



Tsilhqot'in National Government Announces Permanent Salmon Conservation Hatchery

The Tsilhqot'in National Government (TNG) has formed a historic partnership with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) to develop a permanent salmon conservation hatchery in the Tsilhqot'in territory to be managed and operated by TNG.

A conservation hatchery for Tsilhqot'in Nation salmon has been a long-standing Nation-wide priority for the recovery and rebuilding of territory stocks. The TNG has fought and made significant sacrifices to conserve Tsilhqot'in salmon, including protecting our headwaters in our Title lands where these salmon spawn and rear.

The Tsilhqot'in Territory is a salmon Stronghold. Tsilhqot'in Title lands are home to the spawning and nursery grounds of the Chilko ts'eman (sockeye) run, which is the strongest annual sockeye run of the Fraser River. The Tsilhqot'in fishery is one of the most selective and sustainable in the world. However, Tsilhqot'in salmon face unprecedented challenges with the significant decline of Jaš (Chinook) over the last few decades, near extirpation of tislagh (steelhead), and record-low returns of ts'eman in recent years.

The investment in the permanent and larger hatchery is an important tool in the Nation-wide priority of recovering Tsilhqot'in wild stocks and supporting a thriving traditional fishery. Since 2019, TNG has conducted key technical work that has resulted in the establishment of the small-scale TNG-led interim salmon conservation hatchery, which is now in its second year of operation in the territory. The establishment of a larger, permanent hatchery is an important milestone for the Nation in protecting and recovering Tsilhqot'in salmon populations. It is also an important symbol of collaboration, being supported by both DFO and the Province of B.C.

The Tsilhqot'in National Government is the governing body for the Tsilhqot'in people. The Tsilhqot'in Nation is comprised of six communities located throughout the Tsilhqot'in (Chilcotin) territory and is the only Nation in Canada with a court declaration of Aboriginal title (Tsilhqot'in Nation v. British Columbia).

“Salmon are an integral part of our life as T̓silhqot̓in people. We have the most selective and sustainable fishery in the world with our traditional dip net fishery. Unfortunately, despite our efforts to protect wild salmon stocks that spawn in our territory, more has to be done. A permanent conservation hatchery is a welcomed addition to the fight to conserve T̓silhqot̓in salmon. Due to the T̓silhqox landslide this summer, our people did not harvest fish. This loss is not just a localized issue – salmon are a life source for people, lands and animals as they make their journey through the ocean and waterways. Our people are happiest when they can fish – we must do everything we can to ensure that we will always have fish in our territory. We are hopeful that with the right level of commitment and collaboration this hatchery will help support the rebuilding of our most vulnerable salmon populations and a thriving fishery for the future.”

—Nits̓il̓?in (Chief) Joe Alphonse, O.B.C, LL.D. (hon.). Tribal Chair, T̓silhqot̓in National Government

-30-

MORE INFORMATION: [HTTPS://TSILHQOTIN.CA/OUR-TERRITORY/FISHERIES/](https://tsilhqotin.ca/our-territory/fisheries/)

PHOTOS:

[HTTPS://DRIVE.GOOGLE.COM/DRIVE/FOLDERS/1AZTFF7MOH00KDXFSZXUURCFFTAB7NVVW?USP=SHARING](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1AZTFF7MOH00KDXFSZXUURCFFTAB7NVVW?usp=sharing)

CONTACT:

MYANNA DESAULNIERS
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

MYANNA@TSILHQOTIN.CA
CELL 250 305 7885