kelowna.



Idle No More: Chad Paul, Westbank First Nation





## Syilx Nation Title and Rights, continued

### BILL C-38

The federal government's Bill C-38 was an unrelenting assault on everything First Nations believe in. It ignored constitutionally enshrined Aboriginal Title and Rights and previously negotiated Treaty Rights. Bill C-38 devastated the Fisheries Act, eliminated the responsibilities of the Crown to protect Canadian waterways, it gutted the environment protection process that ultimately represented a strike against democracy. Rather than silencing Canadians, as the Harper government hoped, it galvanized our people, environmentalists, and other allies against it.

### BILL C-45

Then in the fall of 2012, the federal government brought forward the omnibus Bill C-45 in an attempt to further legislate away federal fiduciary responsibilities and First Nation constitutional rights across Canada by eroding the Fisheries Act and other Federal Environmental Protection process. Still Indigenous people across Canada remained relentless in our defiance and continued to vigorously oppose not only Bill C-38 and Bill C-45 but the mega-projects and pipelines that these changes were suppose to make easier to allow and build. Our communities and many Canadians saw these changes the Harper government sought to force on Canadians as further assaults on our lands and thus ways of life. Many massive new industrial developments are being simultaneously pursued in BC, the proposed expansion of Kinder Morgan's Trans-Mountain Pipeline, the Taseko Mines' New Prosperity Mine proposal or the BC Hydro's planned Site C dam project, are all being opposed because our people know that the long-term impacts on our territories and on our communities outweigh the short-term economic gains being dangled. Money is not the issue! The federal government did not expect Canadians to put environmental sustainability and democracy ahead of corporate greed. These projects are driving changes to water down environmental standards that threaten to turn environmental reviews into rubber-stamping shames.

### FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S JOINT REVIEW PANEL (JRP)

First Nations across BC participated in the federal government's Joint Review Panel (JRP) on the Enbridge Pipeline Proposal in attempt to influence the process in the face of restricted access and disregard for Indigenous processes. Here in Kelowna, the so-called, public hearing, held at the Sandman Inn was closed to observers. First Nations people across BC made it clear that they reject the Enbridge project and that the province of BC's five minimum requirements are vague, weak and offer little assurance to First Nations' concerns. Notwithstanding vocal opposition and calls for more transparency, it seems that the JRP remains a fixed and closed process fuelling speculations that the federal government plans to approve this project regardless. The Harper government's response to protests was to question the legitimacy of the environmental groups opposing the project and scrutinize their charitable status while stating that this opposition was originating from outside Canada.

### MISSING WOMEN'S INQUIRY

In the foreground to these National concerns, the provincially driven Missing Women's Commission of Inquiry continued to forge ahead. The Native Women's Society of Canada has documented the "disappearance and murder of over 600 Aboriginal women and girls in Canada over the last 20 years". This is yet another national tragedy that the federal government is not interest in addressing. In alliance with fifteen other provincial women's groups and other Aboriginal groups, UBCIC withdrew from the first phase of the inquiry and refused to participate in the second phase. They did not want to endorse the Inquiry that was described as a deeply-flawed and illegitimate process. It was not inclusive or meaningful and it did not honour the expertise of the people most affected by the issues. It failed to create space where their insights and knowledge could be shared. It lost credibility with Aboriginal people, sex trade workers, human rights and women's organizations when the process proved to repeat the same discrimination and exclusion that it was hoped the Inquiry would uncover.

## Health Governance

The Chief's Executive Council continues to advocate for Syilx control and management of their health, programs and services to ensure meaningful and comprehensive health service delivery. This past year there have been a vast number of challenges and issues facing the member communities and the Nation in ensuring appropriate of health governance.

April 2012, The ONA CEC reappointed Mickey Werstuik to continue to be the interim First Nations Health Council Governance representative for the Okanagan Nation, and Lisa Montgomery Reid has been appointed to be the alternate. Mic Werstuik has played a key leadership role representing ONA in the development of the new interim First Nations Health Authority (iFNHA). The CEC have been the key leaders challenging the iFNHA to conduct their own due diligence to safeguard health services to our people. The CEC has formed the only dissenting voice and has managed to do so while remaining within the process. In October it will become the entity that controls all First Nations health funds in BC.

At the Gathering Wisdom V: Shared Journey in Richmond in the "Adoption of Consensus Paper 2012: Navigating the Currents of Change – Transitioning to a New First Nations Health Governance Structure" was made. There were 158 chiefs and/or proxies in attendance of the vote: 148 YES, 10 NO. Six of the ten that voted NO were our Okanagan leadership. The Okanagan leadership has been consistent in raising serious issues with the transition process. Its structures that determine how decisions are made will ultimately impact Okanagan communities and citizens. The CEC are not fully confident in the current "rolling out process" nor the governance model that will now be responsible to administer First Nation health funding for First Nations citizens in BC. Thus the ONA CEC will continue to hold them accountable and continue to actively participate in all areas of Health Governance and Planning. The Okanagan Nation communities continue to collaborate and strategize together regarding these evolving developments.

### INTERIOR REGION

A major achievement this past year was the partnership that was strengthened with Interior Health Authority.

On June 13, 2012 the Okanagan Nation Alliance and Interior Health Authority signed a Letter of Understanding (LOU). The LOU is a key relationship agreement articulating the commitment to develop in partnership areas of communication, planning and access to health services. The process began when the Government of Canada's Aboriginal Health Transfer Fund Integration Envelope that provided ONA with funding with a key objective of attaining a thorough policy agreement between ONA and IHA. Through an IHA/ONA LOU Working Group, created in August 2011, a Terms of Reference was developed which guided the LOU development, The working group now guides the process of implementing the LOU.

The group's key objectives entail the promotion and strengthening of the working relationships between the ONA and IHA, while pertaining to future prospects for partnership in advancing health care for Aboriginal people in the ONA. (A full version of the LOU is available on the ONA website).

In addition to the LOU the interior region signed a Partnership Accord with Interior Health Authority. This accord included the participation of the ONA CEC and community health leads in the development and signing of the Interior Region Partnership Accord, which forms the Interior Region Nations' relationship with the Interior Health Authority.

The purpose of this Partnership Accord is to clarify the bilateral and multi-lateral roles and relationships of each of the parties as they work together to fulfill this commitment.

Further, it is intended to be a general statement of purpose but does not create a legally binding obligation on the parties nor is it enforceable against either of the parties in any court of law or otherwise.





# Columbia River Treaty

Columbia River Treaty (CRT) is a 30-year renewable multi-million dollar water storage agreement between Canada and the US on the development and operation of dams in the upper Columbia River basin designed for maximizing power generation and flood control. It led to the construction of three major Canadian dams that began in the late 1960s that converted the upper Columbia water system into reservoirs for the storage and management of millions of acre feet (15.5 maf) of new water creating one of the most significant and ongoing infringements of Syilx Title and Rights.

The earliest date by which either Canada or the United States can give notice of its intention to withdraw from the Columbia River Treaty is 2014. This triggers a 10-year negotiations period between the two countries and related parties before the treaty expires in 2024.

CRT and the operations of the resulting dams have caused severe impacts the Eastern portion of the Okanagan Nation territory (Arrow Lakes). There has never been any consultation or involvement of the Syilx, or any other First Nation on the design, negotiations or implementation of the treaty. The Okanagan Nation continues to advance its united position to ensure that the Nation's interests and rights are addressed and respected. The Okanagan Nation Alliance, through its Chiefs Executive Council (CEC), has maintained a strong unified approach to this matter due to its potential and actual impacts on Title and Rights issues.

The connection between hydroelectric and water flow operations and its potential and actual impacts on our constitutionally-protected fishing rights is distinctly an Okanagan issue. This matter provides the Okanagan with an opportunity to engage in future discussions with both levels of government, due to the unique nature of those rights.

The CEC has provided instruction on numerous CRT-related files to further explore potential opportunities for the Nation.



Some of that work includes:

## CRT RELATED FILES

### COLUMBIA BASIN FIRST PEOPLES LEADERSHIP FORUM (TRI-NATION PROCESS)

Ktunaxa Nation, Shuswap Nation Tribal Council, the Lakes Division of Bands, and the Okanagan Nation had begun to identify common positions and/or potential benefits to working collectively on the major issues such as renewing salmon passage with respect to the Columbia River Treaty.

### TECHNICAL COLLABORATION WITH COLVILLE CONFEDERATED TRIBES (CCT)

The CCT as a formal and active member of the ONA with unique capacities and insights has been supportive in ensuring the Okanagan Nation technical teams (primarily fisheries) are well informed and are involved in the US-based Upper Columbia United Tribes (UCUT) organization that has spent over two years devising common issues and interests with respect to CRT. There may be additional strategic benefit to addressing the needs and interests regarding the CRT on both sides by enhanced collaboration.

### OKANAGAN NATION TRACK WITH BC HYDRO

Under Chief Dan Manuel, the Interior to Lower Mainland (ILM) Agreement explicitly offers direct and substantive engagement on the CRT with the Okanagan Nation. This is distinct from how BC Hydro intends to engage other Nations (without the Enduring Relationship). Any BC Hydro engagement is directed by the Province. BC Hydro has been commissioned by the Province for conducting all the technical scenarios and the models exercised that will help BC advise cabinet on their preferred option. BC Hydro does not have any formal or direct say on the CRT file and only serves to communicate the data and modeling results compiled to BC and the ONA.

### OKANAGAN NATION GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT TRACK(S) WITH CROWN

The Okanagan Nation sent numerous letters to the Federal and Provincial Crown that established a formal process, called the CRT BC-Canada-ONA Critical Path. In January 2012, the Province established a Columbia River Treaty Consultation Team within the BC Ministry of Energy and Mines for CRT consultation with First Nations, and engagement with the federal government and US counterparts. The Chiefs rejected the typical and inadequate "top-down consultation approaches" put forward by BC and Canada. Instead, the Chiefs called for a jointly designed and built trilateral engagement process that will meet Okanagan Nation standards. All matters are regularly reported to the Chiefs Executive Council.

## ONA-CROWN CRT PROCESSES UNDERWAY

### CRT BC-CANADA-ONA CRITICAL PATH

A process of steps (some jointly developed) that are designed to ensure that the ONA determines the issues, impacts, objectives from studies and community involvement from its own perspectives so that resolution outcomes and final positions can be adequately negotiated

### TECHNICAL WORK

Fish & aquatics studies and impacts – specifically Okanagan Salmon and Upper Columbia resident species (e.g. Sturgeon, Bull Trout and Kokanee); Terrestrial Studies, issues and impacts including vegetation and wildlife.

### AIUS (ABORIGINAL INTEREST & USE STUDY) PROPOSALS

This work is being proposed as a key and critical piece of defending and altering the impoverished view of Title and the "Strength of Claim" analysis used by the Crown.

### ETHNO-HISTORICAL

Significant early cultural research (Dr. Armstrong, et al.) and legal work is being prepared to challenge the Crown's approach on the Arrow Lakes area.

### THE GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT NEGOTIATIONS MOU TABLE (ONA-BC)

The Chiefs met on February 2013 with the Assistant Deputy Minister of BC Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, Natural Resource Canada and Energy and Mines to discuss setting up a solutions-based, informal table for government-to-government discussions.

March 28th at the CEC meeting in Osoyoos, the CEC approved a TCR appointing Chief Dan Manuel and Chairman John Sirois to be political leads, and Jay Johnson and Tim Raybould as the technical negotiators.

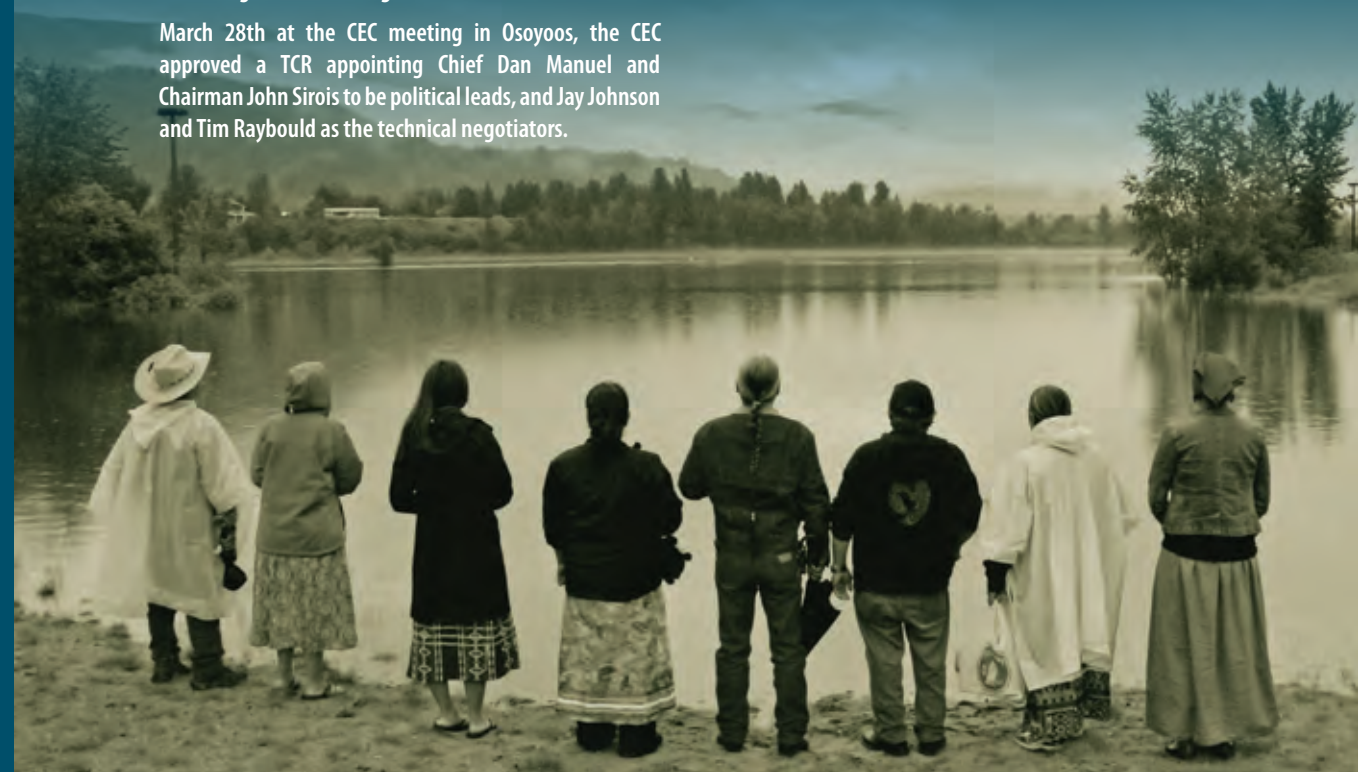
## NEXT STEPS

The ONA will continue the work on the CRT-ONA Critical Path. The ONA has designed an MOU agreement for BC and Canada to sign. This document is expected to be signed in April 2013. The ONA CEC will be establishing:

- an MOU Political Oversight Committee
- a structure for this committee, and
- a specific work plan for this committee in the coming months

The ONA will continue to gather information from its technical studies. This technical information is being gathered to protect, preserve and enhance *tmix* who have been impacted by the CRT and the resulting reservoirs. Studies on Okanagan Salmon and Upper Columbia resident species (e.g. Sturgeon, Bull Trout and Kokanee); Terrestrial Studies, and research into impacts on vegetation and wildlife will continue.

The AIUS work will provide critical information and support Syilx Title and Rights within the Upper Columbia. As this work moves forward the involvement of Syilx community members will be paramount. We all need to share our experiences, knowledge and ties to the Upper Columbia to strengthen this work. This comprehensive study will be completed in phases and is expected to begin in 2013. The AIUS study will complement the Ethno-Historical work that is already underway.





# 2012 - 2013

**SOCKEYE FRY RELEASE** | May 2012 ONA hosted the Sockeye Fry Release and Ceremony at Shingle Creek in Penticton. Over 300 community members, students and guests gathered to witness the ceremony and participate in the release. The children released fry they helped raise, and then participated in booths. This year, there has been a record number of salmon returning. The Release continues to be a part of the Okanagan Nation Sockeye Re-introduction program that was started in 2003 and that has returned Okanagan Sockeye to the Okanagan.

**CHINOOK FRY RELEASE** | May 2012 ONA, in collaboration with the Federal Fisheries Commission, hosted the Chinook Fry Release "Restoring Salmon Upstream of the Dam" on the Shuswap River. The ceremony was led by elder Pauline Gregoire with just over 60 community members, students and guests gathering to participate. The ONA – part of the fisheries restorative work with salmon restoration within the Sub-Okanagan basin – hope to return Chinook, Interior Fraser Coho, and Sockeye to their former habitat and migration range in the Thompson Basin, and to revitalize the salmon fishery.



**SPIRIT OF SYILX YOUTH UNITY RUN**  
SUICIDE & VIOLENCE AWARENESS | May 2012 ONA hosted the fourth annual Spirit of the Syilx Youth Unity Run to promote awareness of the high rate of suicide and violence in First Nation communities. The run from Christina Lake to Revelstoke, BC covered over 260 kilometers of our territory with over 100 participants from each of the eight member communities. There were also running clinics for the communities to learn proper stretching, nutrition, and benefits of being physically active. The run was supported by the RCMP Aboriginal Policing unit and Olympic hopeful, Alvina Begay, Nike N7 Ambassador.

**COLUMBIA RIVER SALMON FEAST CELEBRATION**  
June 2012 ONA supported the Kettle Falls Salmon Feast Ceremony which preceded the ONA's second Salmon Feast Celebration on the Upper Columbia River in Millennium Walkway Park, Castlegar. Due to the weather in Castlegar, close to 15 community members were able to attend the ceremony that was led by elder Richard Armstrong. This work to continue to reconnect with the Columbia River so that we can ensure salmon continues to come back to this land.

**YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE** | July 2012 ONA hosted the Okanagan Nation Youth Leadership Conference as part of the Okanagan Nation Annual General Assembly. Over 70 youth participated in the three day event with presentations/ workshops from a number of cultural, community-based presenters on topics of traditional dancing, empowerment, interactive leadership and storytelling. Keynote Kris Archie, and Shadow Hawk spoke on Decolonization and Youth Leadership while Skookum Sound gave a performance as well as workshops on multi-media and youth. Okanagan youth, Kara Ross led participants in workshops on language.

**ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
**CELEBRATING MY FAMILY, MY FRIENDS, MY PEOPLE** | July 2012

The ONA's AGA was hosted by the Okanagan Indian Band at Komasket Park. Over 200 community members, elders and youth participated in the two-and-a-half day assembly. Highlights included a ceremony for "25 Years Since Signing Declaration", presentation for the "Building a Better Future", Education for life Bursary awards, and also a Stick Game tournament and a run for the drum.



**SALMON FEAST CELEBRATION** | September 2012 The celebration to "honour the sacredness of the river" was attended by over 400 people throughout the three day event. The event included a Stick Game tournament; canoeing from Skaha Lake to Okanagan Falls; 2.5/5 km Walk or Run, entertainment from Jim Boyd, Reynolds Gabriel, Kaykaitkw Hall, Aimee Lezard, Herman Edwards, Warren Hooley, Randy Chilhitzia, Billy Walker and Betty Jean Kruger; and children's activities. The purpose of this event is to preserve the traditions and culture of the Syilx people, while raising awareness about the environmental issues that are impacting fish stocks in the Okanagan watershed. Planning has started for the 2013 Salmon Feast Celebration which will be held the third weekend of September.

**TERRAMADRE** | October 2012 Italy. This International event was attended by ONA Communications staff, Tara Montgomery, and Fisheries Manager, Howie Wright, to showcase our Okanagan Salmon and how we helped its return.



**WELLNESS GATHERING** | October 2012 ONA hosted the Wellness Gathering in Penticton to raise awareness on our wellness through various workshops geared at different aspects from *Healing through Medicine to Visioning Wellness*. There were practitioners from massage to dream interpretation to reiki. Highlights included having Tantoo Cardinal speak to the workshop *Storylines of Strength: Connecting the Generations* where elders and youth connected and shared stories of resilience and hope. Keynote speaker was Tantoo Cardinal with guest speaker Charlene Belleau. Over 100 community members, youth and guests attended this two day event.

**R'NATIVE VOICE WINTER GATHERING**  
March 2013 ONA hosted the R'Native Voice Winter Youth Gathering at Sensisysten gymnasium in Westbank. More than 50 youth in the program attended this gathering to participate in workshops from hemp making to language classes. Highlights included Teyotsihstokwathe Dakota Brant and JB, the First Lady, were the keynote panel and spoke to the youth on leadership and empowerment, as well as cultural workshops and prizes.



- Chief & Council Quarterly Meeting
- AEOC Language & Culture Forum
- Sockeye Fry Release
- Chinook Fry Release
- Spirit of Syilx Youth Unity Run
- Selkirk Gathering Space Grand Opening
- SCA – Syilx Cooperative Protocol Meeting
- Columbia River Salmon Feast Celebration
- CEC Syilx Cooperative Protocol
- Interior Health LOU Signing
- July 4 Paddle
- Special CEC MoFLNRO
- ONA Annual General Assembly
- Special CEC with Minister Poлак
- BC Legal Meeting on CRT
- Okanagan Nation Youth Leadership
- ONA hosted Technical Meeting with MARR representatives
- Hunting Camp
- ONA/Pacific Salmon Foundation Fundraiser
- BC Legal Meeting on CRT
- ONA CRT Issue-Interest Scoping Meeting
- Special CEC: Children & Family
- ONA – NTA BC Hydro ILM Tele-Conference
- Annual Okanagan Salmon Feast
- Chief's Executive Council Meeting
- Special CEC: CRT/Crown Engagement
- UBCO MOU signing Ceremony
- Special CEC: Okanagan Elders Meeting
- Chief's Executive Council Quarterly Meeting
- Wellness Gathering
- Terra Madre, Italy
- Special CEC: CRT - Tir Nation Meeting
- Wilson/Jules Litigation Tele-Conference
- Chief's Executive Quarterly Meeting
- Idle No More
- Special CEC: Health Urban Protocol
- Idle No More
- Special CEC: CRT Tir Nation Meeting
- Special Guest Stephen Kaklwi
- CEC Meeting: CRT/ Crown Engagement
- Special CEC: Yakima Business Council
- Trans-boundary Salmon Management Band School Conference
- CRT – Technical Meeting with Crown
- Health Strategy Sessions
- R'Native Voice Winter Gathering
- Community to Community Forum
- CEC Special Meeting: SOSSEC





# Natural Resources

*The Okanagan Nation has the inherent jurisdiction to manage the land and resources within its territory.*

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Initiated over 35 new projects
- Hosted 16 meetings with community and technical staff
- Provided technical support to the CEC Columbia River study and report
- Mapped over 40 GIS layers on the voicesontheland.org atlas
- Conducted over 80 interviews with Syilx community members
- Recorded over 1,650 nsyilxcən words, and 962 nsyilxcən phrases
- Mapped 15,116 Syilx use and occupancy sites to date
- Conducted cultural research on over 12, 250 km<sup>2</sup> within Syilx territory to date
- Radio tagged 41 blue-listed Western Painted Turtles
- Worked with Syilx communities to conduct archaeological surveys on over 200 hectares of land within Syilx territory
- The ONA library now has over 2,373 books and articles catalogued, 477 audio/visual items and hundreds of maps for Syilx community members to use
- Acquired funding to actively engage Syilx youth
- Supported spring and summer field work for 12 Syilx community members
- Surveyed and studied hundreds of: amphibians, reptiles, birds, and plants in the Upper Columbia/Arrow Lakes
- Technical Resources supported by CEC CRT Technical study and report

We have been working hard to acquire funding to support CEC directives and respective member communities. One of the significant accomplishments over the last year has been the revitalization of the NR department and the Natural Resource Council (NRC). Each Syilx community has reaffirmed their commitment to engage in the NRC process and meetings have been well attended with constructive discussions and resolution. The NRC is also collaborating with Dr. Jeanette Armstrong in her role as the prestigious UBC Okanagan Canada Research Chair through supporting the development of research initiatives designed to enhance land stewardship activities within Syilx communities and at the ONA.

The ONA is engaging in a wide variety of collaborative projects like never before including the development of a comprehensive strategic plan with one of our member communities, Colville Confederated Tribes, for future engagement, which highlights needs and activities on both sides of the international border.

We have retained staff with many years of experience and have been able to support Syilx community members out in the field and in cultural research related activities. There are Syilx footprints out on the land in the Columbia Basin and staff are working with and caring for the land and wildlife. The ONA continues to maintain a resource library to ensure that information resources are preserved for the future, even as information storage devices and formats change.

A few of our key initiatives are:

## REFERRAL RESPONSE

The NR department has successfully partnered with several Syilx communities to develop and implement referral response mechanisms and integrate the online ONA decision Support System (which supports land development decisions and cultural resource mapping). We have worked closely with UNB on this process and now have additional funding to work with OIB in 2013. We will continue to support and be a technical resource to communities.

## YOUTH ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

This year's focus on a youth engagement strategy has been focused on water but there are many areas where we are seeking youth involvement and engagement. The objective as mandated by the CEC is to hear the youth voice, and get them engaged in the myriad of projects that we do at the Nation level.

In addition, the ONA, in collaboration with LSIB, has initiated a 2-year long Water Leaders Training with Similkameen Elementary Secondary School. This program is designed to mentor and educate students to become future Syilx water managers.

*continued...*





## CAPACITY BUILDING

Through negotiations with BC Hydro, the ONA was able to provide funding for the coordination of two archaeology Resource Inventory Standards Certification (RISC) courses. The week-long course is designed to provide field technicians with basic archaeological site identification, note taking, mapping and navigation skills. Both courses were a great success and all 19 Syilx participants are now, RISC certified.

For the first time, the NR department was able to provide field work for 12 Syilx community members. This field work occurred throughout Syilx territory but the majority took place within the Upper Columbia/Kootenay/Arrow Lakes region.

## CULTURAL RESEARCH

The ONA research strategy has been developed to support the Nation's mandate to work collectively to advance and assert Okanagan Nation Title and Rights throughout Okanagan Nation Territory. The research framework, called the Comprehensive Okanagan Research Package (CORP), acknowledges the complexity of the relationship between the Syilx and the broad array of landscapes, ecosystems, and climatic zones within the 69,000 km<sup>2</sup> of their territory and enables the Syilx people to develop research methods collaboratively to gather information on cultural resources and the *tmix* within Syilx territory.

## WATERSHED MAPPING

Very detailed watershed maps have been prepared and uploaded onto the *Voices on the Land Web Atlas* ([www.voicesontheland.org](http://www.voicesontheland.org)) as well as the secure and encrypted site which communities can use to help in their land use decision making processes – the ONADSS. These maps depict most of the current and past land developments within Syilx territory (water licenses, dams, forestry, grazing, mining, energy etc). A detailed analysis has also been completed to determine areas of "intactness" which are areas that are relatively free of development and prime candidates for community protection and restoration plans. The purpose of all ONA mapping work is to support community and CEC decision making processes, referral response and community development.

This year we worked with the Lower Similkameen Indian Band on a placenames project which resulted in 88 more placenames being added to the Okanagan Nation placenames map. We also produced video recordings of LSIB Elders translating each placename. This data set speaks to the relationship between the Syilx and their land and is a valuable resource for future generations.

## OTHER PROJECTS

Additional projects that are on-going include Fortis Transmission Line upgrades with OIB, Shoreacres near Slocan. National Research Council of Canada and the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory are coordinating with the ONA, PIB, En'owkin and the Nature Conservancy to create a more collaborative approach to managing the White Lake Basin.

Next year we anticipate even more opportunities to get out on the land throughout Syilx territory and we will continue to do everything we can to support that endeavor and the direction that the CEC have provided for us.

This work will continue to grow to support the CEC mandate in the protection, advancement and assertion of our Syilx Title and Rights.

# Upper Columbia

The ONA has the expressed direction to identify and protect the expansive and complexity of Okanagan interests on the territory. These specific activities all seek to mitigate, re-dress, protect the fish, wildlife, water and environmental interests of the Syilx Nation. All of our activity attempts to halt or reverse damages from externally driven developments and projects. The ONA ensures that legally at every turn our actions never inadvertently support or condone the activities and thus damages of these projects. At every turn the participation of the ONA and its member communities in these technical projects has had an increased species or habitat protection outcome and resulted in net benefits to the broad land based interests of the Nation.

This year numerous opportunities for technical projects have been realized within this region of Syilx Territory. These projects are highlighted as follows:

## ARROW LAKES AND KINBASKET RESERVOIR MONITORING

Currently, we are working on projects in the Arrow Lakes and Kinbasket Reservoir to assess the relationship between reservoir operations and the plants and animals that occur in the drawdown zone of those reservoirs.

## MONITORING OF REVEGETATION IN KINBASKET AND ARROW LAKES RESERVOIRS

This is an 11-yr program (2012 was its 3<sup>rd</sup> implementation year). The study evaluates the response of select wildlife species to revegetation of the drawdown zone. Studies focused on small mammals (mice, voles, shrews), bats, songbirds, arthropods, spiders, and ungulates (mainly elk and moose) occur throughout the spring and summer.

## REVELSTOKE REACH WESTERN PAINTED TURTLE MONITORING

This project aims to understand the relationships between turtles and reservoir operations and assesses the winter habitat use, annual movement patterns and population trends of this threatened species in the Revelstoke Reach of Arrow Lakes Reservoir. To date, a population of 242 has been determined. Technicians have outfitted 41 turtles (29 females, 10 males, 2 juveniles) with VHF radio transmitters to study nesting sites and movement patterns.

## MONITORING WETLAND AND RIPARIAN HABITAT IN REVELSTOKE REACH

The main objective of this study is to assess the effectiveness of projects designed to enhance wildlife habitat in the Arrow Lakes Reservoir. Results of the study are used to make recommendations to improve wetland enhancement techniques.

## AMPHIBIAN AND REPTILE LIFE HISTORY AND HABITAT USE ASSESSMENT

This project studies the distribution and habitat use of amphibians and reptiles in the drawdown zones of the Kinbasket and Arrow Lakes Reservoirs. The study also assesses the impacts stemming from BC Hydro's Mica Dam (Units 5 and 6) on the survivorship of amphibians in Kinbasket Reservoir.

## JUVENILE STURGEON MOVEMENT RESEARCH IN MIDDLE COLUMBIA RIVER, UPPER ARROW LAKE

Using sonic tagging technology, 50 juvenile sturgeon were monitored for their movements in upper Arrow Lake in around the Shelter Bay to Walter Hardman area of the reservoir. Data was logged on movements, analyzed based on season and reservoir level, and a draft report prepared. Next steps are to use various fishing methodologies to intercept juvenile sturgeon in the upper Arrow Lake to understand growth and survival as part of measuring the success of the White Sturgeon Recovery Initiative for the Columbia River.

## RENATA ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT

The Renata Archaeology Project, gave a group of Syilx trained archaeology field technicians an opportunity to work with archaeologists to undertake a three day long survey of the Renata beaches in May 2012. Our team was able to identify and recover 55 collected artifacts from archaeology site DiQm-13 and 19 artifacts from DiQm-8.

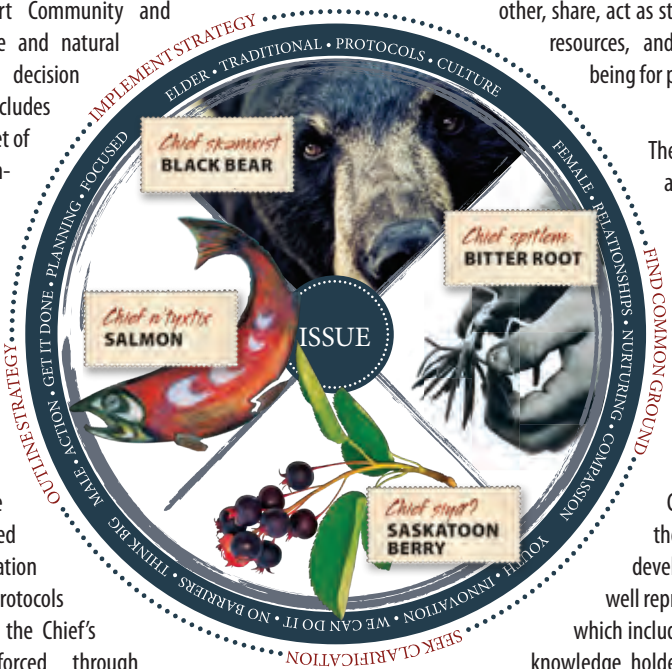
The ONA will continue to work diligently to engage interested Syilx community members in this work and to secure increased participation, coordination and leadership of such projects for the benefits of our Nation.



# Syilx Cooperative Protocol

Over the last year, the CEC set into motion the implementation of the Syilx Cooperative Protocol. This unique collaborative Protocol is based upon Syilx traditional and contemporary principles, processes and practices. It offers a framework to assist and support Community and Nation-based land use and natural resource management decision making. The Protocol includes the development of a set of common principles standards and conditions to be used to measure impacts and benefits, and to screen or soundly reject many more proposed resource-based developments on the Territory.

The Syilx People have always had established protocols of cooperation and sharing. These protocols were implemented by the Chief's authority and reinforced through feasts, ceremonies, potlatches, dances, trading ceremonies, and swanx pow-wows.



The Four Food Chiefs embody the protocols, order and life lessons of the Syilx way of life and culture. In their deliberations Chief Black Bear, Chief Bitterroot, Chief Spring Salmon and Chief Saskatoon Berry reflected how the Syilx trust each other, share, act as stewards of our land and resources, and preserve Syilx well-being for past, present, and future generations.

The development and approval of specific nationwide standards is a vital next step which will greatly assist the Syilx people as they move towards Syilx decision making autonomy within Syilx territory. The CEC has advised that these standards must be developed by a diverse and well represented working group which includes Syilx TEK specialists, knowledge holders and technical staff.

The Natural Resource Council has been tasked with the development and formation of this group.

## SOME EXAMPLES OF SUBJECTS FOR STANDARDS

- Defined cumulative impact assessment procedures for activities and developments
- Standards to ensure the protection of Syilx Title and Rights
- Standards for land use planning including harmonizing efforts and working collaboratively
- Standards for environmental and ecological issues including a list of developments that are not welcome in Syilx territory
- A comprehensive and informed protocol on Syilx Land Ethics procedures
- Standards and methodologies for Syilx Territorial Inventories to occur
- Standards for Archaeological and Cultural Heritage resources
- Mechanisms for the implementation for the *Sux w txtem* policy
- Standards for the protection and preservation of water and air
- Standards for Parks and Protected Areas
- Standards for Fish and Wildlife to ensure they are properly respected and protected.

Once developed, the above list of standards will help to ensure that Syilx laws are known, understood and acted upon within Syilx territory. In addition to the development of standards and protocols as listed above, the CEC have also recommended the development of additional processes which

include: communication protocols and mechanisms, formulas for revenue sharing and distribution, and other tools that will be identified as these responsibilities unfold and progress to ensure the respect and protection and preservation of the *tmix*.

# Syilx Water Strategy

"I am encouraged to hear that our people are talking about creating our own water governance. We have to make these decisions for the good of everybody."

Chief Jonathan Kruger, Penticton Indian Band

The water strategy is a longstanding CEC directive designed to improve relationships and Syilx water governance. A Syilx Water Strategy will assist and support 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. The ONA was able to acquire funding from the Royal Bank of Canada Blue Water Project to support this work. This 4-year initiative called *iq kwu syilx iq siw&kw&st* "our Syilx water" was initiated in the summer of this year. The preliminary implementation of the strategy heavily focuses on community involvement and direct input from the Syilx people. It is critical to the project's success to hear our members express their knowledge, insights and deep convictions on such important work and the numerous and complex issues our members are facing in their homes, communities and at the National level that are associated with a growing demand and the allocation and use of water. Syilx community dialogue is a primary objective of this 4 year project that will result in a final report documenting the Syilx perspective on how to improve current regulatory frameworks and the cultural significance of water management within Syilx territory. It is the Chiefs that are vigilant in their efforts

to ensure that clean, flowing water – the lifeblood of the land, is properly respected and available for all living things... *for the good of all for all time.*

The community engagement process is guided by the following:

- Ensuring that community members are aware of current provincial and federal water management regimes within Syilx territory
- Ensuring that community members have an opportunity to participate in the Syilx Water initiative including how the initiative engages Syilx communities and the development of a water strategy
- Providing community members with an opportunity to offer their input to this initiative including what the Syilx water strategy should look like, who to talk to, how we can solve community specific water issues (action plan development) and how to ensure that community members are actively involved in the management of Syilx water
- Integrating information about Syilx interests, concerns and values related to water into the Syilx Water Strategy

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION AWARENESS OVER THE PAST YEAR INCLUDED

- 5 Natural Resource Council meetings
- 3 Chief & Council meetings
- 5 meetings with community technical staff
- 7 meetings in communities
- 8 people interviewed
- 6 events
- 2 water workshops
- A joint TEK Committee meeting
- A speaking engagement by former premier Stephen Kakfwi of NWT
- 4 meetings with other Indigenous organizations working with water
- 2 spin off projects developed including water for youth project in the Similkameen and support for the Okanagan Youth Alliance (OYA) to engage in a youth in water stewardship initiative





# Fisheries and Aquatics

The goal of the ONA is the conservation, protection, restoration, and enhancement of Indigenous fisheries (anadromous and resident) and aquatic resources within Okanagan Nation Territory.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- 60 k Okanagan Sockeye were harvested
- 10 k Sockeye salmon was distributed to Okanagan Nation member communities
- 2012 harvest year raised awareness and benefited the trans-boundary harvest negotiations
- 450,000 Okanagan Sockeye salmon returned to the Columbia River
- Okanagan Sockeye Hatchery plans 95% completed
- Through relentless pressure, we now have a process with the province and federal fisheries to scope the impacts of the Columbia River Treaty and water storage when Okanagan salmon migrate as juveniles and adults in the Columbia River
- The ONA has the largest Stream to Sea Program in BC supporting 10 schools, with 14 tanks within the Okanagan.
- 8,500 fish passed through Skaha dam and spawned in the Penticton Channel
- 100,000 adult Sockeye spawned in the Okanagan River
- Okanagan Sockeye was a highlighted food at the International Slow Food Terra Madre Conference in Turin, Italy

The ONA's main focus continues to be on Salmon recovery in the Upper Columbia and Okanagan sub-basin, but throughout the Thompson, Columbia and Okanagan basins there are over 60 fish-related projects that are also taking place.

Highlighted below are some of this year's diverse projects:

## YELLOW LAKE CREEL

Creel surveys are conducted on Yellow Lake in the summer and winter of 2012/2013. Information was gathered from anglers as well as information from the fish caught. This included taking scale samples and lengths. Rainbow Trout and Brook Trout were two of the fish species caught by anglers.

## CHINOOK CREEL SURVEYS

Chinook FSC surveys were done where we observe and record and interview anyone that was fishing at Middle Shuswap River for Chinook. This occurred between July 15 and August 15, 2012. Creel surveys are vital tool to monitor fishery performance, evaluate stock impacts, and provide the data upon which future management decisions can be made.

## NICOLA LAKE

ONA fisheries, in partnership with the Upper Nicola Band have worked with the Nicola Tribal Association members to conduct acoustic trawl surveys on Nicola Lake since 2008. Other data taken during the survey included zooplankton, temperature, and oxygen readings.

## COHO WALKS LUMBY

Coho walks were conducted in order to survey spawning Coho salmon on Besette, Creighton and Harris creeks in Lumby. These surveys have been conducted since 2000 in collaboration with Okanagan Indian Band in order to determine the distribution of holding and spawning Coho while noting habitat quality and habitat limitations.

## OKANAGAN FISH TRAP (CARP & SOCKEYE)

Sampling occurred for 5 – 7 days in May to determine the feasibility of catching carp. Data collection through beach seining included count of all species caught, biosampling, and random sampling of carp for length, sex, and gonad weight and fecundity. Site assessments and validation were completed for monitoring adult fish abundance and distribution and habitat utilization.

## OKANAGAN LAKE SAMPLING

During 2012 the ONA was contracted by the Ministry of Forest, Lands Natural Resource Operations to carry out Mysid collection samples, Lake trawling, and Mysid sampling and monitoring on Okanagan Lake. ONA completed standardized stepped oblique trawls to obtain a representative sample of fish of all ages in the pelagic zone of Okanagan Lake, this took place in August.

## MIDDLE VERNON CREEK FRY

Fyke netting of the outmigrating fry from Middle Vernon Creek. The goal of this project is to estimate the abundance of fry for Wood Lake stream spawning Kokanee and assess the feasibility and design of a permanent flow control structure at the outlet of Duck Lake which flows into Middle Vernon Creek and then into Wood Lake. Due to high water flow during outmigration the sampling was cut short and we were unable to monitor the complete outmigration. Because of this, ONA and B. Marchand from OKIB tested new sampling methods to catch fry during high water in order to provide an estimate of the number of fry outmigrating to Wood Lake.

## KOKANEE ENUMERATION & BIOLOGICAL SAMPLING

This project is where we enumerate adult Kokanee spawners and collect biosamples from Equisis, Naswhito, and Whiteman creeks within OKIB Reserve.

## LAB ANALYSIS

To increase capacity the ONA operated a lab that was run by two full time staff during 2012 - 2013. Fish, were processed for length, weight, age, thermal mark (hatchery fish), DNA, and fecundity. Over 17,000 fish were processed. Over 5,000 Mysids were counted and classified by size. Water was filtered and prepared and sent to a chemical lab for nutrient analysis. Our lab does biological sampling on different life stages of the fish, including fry, smolts and adults.

This year our lab staff have started to learn how to age the Kokanee and Sockeye that we collect and process. In the past these samples were sent to DFO for analysis.

An exciting note is that we plan to expand the work we are currently doing to include processing of the fish stomachs (diet) to identify what they are eating. This will start in June 2013 and will tie into the bioenergetics model for the Sockeye Reintroduction Program.



Chinook Release: R to L : Elder Pauline Gregoire, OKIB; Chief Byron Louis, OKIB; Chief Wayne Christian, Splatsin



## *k̓c̓p̓el̓k̓'̓stim* Hatchery

2012/2013 saw the detailed planning and approvals for the *k̓c̓p̓el̓k̓'̓stim* Hatchery Facility. Okanagan Aquatic Enterprises Ltd. and ONA worked collaboratively with the Grant and Chelan PUDs to advance the conceptual design of the hatchery through a rigorous 33%, 66%, and 100% design review process. This collaboration led to the drilling of the hatchery's three production wells, to obtain all environmental and engineering approvals, and to finalize the Lease, Well Permit, and other related agreements with the Penticton Indian Band and Canada.

2013/2014 will be busy with bidding out the construction of the hatchery project, selecting a qualified builder, and managing the construction phase. Construction is expected to begin in July 2013 and run through to September 2014. Once completed, the 25,000 sq ft hatchery will have the capacity to rear up to 8 million Sockeye salmon eggs which will be released annually as fry into Shingle Creek. 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.



# Sockeye Reintroduction Program

At the end of the three-year risk assessment in the spring of 2003, it was determined that with proper project design, reintroducing Sockeye salmon into Skaha Lake posed little threat to resident fish stocks, and the ONA proceeded with an experimental fry reintroduction program. The ONA is now in year nine of this twelve year study.

This project encompasses all areas including:

- Broodstock (collection/fertilization)
- Habitat Restoration
- Monitoring
- Okanagan Sockeye Run
- Okanagan Sockeye Harvest
- Community Education and Outreach

## BROODSTOCK

In October, 2012 approximately 1.1 million eggs from 440 female Sockeye Salmon were collected and fertilized. Disease screening was conducted and of the nine years, only a single stock (by 2010) tested positive and higher than normal for virus disease sampling (greater than 25% prevalence). The fry have always tested negative for Infectious Hemipoeitic Necrosis (IHN), a harmful pathogen (virus). To date, the percentage of hatchery-origin Sockeye used for broodstock has ranged from less than 1% in 2011, to 14% in 2007.

These eggs will be raised to the fry stage at the Shuswap River hatchery, until they are released into Skaha and Osoyoos Lakes in May 2013 as a key component of the twelve-year Skaha Sockeye Reintroduction experiment.

This year (2012) marked a milestone as the first year that the entire broodstock process was led by ONA – a clear demonstration of building ONA Fisheries capacity over the last 10 years.

## FISH HABITAT RESTORATION

Fish habitat restoration in the Okanagan remains a key priority for the Sockeye Reintroduction program. ONA must remain diligent to:

- Re-gain fish access to historic habitat by providing fish passage at man-made migration barriers.
- Re-naturalize destroyed fish habitat by creating spawning & rearing habitats, by re-activating floodplain, by restoring riparian vegetation, and by adding natural features in river and creeks.
- Work in collaboration with provincial & federal authorities and water withdrawal landowners to ensure fish friendly flows in the Okanagan River and tributaries.
- Monitor fish habitat conditions (current status and trends post-restoration activities) within Okanagan basin.

Specifically, the monitoring program adaptively managed and implemented successful restoration works; completed the engineered design of phase 1 (spawning platforms); the baseline data on groundwater and surface water elevations; and for preparing engineered design for Skaha Dam passage

In the area of fish passage a conceptual plan was designed which itemized the design criteria to further the engineered design for Skaha Dam Passage.

## MONITORING

As part of the program ONA continues to monitor :

- To ensure the program is not impacting the current Sockeye and Kokanee population
- In addition biologists document the positive and/or negatives to the Sockeye being re-introduced to Skaha lake
- Document how well the salmon in Skaha lake are doing

Monitoring includes:

- Kokanee Adult Monitoring
- Juvenile Kokanee Monitoring
- Harvest and Compliance Monitoring
- Adult Migratory Studies
- Smolt Migration (Skaha to Osoyoos)
- Lake Research (Water Chemistry, Plankton, Mysid Harvest and Food Web Interactions)

## OKANAGAN SOCKEYE RUN

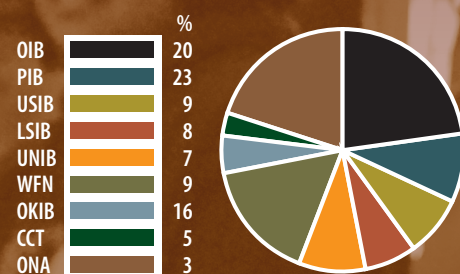
The return for Okanagan River Sockeye in 2012 was 435,000 fish with approximately 95% of the return comprised of 4 year old fish. Returns were expected to significantly exceed the long term average return for Okanagan Sockeye as well as the 2012 cycle year average. A high degree of uncertainty exists with respect to marine survival conditions as well as in-river migration conditions.

Significant harvest opportunities for Food Social Ceremonial harvest, commercial and recreational fisheries were anticipated in Canada.

## OKANAGAN SOCKEYE COMMUNAL HARVEST AND DISTRIBUTION

10, 677 FISH HARVESTED & DISTRIBUTED

The ONA harvested 10,065 Sockeye in the 2012 harvest season beginning in July and ending in September. One in five Sockeye harvested in Osoyoos Lake was distributed to community via the member community health departments, for 2012. The chart illustrates community distribution according to percentage of fish caught.



ONA Communal Fish Distribution 2012

There was an approximate 3% of the catch as identified in dark green as ONA that was used for Salmon Feast and other ceremonies/events as well as good-willed to non-Okanagan members during tours and site visits.

This year's harvest was a record year that scientists alike could not have forecasted – a memorable milestone of Okanagan Nation Fishery.

## SUMMARY OF 2012 CANADIAN OKANAGAN SOCKEYE HARVEST

	FSC	DEMO	TOTAL
Angling Catch	994	1,208	2,202
Gillnet Skaha Dam			0
Gillnet Osoyoos	880	0	880
Seine Osoyoos	8,780	48,282	57,062
Fish Trap Skaha Dam	23	0	23
Harvest (Okanagan)	10,677	49,490	60,167
Escapement			100,000
Wells Dam Count			326,100

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH & EDUCATION

Education and community outreach to the public, nation members and the scientific community remains an integral part of the success of the Sockeye Reintroduction program.

Some activities this past year included:

- March 2012 | Kelowna, presentation at BC Fish and Wildlife Region 8 Meeting
- May 2012 | Victoria, Poster presented at American Fisheries Society BC and Washington Chapter meeting,
- November 2012 | Kamloops, presented to the Mid-Fraser/Thompson Okanagan Sport Fish Advisory Board
- ONA delivers a unique education and outreach program dubbed "S2S," (Stream to Sea). Students get an opportunity to raise Sockeye salmon, thus teaching them the value of freshwater and marine ecosystems. Classroom aquariums allow students to watch eggs develop into fry. ONA staff visit classrooms and present different topics.

• In May, students release the fry they raised back into the qawsitk™ (Okanagan River) in Penticton as a key component of the reintroduction program.

• Regular meetings are held with the Penticton and Osoyoos Indian Band Chief and Councils to provide updates

• Public campaigns on Chinook head recovery and fish species identification are held throughout the summer and early fall months

• Information booths set up at member community events and career fairs

• Community members joined ONA Fisheries staff to assist with harvest and to view harvest methods

• Scientific presentations made at UBC Okanagan

• ONA-hosted events : Annual Fry Release Ceremony, Salmon Feast, Chinook Release, Columbia River Salmon Ceremony, and partnership with Pacific Salmon Foundation gala to showcase of Okanagan Sockeye

• We continue to have many visitors to the broodstock site in October, including schools, partners, and people walking along the Okanagan River path. They experience and view many interesting aspects of broodstock. They witness how Sockeye are collected, sorted into males and females, and placed into holding pens. Eggs are removed from females and milt from males. In addition, they can view disease testing occurs by sampling the kidneys as well as ear bones (known as otoliths) collected for aging

## 2013 SEASON FORECAST

In 2013 the number of Okanagan Sockeye returning to mouth of the Columbia River is forecast to be 150,000 adults. This would result in 105,000 to 120,000 Sockeye over Wells Dam. A food harvest will likely occur in addition to opportunities for commercial and recreational fisheries.



# Okanagan Sockeye Demonstration Fishery

The ONA has been evaluating the feasibility of an economic fishery since 2009 as a means to ensure the benefit of Okanagan salmon remains with the Okanagan Nation and ensure future access for a recovering food fishery. In addition, increasing catch will benefit trans boundary salmon negotiations with the US. Simply put, if we don't use it, someone else will. Advice from ONA Legal is that this fishery is an expression of our fishing rights and won't impact the Title and Rights of the Okanagan.

Funds to assist with this feasibility come from the Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (PICFI), this is an initiative aimed at achieving environmentally sustainable and economically viable commercial fisheries, where conservation is the first priority and First Nations' aspirations to be more involved are supported. As part of this program the ONA looked at the following:

- The feasibility to harvest enough salmon to have a sustainable commercial/economic fishery
- The "Okanagan Select" Product 
- "Okanagan Select" consumer education and brand recognition
- Working with other inland salmon producers to develop a regional brand concept

## OKANAGAN NATION COMMERCIAL/ECONOMIC FISHERY

Sockeye begin returning to the Okanagan in July when food fisheries begin, and economic and recreational fisheries did not start until August. Purse seining and trolling were the two methods tested in the 2012 Pilot Economic Fishery at Osoyoos Lake. A purse seine net measuring 600 ft in length, 90 ft depth and a mesh size of 1 inch when stretched was set in the north-central area of the lake. Purse seining began in early August until 1st of September, when most of the Sockeye had receded back to suwiws (Osoyoos Lake).

A total of 48,282 Sockeye were harvested with the purse seine and 1208 were harvested by angling catch totaling 148,470 lbs. Of that, 10,677 were distributed to ONA member communities.

Trolling was also conducted using Scotty downriggers with five to six lines per rigger (including 10-12 inch flashers and pink hoochies with barbless hooks). Approximately 1,100 Sockeye were sold directly to local markets.

In 2012, a few community members and the Nk'Mip Desert Cultural Centre, along with the help of ONA and the BC Sportfishing Group, began their own eco-guiding venture calling themselves "Okanagan Nation Cultural Fishing group". Trolling was their method of focus this year with plans to incorporate cultural fishing methods in future years. Two vessels, with designated fishers and/or ONA member, fished in the lake during the first half of August.

## THE PRODUCT

Approximately 20,000 lbs of fish were canned and 10,000 lbs of headed and gutted Sockeye were inventoried for later sale of Indian candy, smoked lox and fillets.

The remainder of fresh fish was sold through a price bid selection process with the ONA operating the landing site. Lessons were learned in taking control of the fishery rather than leaving to the fish buyers as fish buyers attempted to 'cannibalize' the Okanagan market with fresh sales with bids to buy our fish at a low price per pound and sell back into Okanagan Market at a lower price to drive down the price of local salmon and cut ONA out of our direct marketing campaign. In the end the price was nearly twice as much with emphasis on funds put back to community development and training in the fishery (community kitchens, fish totes/gear, cutting training, etc).

Once the inventory from 2012 is sold the demo fishery will see a small profit through sales in 2013.

## CONSUMER EDUCATION AND BRAND RECOGNITION

As part of increasing the Okanagan Select brand recognition and to seek assistance in consumer education ONA joined the Thompson Okanagan Slow Food © movement and became one of the slow fish ambassadors for the region. (Slow Fish is an initiative of Slow Food and this is where the Okanagan Sockeye fits into this movement.) This movement includes: responsible fair access fisheries, teaching consumers how to buy fish and giving them valuable advice about what fish to avoid protecting our seas. There is a list of the "yes" fish that can be eaten without hesitation and the Okanagan Sockeye is on this list.

This regional convivium has assisted the ONA in reaching out to the local and regional community to educate them and provide a venue for us to share our story of bringing the salmon back.

In 2012 ONA was selected to participate in Terra Madre, a major bi-annual conference held in Turin Italy, intended to foster discussion and introduce innovative concepts in the field of food. There were people from around the world in attendance with speakers such as Dr. Vandana Shiva who spoke about the need to protect the freedom of seed and biodiversity and our own freedoms to have healthy, safe and diverse food. Okanagan Sockeye was a highlighted food representing Canada, as the Okanagan Nation embodies the principles of an artisanal fishery, sustainability, and bringing back a food that is a main food source for Indigenous peoples.

From the Terra Madre conference we've learned that taking control of your fishery and securing access is a common worldwide issue for small artisanal fisheries and in the future there may be value in participating in Slow Fish International if there are benefits related to increasing the profile of the Okanagan Sockeye on an international stage.

## INLAND SALMON PRODUCERS/ REGIONAL BRANDING

In 2012 the Okanagan Nation Alliance became a part of the Inland Salmon Producers Association (ISPA). This group promotes through the marketplace the inland salmon fisheries, the river fishing cultures, and the high quality natural and wholesome fish that is produced, as certifiably sustainable, healthy, and beneficial to the salmon, the producer and the consumer.

ONA involvement focused as:

- Board Member
- Marketing delivery agents developing a regional brand (Communications/Marketing lead)
- Demonstration fisheries and training of other First Nation Fisheries (reciprocity sending ONA Fisheries staff to Harrison Fishery and Northern Shuswap Fishery.)

This year the group has formalized its members with Howie Wright representing the ONA. Other members include Upper Fraser Conservation Alliance: Brian Toth, Harrison Fisheries Authority: Kim Charlie and other participants such as Snohomish Fisheries Inc. and Lake Babine Fisheries.

This group works as a forum and best-practices body, organized to provide for operations planning among ISPA members. The group met three times: August 2012, December 2012, and February 2013 as well as presented at the National Aboriginal Fisheries Forum II in Nanaimo BC.

Benefits for the ONA as a part of this group are:

- Provides an opportunity for development of a regional brand
- Provides assistance in logistic and sale strategies
- Showcases stewardship (and responsible trade) and revitalizing of inter-tribal trade arrangements
- Traceability and catch monitoring platforms help to secure regional and national accounts

A major milestone for this group was the development of a regional brand and marketing strategy for "River Select".

## NEXT STEPS

Given the projected numbers there will be a small commercial fishery with a goal to do a communal food harvest at the same time. As this economic pilot moves forward the fishery will continue to share the story of the Salmon coming back.

2013/2014 will see the following initiatives:

- The ONA has been invited to participate at the Canadian Slow Food Convivium to showcase the Okanagan Sockeye
- ISPA will launch the River Select brand and campaign in the fall of 2013
- ONA will continue to be the communications and marketing lead for ISPA and the River Select Brand



# Language & Culture

The ONA CEC is committed to the preservation and practice of Syilx language and culture.

The ONA continues to integrate whenever, wherever possible the development of nsyilxcən language and culture resources in all initiatives. This past year there has been a variety of cultural celebrations and ceremonies on the territory:

- Okanagan Nation Salmon Feast and ceremony
- Canoe Trek July 4 Paddle
- Numerous Water ceremonies
- Chinook release ceremony
- Sockeye fry release ceremony
- Columbia River and Kettle Falls ceremonies
- Syilx hunting camp
- Food Gatherings
- TEK Teachings
- Elders Support in our work

This work continues to be guided by the Elders and Speakers throughout the Okanagan Nation communities. Other partnerships throughout the year included work with Paul Creek Language Association to access over 1000 nsyilxcən words and phrases to upload to the FirstVoices Website which included in this project were 29 water words that are being utilized for the *i?kwu\_syilx i?siw?kwtat* strategy that the ONA is undertaking. These words are all available at [www.firstvoices.com/nsyilxcen](http://www.firstvoices.com/nsyilxcen)

In addition the En'owkin Centre continues to be a key resource for supporting our Nation initiatives as a cultural resource on some of the natural resource and youth projects. We like to extend our gratitude especially to *caylx* (Richard Armstrong) who with a very busy work schedule as a Instructor both at UBC Okanagan and En'owkin will find the time to support the ONA mandate.

On a provincial level through the First Peoples Heritage Language and Culture Council (FPHLCC) has changed their office name to First Peoples Language Council (FPLC) and William (Bill) Cohen continues to represent the Okanagan Nation on the Board of Directors. This Provincial organization is mandated to support First Nation languages, arts and culture.

Next year will see the development of the following resources:

- Syilx Lullaby CD for ages prenatal to 6 years
- Syilx Curriculum Resource Binder for early learning programs
- "A Family for Chipmunk" story book for use by children in the AFGC process

# Okanagan Youth Alliance

To build a stronger youth leadership, with an emphasis on Syilx culture, language and unity; thus developing responsible role models, individual wellness and positive change for future generations.

With a desire to create a path best suited for the youth of our nation, Okanagan Youth Alliance (OYA) participated in their first strategic planning session at the beginning of December 2012. OYA took steps towards further developing their purpose and goals. On the agenda was to take a look at the overall structure of the group and breakdown what it is they truly want to accomplish within this youth initiative.

They came up with a new 4-part structure: Public Service (Giving back), Leadership/Life Training, Self-sufficiency (Fundraising/Funding) and Youth Advocacy (Our Voice). Within each category we brainstormed many great ideas, but ultimately chose a few short term and long-term goals to focus on. This is an ongoing initiative working with these youth to help them build capacity and take on new initiatives at a Nation level.

OYA took part this year representing the Nation at various events and activities such as representing the Nation Youth at the BC Gathering Our Voices Conference in Penticton, Spring Break 2012.

Two initiatives that OYA worked on this past year were the Water Stewardship Initiative, and two OYA representatives were recruited to work on the Public Health Service Agency (PHSA) Indigenous Wellness Pilot. They were trained to conduct focus groups with youth within the Nation

OYA will be doing more strategic planning in partnership with ONA, redeveloping the structure of OYA and refining the goals and plan for the upcoming year.

Kirsten Lindley	TBD	LSIB
Antonio Pulido	Fisheries	OIB
Justen Peters	Youth Mental Health	OKIB
Warren Hooley	Health	PIB
Dina Brown	Culture & Language	OKIB
Sylvester Cohen	Natural Resources	UNIB
BJ Cardenas	Child & Family	UNIB
Quentin Scott	Sport & Recreation	WFN
Sacheen Lindley	Education/Culture	WFN
Taylor Baptiste	TBD	OIB
Alicia McRae	TBD	UNIB

Okanagan Youth Alliance  
Unity Run: Nation Youth, Members and ONA Staff





# Wellness

*Reclaiming and Restoring Syilx way of being and knowing (world view) through development of wholistic Wellness programs and services grounded in a Syilx-centered framework.*

## HIGHLIGHTS

- First Nations Health Council, Interior Region and Interior Health Authority signed a Partnership Accord
- Implementing the Letter of Understanding with Interior Health Authority at a Nation level
- ONRT delivered Community Grief Workshops in two communities
- The AFGC program impacted 58 children and youth
- ONA Early Childhood Development Culture and Language Gathering at Spirit Ridge in Osoyoos, May 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. Approximately 40 AECD staff from across the territory attended to share information and collaborate on how to incorporate Syilx culture and language into their AECD programs.
- ONA begins developing a trail blazing LOU with Ministry for Children and Family Development
- Youth Mental Health community driven strategic planning for R'Native Voice, ONRT and ACYMH program.
- 85 people attended the Nation's Wellness Forum

ONA Wellness Department consists of three clusters: Health, Youth Mental Health and Children and Families. This year we have seen many changes, developments and successes. The team continues to work toward implementing the Chiefs Executive Council (CEC) Business plan priorities. The Wellness Committee in the advisory of the CEC, and supports and guides the strategic development of the Nation Wellness initiative.

## CHILDREN & FAMILIES

The ONA is seeking a Service Delivery MOU with the urban Aboriginal organizations in the territory. This would provide coordinated, collaborative planning for services for Aboriginal people within Okanagan Territory.

The Wellness Committee who provide the input, support and direction to ONA Wellness strategic planning to influence and increase Okanagan Nation's profile and increased services and cultural safety in Mainstream Public Health and Social Services and Child Welfare remain very active; 3 evaluation meetings were held to ensure that the delivery of ONRT and R'Native Voice are effective and exercise current best practices.

Within the Child and Families section of the Wellness department, there are 3 divisions. Aboriginal Family Group Conferencing is a direct service within children and families; AECD is a capacity building and community support coordinator and resource for early childhood programs within the territory and Child & Family planning is developing strategies, agreements and plans for current and future child and family services within Okanagan territory.

The ONA Wellness Committee has articulated a VISION for Syilx service delivery (operations) that implements a Syilx cultural framework. The service delivery model will result in a continuum of services from Prevention and Support to Protection. Section 20.1 Delegated Statutory services would be one component in a range of services. Syilx Child and Family Services would care for all Aboriginal children residing in the Okanagan Territory.

Children and Family working group (Social Development workers from seven member communities), has engaged in extensive community engagement. This has included hosting several workshops looking at *capṭik'w* and *nsyilxcən*. This work has assisted the Committee to begin realizing this vision. We have had:

- 18 community visits
- 3 Bi-Monthly meetings with MCFD/AANDC and ONA
- 12 Wellness Committee meetings
- 6 presentations to Chiefs Executive Council
- 14 community workshops
- 2 Nationwide events (Forums, Fish Camp)
- 2 Custom Care focus groups
- Provided support and participated at Provincial and federal events in Child and Families.

A Letter of Understanding between the ONA members bands and the Ministry for Children and Families is being developed. This will create a relationship and work plans that will evaluate, assess and redefine services to Aboriginal children and families within the Okanagan territory.

The plan will outline:

- Cultural Framework
- Community Voice
- Administering Authority
- Service Delivery Model
- Implementation Plan including financials

This coming year we plan to finalize the Syilx Child and Family Framework, present to MCFD and AANDC and begin start up.





**ABORIGINAL FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCING (AFGC)**

This year the AFGC program has worked with 38 families throughout the Okanagan Nation. There were 40 circles held, 23 new conferences and 17 follow-up meeting held. We also consulted with 12 families for other processes and overall support. Over the course of these circles there were 58 children and youth impacted. The overall impact that the circles saw included working with 33 children and youth remaining in their family home, 10 being returned to primary parents and 3 being returned to extended family members. We also saw 10 children remaining in the care of the Ministry and 2 children going into care.

We have seen an increase in families self referring and the Nation Social Workers accessing the AFGC program. We saw in influx of referral from the South Okanagan offices and working with both the Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal MCFD teams. The program has the opportunity to complete circles for the Penticton, Summerland, and Princeton MCFD Intake teams. This support to families at intake and pre-intake is vital in assisting families to be successful in caring for their children. With the increase in referrals, in order to meet the needs of the Nation, additional coordinators is a necessity.

This past year the Okanagan Nation Alliance was asked to work with the Thompson Region and assist them with training 16 AFGC coordinators. This allowed the opportunity for networking and collaboration of the AFGC workers throughout the Province.

This coming year, as a result of moving to a more traditional decision making process, the program will be changing its name from AFGC to Family Decision Making.



**ABORIGINAL EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (AECD)**

The AECD programs can include Aboriginal Infant Development, Aboriginal Supported Child Development, Aboriginal Headstart, Preschool, Daycares, and Aboriginal Success by 6 programs, Early Childhood, pre and post natal programs and any other programs supporting Aboriginal children aged 0-6 and their families.

This year the AECD hosted a Syilx ECE Gathering in May 2012 at Spirit Ridge and brought together 40 early childhood development staff to share resources and tools. The development of the Syilx Aboriginal Early Childhood development strategy has began to be implemented along with strengthening the AECD communication strategy.

The ONA in partnership with the En'owkin Centre and Nicola Valley Institute of Technology developed and saw the completion of the first year of the Syilx Early Childhood Certificate program.

**HEALTH HUB**

This year has been an engaging and productive year for the Health Hub as the ONA continues to lobby and respond to local health service issues that are facing the member communities and the Nation.

The Okanagan Nation responded to Upper Similkameen Indian Band's call for support. Temporary hospital closures were announced for Princeton due to lack of temporary coverage. Okanagan Nation provided support and lobbied then-Minister DeJong for an expedient resolution of the current crisis to ensure services were not lost.

Okanagan Nation wrote letters to the IHA Board Chair to voice their concern about the announcement made by IHA the imminent closure of STI clinics within the Interior Region due to the impact this would have within Aboriginal communities and their access to services.

The ONA continues to collaborate:

- The ONA collaborated with ONEMATCH to promote Aboriginal blood and bone marrow donors. From the Nation community nurses were trained in swabbing and Chief Jonathan Kruger is noted as the first Chief to register in ONEMATCH as a potential donor.
- Health as Partnership project strengthened relationships between the ONA and UBCO, Interior Health and mainstream health professionals.
- ONA Wellness Committee: health working group – health working group continues to collaborate on Nation projects, for example, nurse practitioner proposal.

A Nation Health Strategy Session was hosted February 28, 2013. It included Nation leadership, health staff and community members. This session was a huge success giving the ONA valuable direction to move the health portfolio forward.

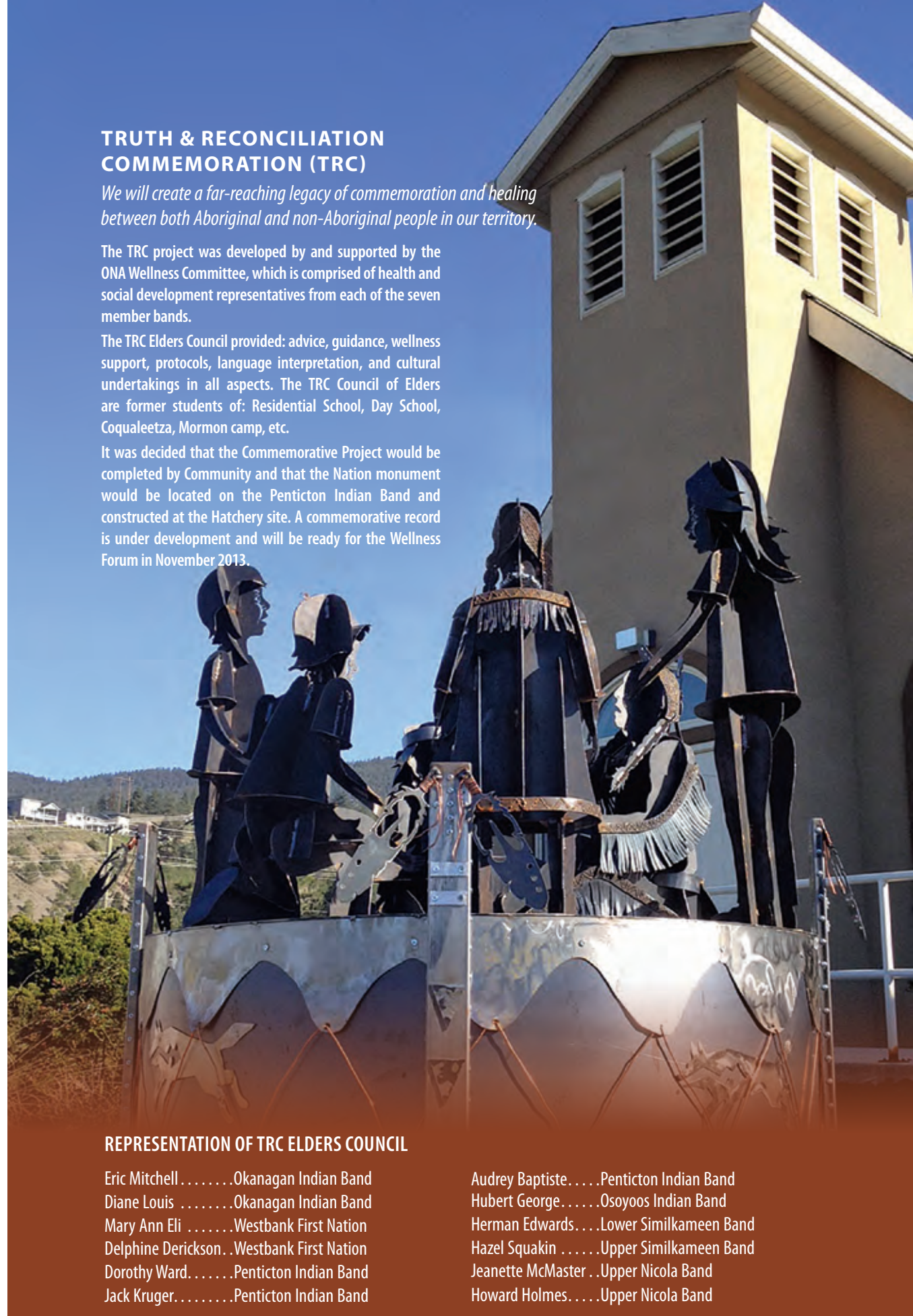
**TRUTH & RECONCILIATION  
COMMEMORATION (TRC)**

*We will create a far-reaching legacy of commemoration and healing between both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in our territory.*

The TRC project was developed by and supported by the ONA Wellness Committee, which is comprised of health and social development representatives from each of the seven member bands.

The TRC Elders Council provided: advice, guidance, wellness support, protocols, language interpretation, and cultural undertakings in all aspects. The TRC Council of Elders are former students of: Residential School, Day School, Coqualeetza, Mormon camp, etc.

It was decided that the Commemorative Project would be completed by Community and that the Nation monument would be located on the Penticton Indian Band and constructed at the Hatchery site. A commemorative record is under development and will be ready for the Wellness Forum in November 2013.



**REPRESENTATION OF TRC ELDERS COUNCIL**

Eric Mitchell . . . . .Okanagan Indian Band  
Diane Louis . . . . .Okanagan Indian Band  
Mary Ann Eli . . . . .Westbank First Nation  
Delphine Derickson . .Westbank First Nation  
Dorothy Ward . . . . .Penticton Indian Band  
Jack Kruger . . . . .Penticton Indian Band

Audrey Baptiste. . . . .Penticton Indian Band  
Hubert George. . . . .Osoyoos Indian Band  
Herman Edwards. . . .Lower Similkameen Band  
Hazel Squakin . . . . .Upper Similkameen Band  
Jeanette McMaster . .Upper Nicola Band  
Howard Holmes. . . . .Upper Nicola Band



## YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

In 2012-2013 the Youth Mental Health sub-department underwent a Community Strategic Planning process whereby there were two Nation community sessions. We reviewed the Youth Mental Health programs, and recommendations for enhancements were developed. The Youth Mental Health cluster encompasses the Okanagan Nation Response Team (ONRT), RNative Voice, and the position of Aboriginal Child and Youth Mental Health Coordinator.

## OKANAGAN NATION RESPONSE TEAM (ONRT)

Responses	#	Age Range	# people supported
Suicide Attempts	7	4 (10 - 18)	14
		2 (25 - 25)	9
		1 (36 - 50)	8
Suicide Completion	0		
Self Harm	2	2 (10 - 18)	6
Violence	2	1 (10 - 18)	8
		1 (25 - 35)	7
Tragic Death	3	1 (10 - 18)	4
		2 (25 - 35)	64
Trauma (health related)	0		0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>14</b>		<b>120</b>

The Goals for ONRT in the 2013/2014 year will be to:

- Revise the ONRT Program Manual
- Implement their Communications Plan
- Host three (3) team training boosters

## R'NATIVE VOICE PROGRAM

At the end of the School year we had over 30 youth receive high school leadership credits for completed the R'Native Voice Program in 2011-2012. Our working relationship with the school districts in our area of service is going well. They see the benefits of the program and are in complete support of our program.

The R'Native Voice program continues to be actively involved in reaching the Okanagan Nation youth with a focus on building capacity and leadership.

## Building a Better Future

While building the Southern Crossing Pipeline, FortisBC forged strong relationships with the member communities of the ONA. In recognition, Fortis BC has established an annual Financial Award/Bursary for Okanagan Nation members who are committed to building a better future for themselves and their community through post secondary educational studies.

The 2012 recipients were:

- DINA BROWN, OKIB
  - YOLANDA GEORGE, PIB
- Both students are students of Human Kinetics.

Community	R'Native Voice @ start	# Session @ completion	#	Start Date	Completion Date
Westbank	8		10	03/2012	06/2012
Osoyoos	12		12	02/2012	06/2012
KFS	6		8	03/2012	06/2012
OKIB	7		9	03/2012	06/2012
Sookinshoot	8		10	03/2012	06/2012
TOTALS	38		49		

Community	R'Native Voice @ start	# Session @ completion	#	Start Date	Completion Date
L Similkameen	22		15	11/2012	02/2013
Osoyoos	10		7	11/2012	03/2013
Penticton	8		ongoing	03/2013	06/2013
Upper Nicola	7		ongoing	01/2013	04/2013
Westbank	8		ongoing	01/2013	05/2013
OKIB	9		ongoing	02/2013	05/2013
TOTALS	64				

## RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

The ONA Wellness department continues to develop capacity in the members it serves and gather resources for the use of the Okanagan Nation member communities.

There were numerous forums and strategy sessions held including the Annual Wellness Gathering held October 24-25<sup>th</sup> in Penticton, which brought community and stakeholders together with a focus on bringing Syilx youth and elders together. Promotion and recruitment of youth from throughout the Okanagan Nation was successful with over 40 youth and 80 community members in attendance.

There were three major Youth focused events in 2012/2013:

- Annual Youth Summer Gathering May 4-6, in Spaxomin (Upper Nicola)
- Spirit of Syilx Youth Unity Run: Suicide and Violence Awareness, May 31, 2012
- Okanagan Nation Youth Leadership Conference, Komasket Park July 24-26 (Okanagan Indian Band)



## Education

*"Education is crucial for young people, especially Aboriginal youth who are using that education to help their communities grow."* Chief Robert Louie

## OKANAGAN NATION EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Okanagan Nation Education Committee (ONEC) made efforts to meet regularly this past year. The purpose of ONEC is to provide expert educational advice and strategic direction to the Okanagan Nation Alliance Chiefs Executive Council for the protection, advancement and implementation of Okanagan control over education at all levels of government through promotion, advocacy, policy development, networking, collaboration, capacity building and communication.

## OKANAGAN NATION RENEWS ITS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA OKANAGAN

On September 28, 2012 the ONA and its member communities renewed a Memorandum of Understanding with UBC Okanagan to further Aboriginal education at the Kelowna campus. Since welcoming UBC in 2005, the Okanagan Nation has established a long-term relationship with the university. The MOU with UBCO underlines the importance, opportunities and benefits of higher education for Indigenous people of the Southern Interior.

The renewal of the MOU continues to embrace the spirit and intent of the original signing which values distinct cultures, languages, territory, life-long excellence in learning and respect for Indigenous peoples and their lands.

At the ceremony, Deborah Buszard, deputy vice-chancellor and principal of UBC's Okanagan campus, said "the Okanagan people, their traditions, culture and future are essential to the university. We are honoured that UBC has been welcomed into the traditional territory of the Okanagan Nation, and are thankful that we have been so warmly embraced by the Aboriginal community."

"Renewing our agreement with the Okanagan Nation Alliance ensures that the opportunities for higher education will continue to be available to these First Nations of the Southern Interior. Our joint initiatives are dedicated to this goal and reflect the high value we put on our relationship."

Chief Robert Louie; Chief Byron Louis; Pauline Terbasket, Executive Director and members of the Okanagan Nation Education Committee represented the ONA at the signing.

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION HIGHLIGHT

In February the Nation's member communities came together for the annual Okanagan Nation Band school conference held at Spirit Ridge in Osoyoos. The conference was co-hosted by *ntámle snm'a ?m'aya?tn* school from the Lower Similkameen and *sen'pok' chin* from Osoyoos Indian Band.

The community schools came together to celebrate the successes of the schools and learn from each other. The Band School Conference is really evident and speaks to the success that we can find as a Nation when our member communities collaborate.



ONA/UBCO MOU Signing Ceremony: Chief Robert Louie, WFN and Deborah Buszard, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Principal, UBC Okanagan





*"Everyone should know  
their family tree and  
know who they are."*

Okanagan Nation Salmon Feast  
Okanagan Nation Elder,  
Margaret (Maggie) Kruger

## *Sts-oomsts yeeh S-Ooknahkchinx* OKANAGAN NATION DECLARATION

*Yeeh koo S-Ooknahkchinx kgoolhentem yarpnah shchelhecharlt  
kchlkidekmintet kgel yayart yeeh sentsoo-weeptet. Oothl yalah  
yarpnah koo Isoot.*

*We, the Okanagan Nation make this declaration today as a sign for every  
generation to come. Therefore, we hereby declare that:*

*Mneemthltet yeeh koo xahtmaskchilwk, koo temskchiwhehwh yatlal te  
temwhoolahwh, yeeh toomhtemhtet.*

*We are the unconquered aboriginal peoples of this land, our mother;*

*Telh kgoolhentsooten swhitzetxtet yeeh toomhtemhtet, ksnpee-  
eelshmenhtemh, kstxetdenhtimh oothl kskgethikchiwhenhtemh.*

*The creator has given us our mother, to enjoy, to manage and to protect;*

*Telhs meegas qchesapihs, yeeh koo xahtmaskchilwh koos queleewtx eel  
toomhtemhtet.*

*We, the first inhabitants, have lived with our mother from time immemorial;*

*Yeeh koo S-Ooknahkchinx yeeh tzohchentsootentet koo xeehxeestim koo  
kgel yayart phchwikstmentem an hchastan yeeh telh toomhtemhtet.*

*Our Okanagan Governments have allowed us to share equally in the  
resources of our mother;*

*Loot penhkinh ide xeehxeexmentem yeeh stethltethltet yeeh kgel  
toomhtemhtet, yeeh telh toomhtemh an hchastantet, yeeh  
txtdeeplahntentet oothl yeeh noonemwheenahntentet.*

*We have never given up our rights to our mother, our mother's resources,  
our governments and our religion;*

*Loot penhkinh koo tdeks ntzespoolawhahx. Peentk kstxtdiplahntemh  
yeeh telh toomhtemh an hchastantet koo kgel yayart, telh yarpnah  
oothl tdeswhoois.*

*We will survive and continue to govern our mother and her resources  
for the good of all for all time.*

### CHIEFS AND COUNCILORS

#### OSOYDOS INDIAN BAND

Chief - Clarence Louis  
Councilors - Vernice McGinnis  
- Thomas Alex

#### PENTICTON INDIAN BAND

Chief - Adam Eness  
Councilors - Jeanette Smilgong  
- Leo Orland  
- Joseph Pierris  
- Archie Jack

#### UPPER SIMILKAMEEN INDIAN BAND

Chief - Hazel Squakin  
Councilors - Karen Holmes  
- Carrie Allison

#### LOWER SIMILKAMEEN INDIAN BAND

Chief - Barney Allison  
Councilors - Richard Terbasket  
- Ralph Bent  
- Pauline Terbasket

#### OKANAGAN INDIAN BAND

Chief - Mursy Alexis  
Councilors - Gradin Alexis  
- Johnny (Tim) Alexis  
- Albert Saddleman  
- Cecil Lewis  
- Matthew Bonneau  
- Molly Bonneau  
- Herbert Simpson  
- Raymond Gregoire  
- Daniel Wilson

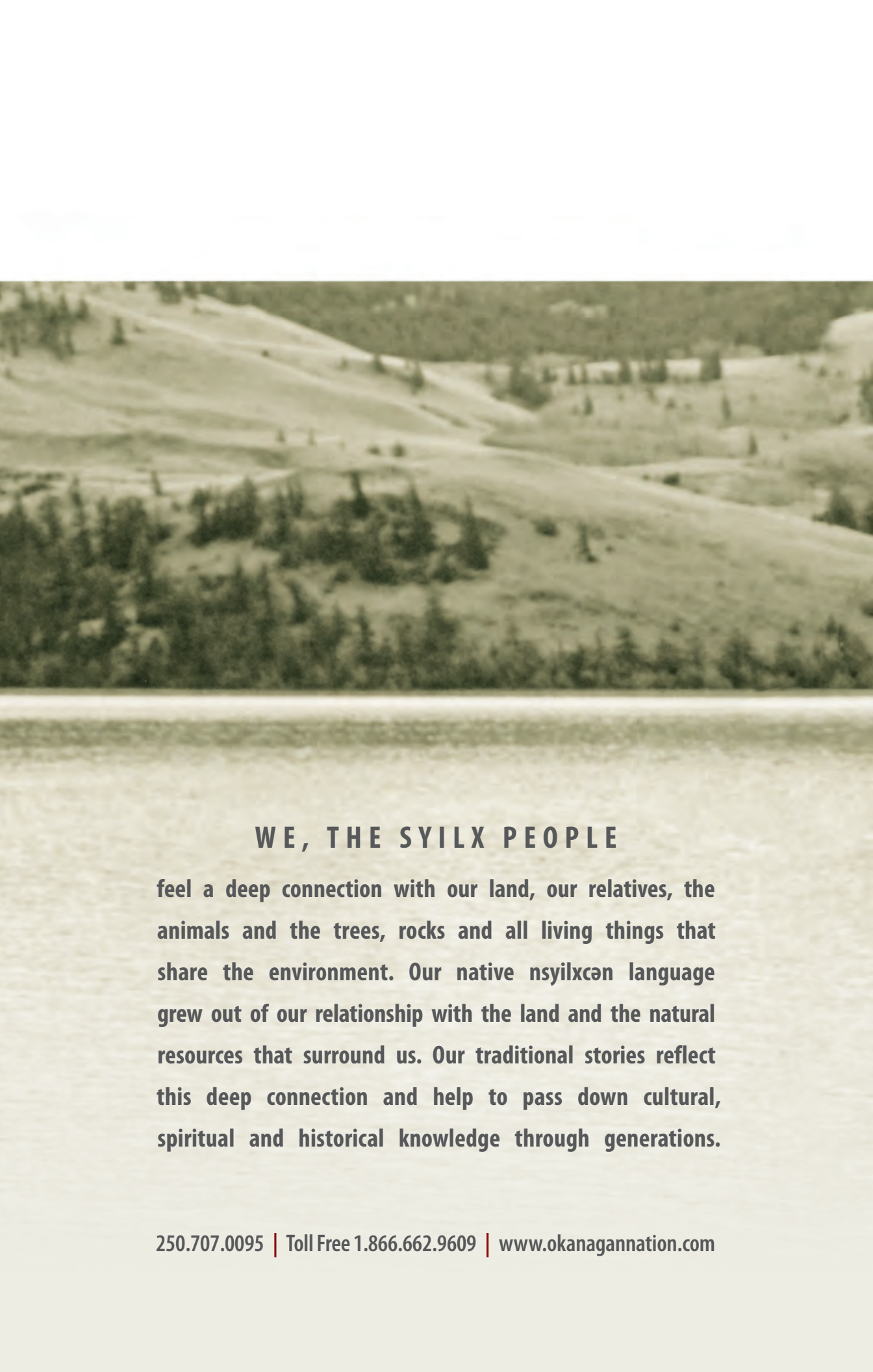
#### WESTBANK INDIAN BAND

Chief - Robert Louie  
Councilors - Harold Deridson  
- Rose Deridson

#### NICOLA INDIAN BAND

Chief - Fred Holmes  
Councilors - Harvey McLeod  
- Walter Archachan  
- Sharon Lindley  
- Richard McLeod





## **WE, THE SYILX PEOPLE**

**feel a deep connection with our land, our relatives, the animals and the trees, rocks and all living things that share the environment. Our native nsyilxcən language grew out of our relationship with the land and the natural resources that surround us. Our traditional stories reflect this deep connection and help to pass down cultural, spiritual and historical knowledge through generations.**

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