

## Penticton is home to the first bat condo in the Okanagan

**April 29, 2026 (PENTICTON, BC):** The snpink'tn Indian Band, in collaboration with Rock On Collective, the Okanagan Community Bat Program, and the City of Penticton, has supported the construction and installation of a bat condo along the Penticton Channel Parkway, a location identified as optimal due to its ecological significance as habitat for tǎntǎnwiya?, bats, and other wildlife.

The Penticton Channel and its associated riparian corridor have undergone extensive alteration, making the remaining riparian areas increasingly scarce and important to protect. "Riparian and wetland ecosystems in the Okanagan Valley have suffered severe destruction, with estimates indicating that 85% to 90% of valley bottom riparian habitats have been lost since the 1800s," states Gemma Almendros, biologist with the snpink'tn Indian Band. "These critical areas, which support a high diversity of wildlife including bats, have been largely reduced due to human activities."

In response to this ongoing loss, the Bat Condo Project was initiated to provide secure maternal roosting habitat. The structure, approximately four feet by eight feet in dimension and elevated 16 feet above ground, is designed to support female bats during critical breeding periods. "A bat condo is a maternity ward for bats," explains Paula Rodriguez de la Vega, Coordinator of the Okanagan Community Bat Program. "Each female bat gives birth to just one pup per year, and these structures provide essential seasonal habitat during spring, summer, and fall."

While most bat species rely on natural features such as mature trees, snags, and rock faces, several species have adapted to roost in human structures, including Little Brown Myotis, Yuma Myotis, Big Brown Bat, and Townsend's Big-eared Bat. These species are also known to utilize constructed bat condos. "Some bat species have adapted and now use buildings to roost," notes Rodriguez de la Vega. "Over the past 15 years, we have observed colonies shifting between buildings in Penticton. Purpose-built habitat such as this condo offers a more stable and secure alternative."

The initiative also reflects a broader commitment to shared responsibility for land and wildlife. "As a community of climbers, much of our recreation occurs within habitats that bats depend upon," says Moratz, Board Director with local non-profit Rock On Collective. "Recognizing their ecological importance transforms these encounters into meaningful experiences and reinforces the need for intentional action to support their survival."

snpink'tn Indian Band Chief, Greg Gabriel, emphasized the cultural and ecological importance of the project. "Within the syilx Nation Territory t̓ántanwiyá? are part of the living systems we are obligated to care for. This project reflects our responsibility to protect and restore habitat for all tmix", ensuring that future generations inherit a landscape where these relationships remain intact."

Several bat species, including the Little Brown Myotis, are currently listed as endangered and face ongoing threats from habitat loss and disease. The City of Penticton has formally committed to supporting bat conservation through its designation as a Bat Friendly Community.

"We encourage residents to learn more about the local bat population. If your building is being used by bats for roosting, please follow best management practices", says Lucie Giraud-Telme, City of Penticton Sustainability Department. "Residents can also help bats by planting native vegetation, turning off outside lights or installing motion-sensors, minimizing pesticide use, and bringing cats inside after dusk during summer when bats are active."

The successful construction and installation of the bat condo was made possible through the support of the South Okanagan Conservation Fund, Environment Canada, BC WLRS, Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, LK Contracting, Maurer Crane Services, Pile Pros, Nielsen Roofing and Sheet Metal Ltd., City of Penticton, snpink'tn Indian Band, Rock On Collective, Okanagan Community Bat Program and numerous volunteers.

To keep up to date on what each organization is doing, follow along on these websites or Instagram accounts:

[www.pib.ca](http://www.pib.ca)

@pibnaturalresources

[www.rockoncollective.com](http://www.rockoncollective.com)

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[www.bcbats.ca](http://www.bcbats.ca)

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