

For Immediate Release

Tsilhqot'in Nation Gathering, August 20-21, with UBCIC Chief Bob Chamberlin: "We plan on honouring the salmon"

Chief Bob Chamberlin will be the headline speaker at the Tsilhqot'in Nation Gathering on August 20-21; his talk will address the need to protect the salmon.

August 19, 2010, Williams Lake – The Chiefs of the Tsilhqot'in Nation welcome Chief Bob Chamberlin to the territory. Chamberlin is expected to arrive during the Tsilhqot'in Nation Gathering on Tuesday, August 20, as a headline speaker. The event will be held beside the Chilko Bridge, south of Hanceville.

The Nation Gathering will be hosted by the Yunesit'in community and has dedicated the event to honouring the salmon. "Every year the host community chooses a theme, and this year we chose salmon because our Nation has relied heavily on each year's run for our food security," a sentiment expressed by Chief Russell Myers Ross.

Ross states "Since our community chose to honour salmon, I thought it would be important to bring back Bob Chamberlin to the territory – he is one of the most articulate leaders who has taken responsibility to address the growing concerns with governmental policy direction on fish – and it is important to mobilize our Nation to protect the fish considering a majority returns to our river."

Chamberlin is also responsible for advancing the First Nations Wild Salmon Alliance, which will be organized by the Union of BC Indian Chiefs and is scheduled to begin strategizing on a larger campaign this fall. "I have worked in many settings trying to affect positive change. However, after all these years, I do not see the aquaculture industry, or the governments that support it, changing to deal with the immanent threat of disease."

Chamberlin admits: "I am looking forward to addressing the Tsilhqot'in Nation, as I was able to speak with the leaders earlier this spring. The message that I truly want to convey is that every salmon is at risk of encountering one of many diseases once they reach the Pacific and are forced to navigate a gauntlet of fish farm sites. The diseases have the potential of wiping out an entire species if the governments continue to ignore the implications."

Besides the Nation Gathering, Chamberlin is also joining the Tsilhqot'in during the final days of hearings for the 'New Prosperity' mine proposal, in which the Tsilhqot'in communities have expressed overwhelming opposition.

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