



Okanagan Nation Alliance's Co-Publication Wins 2021 Mercer Patriarche Best Paper in the North American Journal of Fisheries Management

August 24, 2022

tkwəłniwt (Westbank), Syilx Territory: The Okanagan Nation Alliance is honoured to announce that their co-authored publication "Age-Structured Interactions among Reintroduced Sockeye Salmon, Resident Kokanee, Invasive Mysids, and their Zooplankton Prey in Skaha Lake, British Columbia" was selected by the American Fisheries Society as the best publication for 2021 in the North American Journal of Fisheries Management. The primary authors are the late Dr. Kim Hyatt, former Head of Salmon in Regional Ecosystems Program, Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Dr. Don McQueen, Professor Emeritus of Limnology at York University. Additional authors include Ryan Benson, M.Sc. ONA Fisheries Biologist and Howie Wright, M. as well as Dr. Athena Ogden (DFO). It is important to mention that the late Dr. Hyatt was a Sockeye expert, an advocate and important ally in ONA's efforts to restore salmon stocks and habitat on Syilx Territory.

Receiving this Award would not happen without the dedication and collaboration numerous partners forging strong working relationships in revealing the substantive, quantitative evidence on how the release of sockeye fry do not have substantial impacts on resident kokanee populations, as was once proposed. It is also the result of years of dedication by multiple people and organizations on the ground that have worked to ensure that sockeye salmon return to the Okanagan.

In addition, as stated in this study, it is also "one of a growing number of cases in which First Nations have assumed responsibility for the resources in their traditional territories and in which cultural and spiritual beliefs have informed resource stewardship," and provides recognition for the importance of First Nations fisheries management.

The Okanagan Nation Alliance continues to be a leader in the field of fisheries management and salmon restoration, with the largest First Nations conservation hatchery on the continent. The Syilx Nation remains committed to ensuring the salmon are restored throughout all parts of the Syilx Okanagan territory.

The American Fisheries Society provides the award and is the world's oldest and largest organization dedicated to strengthening the fisheries profession, advancing fisheries science, and conserving fisheries resources. For more info on the American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting, where this award will be given out on August 22 2022, please visit: <https://afsannualmeeting.fisheries.org/>

To read the full publication please visit:

<https://afspubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/nafm.10635>