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## **New Forestry Partnership Takes Root in the Okanagan Region**

### **New partnership seeks to support reforestation and long-term forest renewal across British Columbia**

**Oliver, B.C.** — The Osoyoos Forest Nursery (OFN), a partnership between the Osoyoos Indian Band (OIB) and K&C Silviculture Ltd., is helping strengthen British Columbia's forest renewal efforts through expanded seedling production capacity, First Nations partnership, and long-term investment in sustainable forestry.

Located on 26 acres of OIB reserve land near Oliver, B.C., the nursery includes 18,000 square feet of greenhouse infrastructure and 500,000 square feet of outdoor growing space designed to support the production of millions of forest seedlings annually for reforestation projects on OIB territory and across British Columbia and Alberta. The project itself represents a significant collaboration between First Nations leadership and the forestry sector, focused on supporting reforestation efforts while creating local employment, training, and economic development opportunities.

"The Osoyoos Indian Band is very proud to announce our first green business project, the Osoyoos Forest Nursery, and to be partnered with K&C Silviculture Ltd.," shared Chief Clarence Louie of the OIB. "We all depend on our forests for many basic needs. The wood builds our personal houses and all-important community buildings including our schools, hospitals, fire departments, and hockey rinks to name a few. The forests have an important ecological connection to fresh water and all the plants and animals. The Osoyoos Indian Band is proud to be one of the first First Nations in Canada to be growing millions of trees for our beloved forests!"

The project was developed through a shared vision between the OIB and K&C Silviculture. OIB leadership identified an opportunity to participate more directly in the forestry sector through growing trees and green economic development, while K&C Silviculture sought to expand growing capacity beyond its existing operations.

"K&C Silviculture is delighted to collaborate with the Osoyoos Indian Band on this project that represents a major investment in the future of forest renewal in Canada," said Roopinder Goertzen, Chief Operating Officer of K&C Silviculture Ltd. "With a full operational capacity of approximately 18.2 million seedlings per year, the Osoyoos Forest Nursery has been designed with advanced infrastructure and environmental sustainability in mind, including irrigation recirculation systems and efficient benching technology that help reduce water use, fertilizer consumption, runoff, and seedling handling throughout the growing cycle. The collaboration leverages the resources of the Osoyoos Indian Band and K&C Silviculture's 30+ years of experience in the forest nursery sector."

The operation is expected to primarily grow forest seedlings such as lodgepole pine, ponderosa pine, and western larch, which are well-suited to regional ecosystems, with the ability to expand growing capacity and potentially diversify production over time. OIB will plant over 5 million seedlings to support rehabilitation of wildfire damaged lands, incorporate Indigenous values and provide training and opportunities for skills development.

"Right now, there are very few large-scale tree nurseries in British Columbia with First Nations ownership or co-ownership," said Peter Flett, Head of Operations for Nk'Mip Forestry of the OIB. "Our goal is to create meaningful local opportunities in forestry, horticulture, and environmental stewardship while helping support long-term forest renewal efforts across the province."

The project received support from the Government of Canada's 2 Billion Trees program, which focuses on expanding Canada's tree-planting and forest-restoration efforts. Funding provided to the OIB will support broader reforestation initiatives, including the development of local nursery capacity, the production of locally sourced seedlings, and long-term forest renewal efforts within the region.

"The Government of Canada is proud to support initiatives that bring together action on the environment and community development. The Osoyoos Forest Nursery will help grow the next generation of forests here in B.C., while creating meaningful jobs and training opportunities for the local community," shared the Honourable Stephen Fuhr, Member of Parliament for Kelowna and Secretary of State (Defence Procurement).

The official grand opening of the Osoyoos Forest Nursery included a ceremony led by OIB Elders and community members, remarks from project partners and special guests, and tours of the nursery facility highlighting its future vision and growing operations. The Osoyoos Forest Nursery is expected to play an important role in supporting future reforestation and ecosystem restoration efforts throughout British Columbia and Alberta through First Nations-led partnership, innovation, and long-term forestry investment.

### **About the Osoyoos Forest Nursery**

The Osoyoos Forest Nursery (OFN) is a partnership between the Osoyoos Indian Band (OIB) and K&C Silviculture focused on supporting forest renewal, reforestation, and long-term sustainability. Located on OIB reserve land near Oliver, B.C., the nursery combines First Nations leadership, operational forestry expertise, and innovative growing practices to help strengthen seedling production capacity for future forest restoration efforts. For more information, visit: [www.osoyoosforestnursery.ca](http://www.osoyoosforestnursery.ca)

### **Additional Quote**

Congratulations to the Osoyoos Indian Band and K&C Silviculture on the opening of the Osoyoos Forest Nursery. This is where the next generation of B.C. forests gets its start. Millions of locally sourced seedlings will be grown here every year, supporting jobs, strengthening communities, and helping keep our forests healthy for generations to come. *The Honourable Ravi Parmar, BC Minister of Forests*

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