



## Media Release

### **Partners launch resilient housing solutions project at Kanaka Bar to assist with rebuild of fire-ravaged Lytton, B.C., region**

*Kanaka Bar Indian Band, SAIT, Okanagan College, Foresight Canada and Seko Construction partner to harness innovation to provide options for the rebuild of the region*

**Kanaka Bar, B.C.** (Jan. 13, 2022) — Patrick Michell, Chief of the [Kanaka Bar Indian Band](#), announced today they have entered into an agreement with the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology ([SAIT](#)) on a pilot project focused on climate-resilient housing options for evacuees who lost their homes in the June 30, 2021 Lytton, B.C., wildfire. The project is expected to reveal sustainable new build and retrofitting solutions not only for Kanaka Bar's members, Lytton residents and the surrounding region, but also all Canadians looking to make their homes resilient to ever-increasing extreme weather events.

The Kanaka Bar Resilient Housing Solutions project is a community-led and community-driven initiative. The project will see SAIT leading a collaborative team with participants from [Okanagan College](#), [Foresight Canada](#) and [Seko Construction](#) over 10 months to create foundational options for rebuilding in the Lytton region.

The applied research project leverages the expertise and reach of the team to issue an immediate call for commercially approved, Canadian housing building material technology providers/product options. The pilot project will include the design and build of four to eight homes to test and validate material properties, climate resiliency, energy performance and affordability. The goal is to develop a suite of viable options for the region, and other communities, throughout medium and long-term rebuilding activities.

This agreement showcases the leadership of Kanaka Bar and their desire to help the greater Lytton region and beyond. The project brings together leading polytechnic institutions from western Canada and Foresight, Canada's cleantech accelerator, to create an unbiased, multi-disciplinary team of experts that will assess the long-

term needs of the greater region and develop a plan for the future. The vision is to build more resilient structures and address future climate impacts with meaningful solutions.

The Kanaka Bar Resilient Housing Solutions project involves several phases:

- Applied research and community engagement led by Chief Michell and SAIT's [Applied Research and Innovation Services \(ARIS\)](#), specifically its Green Building Technologies (GBT) division, in collaboration with Okanagan College, Foresight and Seko Construction.
- An Innovation Challenge will be issued by Foresight and SAIT to source resilient and sustainable commercially available solutions and construction products needed to rebuild housing structures. The solutions will meet the criteria for BC Step code 5 with respect to fire/water/wind resiliency, energy efficiency, long-term sustainability and affordability.
- After selection of the Innovation Challenge winners, the initial phase of the project will conclude with the construction of four to eight housing structures ready for occupancy by September 2022.

#### **Quotes:**

"We are delighted to bring together leaders in applied research and innovation to tackle the urgent need to build back our region. We are combining the power of our community with the latest building practices to ensure new housing and its supporting systems, as well as older buildings in the region are made sustainable and climate-resilient."

**– Chief Patrick Michell, Kanaka Bar Indian Band**

"The Kanaka Bar Resilient Housing Solutions project will be a truly collaborative effort. It will bring together communities, institutions and innovative solution providers. This will impact all Canadians, especially for our hardest hit neighbours in B.C., through public sharing of the processes and innovations used in the project."

**– Mark Butler, Interim Vice President Corporate Development, Applied Research and International, SAIT**

"Foresight is pleased to bring our proven successful Innovation Challenges model to this critical effort. We will tap into our extensive network of cleantech ventures in the built environment space to help source solutions that will help rebuild this community on a solid foundation of sustainability, resiliency, and adaptation."

**– Jeanette Jackson, CEO of Foresight Canada**

"Okanagan College is looking forward to being involved with this innovative and collaborative applied research project. This project will provide learners, educators, industry and community with real-world opportunities to pool their skills, knowledge and expertise, in the pursuit of a highly important and beneficial cause."

**– Dr. Andrew Hay, Provost and Vice President Academic, Okanagan College**

“Clearly the most challenging health and safety issue faced today by First Nations, throughout all points of Canada, is the urgent need to effectively address the quality and standard of on-reserve housing that unfortunately, has plagued Indigenous leadership, and government, for decades. Attached to this ongoing crisis is the issue of affordability as value for dollar is equally critical. We at Seko Construction, commend Chief Michell and the Kanaka Bar Indian Band for providing us the opportunity to participate in this exciting endeavour and we have the utmost confidence that this innovative initiative will bring about the much needed, and long-awaited solution, for countless Indigenous communities and their memberships.”

— **Peter Shoulak, Vice President, Seko Construction (Vancouver) Ltd.**

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### **About Kanaka Bar Indian Band**

[Kanaka Bar Indian Band](#), also known as "T'eqt'aqtn'mux" or "the crossing place people," is one of 15 Indigenous communities that make up the Nlaka'pamux Nation. For more than 7000 years, Kanaka's Traditional Territory sustained its people. Located 14 kilometers south of Lytton in the Fraser Canyon region of British Columbia, there are an average of 80 residents and the population doubles as membership return home in the summer to visit, fish, gather and reconnect with the land. Committed to using its lands and resources to maintain a self-sufficient, sustainable, and vibrant community not just for today but for the environment and economy of tomorrow, Kanaka Bar has invested in community and climate resilience for years, including a variety of FireSmart initiatives. In 2021, The Kanaka Bar *Community Resilience Plan* was voted "Top Project of the Year" by 130 sustainability leaders at the Clean50 Summit held in Toronto.

For more information on Kanaka Bar and what they are doing and why – visit the community website at [kanakabarband.ca](http://kanakabarband.ca) and view their most recent video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NK2DSAFN-k>

### **About SAIT**

Established in 1916, SAIT was the first publicly funded technical school of its kind in North America. Today, SAIT is a global leader in applied education and research, serving more than 50,000 students annually. SAIT offers certificate, diploma, post diploma, apprenticeship and applied degree programs, baccalaureate degrees, corporate training and more than 1,000 continuing education courses as well as six dedicated and award-winning research areas. Curriculum and research at SAIT is developed through industry partnerships to ensure graduates and industry have the skills and knowledge required in the workplace. SAIT is honoured to be selected by Mediacorp Canada Inc. as one of Alberta's Top Employers for 2021, and to be ranked seventh in Research Infosource Inc.'s Top 50 Research Colleges in Canada for 2020.

SAIT is situated on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy. The City of Calgary encompasses a region the Blackfoot tribes of Southern Alberta described as Moh'kinsstis, meaning 'Elbow,' in reference to its location at the confluence of

the Bow and Elbow rivers. Since time immemorial, this region was a traditional gathering place for the tribes of the Blackfoot Confederacy. Today, the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy encompasses the Indigenous people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta: the Siksika, the Piikani, the Kainai, the Tsuut'ina, the Stoney Nakoda First Nations and the Northwest Métis Homeland — Region 3. [sait.ca](http://sait.ca)

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**About Foresight**

Foresight is Canada's cleantech accelerator. Foresight supports the identification and validation of cleantech opportunities and the successful commercialization of solutions. We bring together industry, government, academia, investors, and innovators to address today's most urgent climate issues and support a global transition to a green economy. Find out more at [www.foresightcac.com](http://www.foresightcac.com). Follow on Twitter @ForesightCAC.

**About Okanagan College**

Serving the beautiful Okanagan, Shuswap and Similkameen valleys, Okanagan College has campuses in Penticton, Kelowna, Vernon, Salmon Arm and a centre in Revelstoke. We live and work in the unceded territories of the Syilx-Okanagan, Secwepemc, Ktunaxa, and Sinixt. We honour, work with, learn from, and listen to Indigenous communities. Okanagan College delivers more than 150 programs to more than 17,000 learners (approx. 8,000 full-time equivalent students) each year. The College's program array spans trades and apprenticeship, business, health and social development, arts, science, engineering technologies, food, wine and tourism, adult basic education and continuing studies programs. More information about Okanagan College and its programs and services for students can be found at [www.okanagan.bc.ca](http://www.okanagan.bc.ca)

**About Seko Construction**

Seko Construction (Vancouver) Ltd., a member of the Permasteel Group of Companies, has been one of Western Canada's premier design-build contractors since 1953. With offices in Ft. McMurray, Edmonton, Calgary, and Vancouver, we are very active throughout Western Canada and specialize in remote construction. Our expertise lies in working with First Nation Communities and private businesses across Western Canada to align budget, expectations and design to ensure successful projects. [www.sekoconstruction.com](http://www.sekoconstruction.com)

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