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Historic Electricity Purchase Agreement Signed with BC Hydro to Fulfil 2011 Commitment in ILM Final Agreement

tkwəłniwt (Westbank), Syilx Territory: The Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) and Upper Nicola Band (UNB) are proud to announce the signing of an Electricity Purchase Agreement (EPA) with BC Hydro. Under the terms of the EPA, the UNB and ONA have jointly developed a groundbreaking 15MWac solar project located on Upper Nicola Band's Nicola Lake IR No.1, situated 30km northeast of Merritt and in close proximity to the BC Hydro Nicola substation.

The Syilx Okanagan Nation's traditional territories and in particular the lands of Upper Nicola Band is an energy corridor in British Columbia. For this reason, the Syilx Okanagan leadership has committed to create opportunities for Syilx communities to develop and own energy projects that benefit members. This landmark agreement is a significant step towards the development of future sustainable energy projects on Syilx Okanagan territory. The EPA was committed to under the [Interior Lower Mainland Final Agreement](#), which was reached between UNB, ONA and BCH in 2011.

This solar project will interconnect to the BC Hydro distribution system, further bolstering the region's renewable energy capacity. It is set to be the largest, over 100 acres, solar plant in British Columbia, showcasing the commitment of both the ONA and UNB to sustainable energy development. This ambitious endeavor will not only contribute to the province's cleaner energy goals but also generate economic opportunities and job creation for local communities.

Chief Dan Manuel, Upper Nicola Band, expressed his enthusiasm for the partnership, stating, "We are excited to bring this historic solar project into reality after many years of project development and negotiation with BC Hydro. It is a testament to our shared commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainable development. Together, we are paving the way for a greener future while creating economic benefits for our people. As we move toward net-zero emissions globally it is projects like this that set the foundation for meaningful participation of indigenous communities"

"The signing of this Electricity Purchase Agreement marks a significant milestone for the Syilx Okanagan Nation. We are proud to be at the forefront of renewable energy initiatives, and this solar project exemplifies our dedication to self-sufficiency and the well-being of all Syilx communities," Chief Clarence Louie, ONA Tribal Chair, stated.

"The signing of this Electricity Purchase Agreement is a testament to the continued vision, collaboration, and perseverance of Syilx Okanagan leadership. As a momentous endeavor, this signing illustrates how Syilx leaders are committed to the principles of sustainability, economic development, and the empowerment for Syilx Okanagan people throughout the territory," Chief Robert Louie, Westbank First Nation, added.

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ONA is one of 81 known Tribal Councils in Canada that currently operates within the parameters of the 1984 Cabinet approved policy that established the principles and the conditions for funding Tribal Councils. The ONA mandate is to work collectively to advance and assert Syilx Okanagan Nation Title and Rights over the Syilx Okanagan Nation Territory.

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