



---

January 8, 2015

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**The Grizzly Bear (ki?law na?) in the Okanagan Territory, At Risk and Deemed  
Protected by the Okanagan Nation**

**Okanagan Nation Territory/Westbank, B.C.** – The Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) Chiefs Executive Council has declared Grizzly Bear, known as ki?lawna? in the nsyilxcen language, as At-Risk and in need of protection.

The Okanagan Nation Alliance has received some funds to support the protection of this at-risk species and to assist in recovery efforts. Federal Minister of Environment, Leona Aglukkaq, has granted a \$39,000 project to the Okanagan Nation under Canada's National Conservation Plan, which works to advance conservation efforts across the country. This funding will assist the Syilx Nation to gather important information and work to build the supportive relationships, partnerships and projects needed to help ki?lawna? survive.

The Syilx (Okanagan) territory was once home to thriving populations of grizzly bears but today few remain. Without prompt recovery efforts, three remnant grizzly populations, the North Cascades, the Kettle-Granby, and the South Selkirks will soon disappear. It is critical that we ensure that ki?lawna? is protected and recovered in ways consistent with our culture, traditional knowledge, values, laws and customs.

"Ki?lawna? has been an integral and critical part of Syilx culture since time immemorial" said Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, "its presence in Syilx Territory is an indicator of the health of Syilx land and people. We will work to build the supportive relationships needed ensure that ki?lawna? will remain and thrive in its natural environment."

The Chiefs Executive Council also announced it will work with Conservation Northwest and the Coast to Cascades Grizzly Bear Initiative to further population recovery in southwest BC. Grand Chief Phillip continued, "We call upon government agencies, our neighbouring nations, and others to also act promptly to save Ki?lawna?"

Thanks to funding from Environment Canada, the Federal Government's support will help position the ONA and its member communities as leaders in wildlife conservation.

For more information, please visit [www.okanagannation.com](http://www.okanagannation.com)

- 30-

**MEDIA CONTACTS:**

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, ONA Chairman  
Cell: 250-490-5314

Al Peatt, ONA – Wildlife Biologist  
Office: 250-707-0095, ext. 213  
Cell: 250-469-1595  
Email: [apeatt@syilx.org](mailto:apeatt@syilx.org)

Tara Montgomery, ONA – Communications  
Office: 250-707-0095, ext. 120  
Cell: 250-862-6866  
E-mail: [TMontgomery@syilx.org](mailto:TMontgomery@syilx.org)