

Site Name:

Nɕaylintn (Pronounced: Ny-lin-tin)

Physical Address:

RDOSCHR012

Former: McIntyre Bluff Name changed to Nɕaylintn per request from Osoyoos Indian Band as part of agreement with Ministry of Environment, 7 August 2015.

Photograph No.



Description of Site:

Nɕaylintn is found in District Lots # 2475s, 648s and the White Lake Grasslands Protected Area (2497s, 2474s, 2473s, 2472s), with the peak of the bluff centered at about 49 degrees 15' 3.4" N and 119 degrees, 31' 50.2" W . It consists of a sheer basalt face, scree, and a gentle western slope.

Heritage Value of Site:

Landmark:

Nɕaylintn is iconic for those visiting the South Okanagan as the spot that signals entry into a new geographic/ ecologic zone from the north. To residents of Area C, it signals arrival 'home'. The bluff marks the northernmost point of the Great Basin Desert, and therefore delimits a unique ecosystem in the heritage of British Columbia and Canada.

First Nations:

Nɕaylintn means 'Storyteller' in Okanagan language. In the tradition of the Osoyoos Indian Band, the name arises from the presence of a human profile at the southeast corner, and according to local tradition, this profile that tells stories relevant to the identity of the Osoyoos Band. Stories of the bluff include battles fought there with invading bands to the North, and therefore remind the Osoyoos Band as unique and separate from other First Nations communities in the Okanagan. In the past, the bluff served as a look-out for potentially hostile invading bands. Nɕaylintn continues to be a place of worship for the Osoyoos Indian Band, which brings spiritual values to this site.

Scientific:

The Bluff serves as a reminder of the glacial forces that shaped the Okanagan Valley. Nɕaylintn was the site of a natural dam which was the southern terminus of glacial Lake Oliver. Until this dam broke, Lake Oliver covered an area as far north as present day Salmon Arm, reminding the viewer of the relationship the area has to the rest of the Okanagan Valley. The presence of the dam shaped landforms north of this point, including the spectacular McIntyre Canyon, located to the east of the Bluff.

The Bluff also marks a ridge along which weather fronts tend to travel, creating the change in precipitation that makes the Vaseux Lake watershed the source of water for the irrigation system upon which Area C depends.

On the west slope of the Bluff, there is a section of the White Lakes Grassland protected area, which encompasses habitat for Provincially red and blue listed species. This protected area is a transitional ecosystem next to and important for the sustaining of the antelope brush shrub-steppe of the South Okanagan.

Character Defining Elements:

- The appearance of a human profile when viewed from the south
- The appearance of a monolithic basalt face when viewed from the north
- The presence of a protected grasslands area on the west slope
- Uninterrupted viewscape which includes the bluff from the northern border of the Town of Oliver to the Bluff
- Uninterrupted viewscape which includes the Bluff from the northern border of Area C south to the Bluff
- The active sharing of stories which includes the bluff in both First Nations and Colonial traditions
- The presence of associated glacial features, including hanging shelves, benches and McIntyre Canyon

Alternate Photo:

