

MEDIA RELEASE



By Ta'an Kwä'chän Council

For immediate release: April 4, 2018

Re: Ta'an Kwä'chän Council Continuation of Fox Creek Salmon Restoration Project

Ta'an Kwä'chän Council, who lost 25,000 Chinook salmon fry due to a fire at the McIntyre Creek Incubation Facility on Mountainview Drive, assures that the Fox Creek Salmon Restoration Project will go on.

Chief Kristina Kane says: "We are saddened about the loss of the Chinook salmon. Salmon are crucial in our heritage as Ta'an Kwä'chän, or people of the head of the lake. The Fox Creek Salmon restoration project began in 2007 as a way of re-establishing a self-sustaining population of Chinook salmon in a tributary of Lake Laberge where the fish had been extirpated. We were guided by traditional knowledge that told us the salmon had once existed in these waters of our Traditional Territories. The project—fostered by Elders, supported by Citizens and many generous collaborators— is successful in that we have strengthened relationships, provided education and training for youth. In recent years we were happy to see wild hatchlings emerging from the substrate.

Ta'an Kwä'chän Council would like to extend its sympathies to the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, who suffered a loss of fish, and our supportive project hosts, Yukon College, who lost part of the important McIntyre Creek Incubation Facility.

We note the fragility of life. However, we have long been aware of the resilience of nature and of our own people. We are confident that our project, now more than 10-years old, will meet these present challenges and grow."

There may be lower numbers of adult returns for several years with fewer eggs being naturally deposited. The opportunity to train youth and staff in tagging in preparation for the fry release will most likely be diminished this season. However, this is a well-established and healthy project, dear to the hearts of the Ta'an people. Ta'an Kwä'chän Council will continue to monitor juveniles, flow rates, temperatures, wild fry emergence and the adult returns. While the loss of the Chinook fry in the hatchery is a misfortune, it is heartening that some fry, being raised in schools through the Stream to Sea Program, will be available for release. Through the interest of youth, the strength of our staff and Citizens, and the continued support of our partners and collaborators, the Fox Creek Restoration Project will continue to thrive.

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