



## Okanagan Indian Band

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### MEDIA RELEASE

February 15, 2022

#### **Two Okanagan Indian Band members are going home after the wildfires**

The Okanagan Indian Band (OKIB) is pleased to announce that two band members are returning home today after the devastating loss of their home during the 2021 White Rock Wildfire. OKIB was able to secure two modular homes last year in an industry with extended wait times. Pine Ridge Modular Homes Limited located in Burns Lake contacted OKIB to let us know they had units available for immediate purchase.

“On behalf of OKIB members and Council, I would like to welcome our Band members back to the reserve,” Byron Louis, Chief of the Okanagan Indian Band said. “The return of the first of our Band members to their homes is a step towards a new beginning.”

More band members and their families will be returning to the community next week as OKIB secured fully insulated self-contained mini-homes and are suitable for use through all 4-seasons. The mini-homes are set up on their properties, and they will be able to reside there while their permanent residence is being constructed.

The return of the Band members to the OKIB community comes as the Site Clean Up project has ended. The site clean up included the removal of all debris that remained from the recent wildfire disaster, and the preparation of the sites for the construction of new homes. While there is a lot of work ahead of us, the momentum of the recovery project is receiving recognition across several agencies.

OKIB would like to remind people that a Go Fund Me fundraiser is underway for any Band members or members of the public who wish to donate to the recovery effort. While OKIB is accessing funding from available sources, there are countless expenses not covered and the Go Fund Me donations will assist the people who lost their homes. To donate to the wildfire recovery project through our Go Fund Me <https://www.gofundme.com/f/okib-fire-recovery> or contact Jenelle Brewer, Recovery Manager [recoverymanager@okanagan.org](mailto:recoverymanager@okanagan.org) to provide a donation and receive an official tax receipt.

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Chief Byron Louis and members of OKIB's Recovery Team meet for the handoff of keys to the new owners. Left to right, Chief Byron Louis; Recovery Housing Lead Al Loke; Recovery Manager Jenelle Brewer and Case Manager Lane Brewer.

