

yilík^wlxkn (Bighorn Sheep)

Psoroptic Mange Initiative Information Update 2



SPRING UPDATE: A NEW CHAPTER BEGINS

Over the past few weeks, the sheep have become accustomed to the pens, which will serve as their home for the next 15-18 months as we initiate our Psoroptic Mange Clinical Trial. This transition marks the beginning of a carefully monitored and promising study. It has been fascinating to observe how individual personalities and group dynamics are already beginning to emerge. From playful interactions in Pen 1 to more reserved behaviour in Pen 4.

One ewe, from Pen 1, quickly made herself known. She's proven to be especially confident and curious, often approaching handlers during feeding times. She's mastered the routine and shows an unmistakable fondness for the grain. Her behaviour has brought smiles to the team and serves as a gentle reminder for the unique bond that can form between animals and caregivers in a research setting.



yilík^wlxkn (Bighorn Sheep) Pens: Ewes from Pen 1 Feeding, 2025.



yilík^wlxkn (Bighorn Sheep) Pens: Ewes exploring the area, 2025.)



The Syilx Nation continues the work of our ancestors by caring for the land and the living things that inhabit it. This initiative is part of our broader mission of naqsmi?st xəl tmix^w.

naqsmi?st xəl tmix^w is an nsyilxcən term that roughly translates to “coming together for all tmix^w (all living things)”. This phrase highlights our commitment and duty to work collectively on all matters of mutual interest in respect to tmix^w and tmx^wulax^w within the traditional Syilx territory.





yilikʷlɨkn (Bighorn Sheep) Psoroptic Mange Clinical Trial

In other exciting news, we're delighted to announce the arrival of the first lamb - born on Easter Monday morning! The timing of this lamb's birth was notable, as it was the first lamb to be born within the pens—an encouraging development amid ongoing efforts in the Psoroptic Mange Clinical Trial. The birth of lambs has brought some energy to the pens, even as our focus remains on the upcoming treatment phase of the clinical trial. We've taken the time to let the sheep settle into their new environment and reduce stress, creating optimal conditions for both healthy births and the eventual commencement of treatment. Once the lambs are well bonded with their mothers and everyone is fully acclimated, we'll begin the next steps in the process.

As we move further into spring, we're looking forward to continuing our work with this remarkable group of animals. There is a lot to learn, and we will keep you updated as the study progresses. For more content, follow us on Instagram or Facebook for updates on lamb arrivals, behind-the-scenes footage from the pens, and progress on the trial. If you are interested in getting involved there will be upcoming volunteer opportunities to come help out at the pens. Stay tuned!

Expected Impact:

This work aims to establish effective, scalable treatment for Psoroptes in wild herds, advancing adaptive wildlife management strategies for sustaining yilikʷlɨkn populations across BC and internationally.



yilikʷlɨkn (Bighorn Sheep) Pens: first lamb of the season, 2025.

yilikʷlɨkn Psoroptic Mange Initiative

Population of Interest:
Ashnola/Similkameen
Population Unit

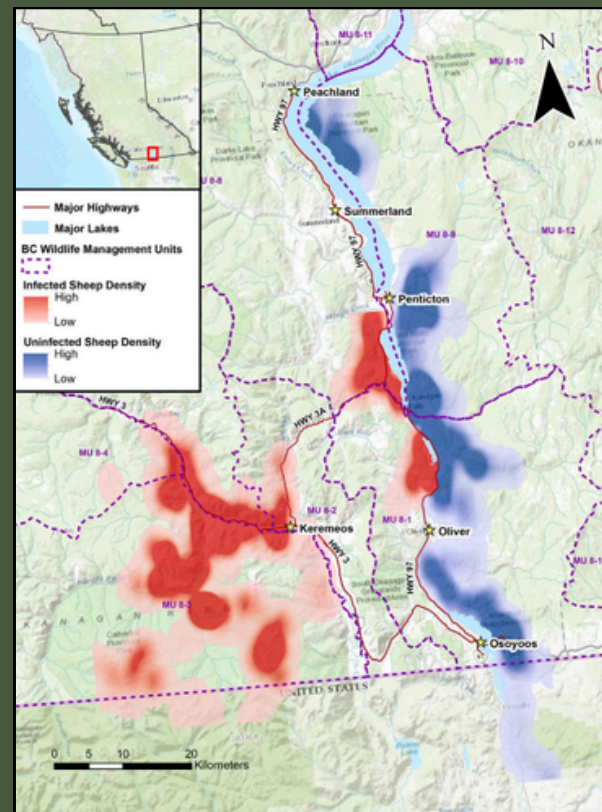
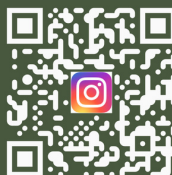
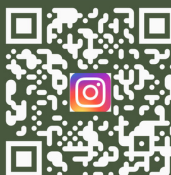


Figure 1: Estimated densities of bighorn sheep with Psoroptic Mange (red) and Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae Bacteria (blue) in the Okanagan Valley. The study this figure is from, can be found at the following QR code.

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Frequently Asked Questions

Bighorn Sheep Psoroptic Mange Trial



What is the *yilík^wlxkn* (Bighorn Sheep) diet?

The sheep in the pens are provided a natural diet that includes alfalfa, grass, hay, loose mineral supplements, and the natural green-up that grows in their pens. Jack Knife Brewery has also graciously been donating its spent grain from the brewing process—which is completely alcohol-free. Together, this creates a balanced mix that supports their health and well-being.

Where are all the *yilík^wlxkn* (Bighorn Sheep) in the study from?

The sheep in the pens come from the Ashnola-Similkameen Population Unit, which extends from Penticton down to the US Border. The sheep currently in the pens are from the PIB Reserve, Ashnola, Similkameen, and Chopaka.

How long will they be held in the pens?

They will be in the pens for the duration of the trial which will be approximately 15 months to 18 months.

Will there be opportunities to visit the sheep?

Absolutely! Community members will have the chance to visit the *yilík^wlxkn*. To prioritize the animals' well-being, we will arrange small group visits that encourage expressions of gratitude, respectfully and thoughtfully. Sharing the work being done by the Nation with the community is a priority,