

# XWTH'Í:T

(WITNESS)

STSA News Bulletin  
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STSA



S'ólh Téméxw  
Stewardship  
Alliance

*"The return of this sacred place is of great significance to the Semá:th, the Stó:lō, the Salish, and to First Nations people in general. The respect and recognition evident here with this agreement is something our peoples have sought for too long.*

*I'm thankful for the support from so many who've all played a part in making this a reality."*

- Chief Dalton Silver of Semá:th



**Semá:th**  
Sumas First Nation

## SQWÉLQWEL / NEWS

### Community

#### SEMÁ:TH LIGHTNING ROCK CELEBRATION

October 19, 2025

Semá:th Longhouse & Community Hall, Abbotsford, BC

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025, the Lightning Rock site and surrounding lands were formally returned to the Semá:th (Sumas First Nation). To honour this return and the decades of hard work leading up to it, Semá:th hosted a community celebration on October 19, 2025, at the Sumas First Nation Longhouse in Kilgard.

The gathering brought

together Elders, Leaders, representatives from the Government of BC (Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation), team members, and many others from the community to reflect and to celebrate the preservation of this sacred site for future generations.

Chief Silver was honoured, and as he spoke in the longhouse, the sound of the rain and thunder outside .





## SQWÉLQWEL / NEWS

(Continued)

swelled until nothing else could be heard, in what can only be described as a powerful and historic moment for the Semá:th

Lightning Rock, and the surrounding land, is understood by the Semá:th as an ancestral burial site and a place of spiritual power and teaching,

associated with a place of transformation connected to Thunderbird. They are committed to the protection and respectful stewardship of the site and have begun plans to restore the area and build an interpretive centre to promote Semá:th culture, identity, and intergenerational learning.

### Relevant Links:

[Global News coverage](#)  
[APTN News coverage](#)  
[CBC Article from 2014](#)  
[CBC Article from 2019](#)

### Have something to share?

Contact us at  
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