



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Friday, July 11, 2014

**38<sup>th</sup> Annual BC Elders Gathering a success**

**Penticton, BC:** The 38<sup>th</sup> Annual BC Elders Gathering came to an end in Penticton and Syilx territory, on Wednesday. Hosted by the Penticton Indian Band, the Gathering celebrated and bestowed respect, gratitude and honour of the Elders of the First Nations community.

“We would like to thank the Penticton Indian Band for bringing the prestigious event to the South Okanagan Events Centre (SOEC) Complex,” said Dean Clarke, General Manager and Regional Vice President. “The SOEC was built as an extension of the Penticton Trade and Convention Centre to host events of this size and calibre. It was an honour to be part of the Gathering.”

After a 17 year hiatus, the Gathering brought more than 2,500 elders and volunteers to Penticton. During the Gathering, the SOEC became the Grand Hall, holding a majority of the cultural elements and sessions. Next door, at the Okanagan Hockey School Training Centre, the ice surface transformed to exhibit and house over 85 vendor displays. Through the covered walkway, the Penticton Trade and Convention Centre doubled as exhibit space, housing 17 exhibitors, and serviced all meals.

“During the course of the two and a half day prestigious event, we served a total of 17,730 meals,” said Paul Johnston, Director of Food and Beverage. “Monday marked the Gathering’s largest meal service, with our food and beverage team serving 2,600 lunches for attendees and volunteers. It was an outstanding performance from our entire food and beverage team.” Prepping and cooking each day in the kitchen from 5 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., the food and beverage team served 1,300 liters of soup, made from scratch, prepared 4,950 chicken breasts, made 4,450 sandwiches, served 21,000 cups of coffee and tea, and served 4,500 muffins.

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