



TSESHAHT FIRST NATION

5091 Tsuma-as Dr. Port Alberni, BC V9Y 8X9
P: 250.724.1225 | F: 250.724.4385 | Tseshaht.com

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Removal of Residential School Memorial at the Orange Bridge

čišaaʔaṭh (Tseshaht) First Nation announces that we began the gentle and compassionate process of removing memorial items from the Orange Bridge. The removal of these commemorative items is part of a larger initiative of the ʔuuʔatumin yaqckʷiimitqin (Doing it for our Ancestors), Project team. Tseshaht First Nation had the Alberni Indian Residential School (AIRS) placed in our territory and look to find ways to undertake our work in a respectful way but also look for ways to commemorate those that attended AIRS.

This is also part of a larger picture with consideration to the environmental commitment our people carry as stewards of the land. The long-term livelihood of the Tsuma as (Somass) River, our lifeblood, and the wildlife it sustains is of utmost importance. Unfortunately, degradation of these memorial pieces has started to happen, threatening the fish and other wildlife ecosystems that feed our community. In addition, we want to continue to promote highway and pedestrian safety.

Honoring our sacred responsibility as stewards of our lands and waters, we ask that our community and members of the public refrain from placing memorial items at this location to help prevent any long-term irreversible damage.

Tseshaht will continue to have internal discussions with a survivors working group and internally as Nation; at temporary or interim solutions on short and mid-term commemorations locations and initiatives to honour students who attended AIRS.

Our First Nation continues to fundraise in order to establish a more permanent memorial structure. To date we have raised over \$60,000 in donations. For information on how to contribute to our memorial fund, please visit www.tseshaht.com/airs-team.

For more information and ongoing updates, please visit our Facebook page or website, www.tseshaht.com.

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