



INVITATION

**Celebrate and Witness signing of
Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
between Cstelnec, Neskonlith and City of
Salmon Arm**

**Intention of signing is to work together cooperatively to develop
the West Bay Trail – west of the Salmon Arm Bay/Wharf to
Little Shuswap Community (Tappen)**

**Friday January 31, 2020 @ 1PM
Pierre's Point Log Building**

**Sxwetsmellp6 – Cstelnec Community Salmon Arm
2471 Pierre's Point Road**



Memorandum forwards West Bay Trail project

Lachlan Labere
Salmon Arm Observer

The dream of a safe pedestrian connection between Salmon Arm and neighbouring Indigenous band lands is moving closer to becoming a reality.

At 1 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 31, representatives from the City of Salmon Arm and the Neskonlith and Adams Lake bands will meet at Pierre's Point to sign a memorandum of understanding for the trail's creation.

The city and bands are partners in the West Bay Trail Working Group, which includes the Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Interior Health, CP Rail, local MLA and MP, provincial government, Switzmalph Cultural Society and the Shuswap Trail Alliance.

A Jan. 13 media release from the Shuswap Trail Alliance (STA) notes the signing is of particular significance to Neskonlith band councillor Louis Thomas, who for the past 40 years has been an advocate of the trail.

"To me, it's about all the lives that were lost there..." said Thomas.

"I see other benefits that come with it; originally it was about safety of people, and now I want people to enjoy what the delta has to offer — the loons, otters and ducks."

More than 40 people have died on the CP Rail tracks that form the only direct connection between Salmon Arm and band lands to

The West Bay Trail is proposed to run from Salmon Arm to Tappen. (Shuswap Trail Alliance image)

the west.

Despite the risk, many people prefer to take the shorter train route than Highway 1.

For Neskonlith Chief Judy Wilson, the trail is about building of connections between communities and providing a safer pathway for work, school, shopping, exercising and getting outdoors.

In addition to the trail's

health and safety benefits, Adams Lake band Chief Clifford Arnouse sees it as an opportunity to highlight the area's cultural and environmental importance.

"Cultural names and place names will be used which will get our story out with more facts," said Arnouse.

"We can show the environment and how we are trying to look after it as naturally as we can."

The completed trail would connect with Salmon Arm's existing foreshore trail leading from Marine Park to Raven.

After the signing, the next steps in building the trail will involve sourcing funding for planning, including archaeological, cultural and environmental assessments.

The public is welcome to attend the signing at Pierre's Point on Jan. 31.

