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*My name is Beverlee Joy Abrahamson, I am 20 years old and a member of the Colville Confederated Tribes. I also descend from the Spokane and Chippewa Cree (also known as Rocky Boy) tribes. I currently reside in Disautel Washington with my two maternal grandparents Beverly and Allen Abrahamson.*

*I grew up on the Colville Indian Reservation and am currently a student at Eastern Washington University. I am excited to be majoring in Education and minoring in American Indian Studies. My younger brother and I were raised in a traditional family by my grandparents, and since we lived outside of town, in the country, we learned how to respect the earth and live off the land. I am thankful for my traditional native upbringing. We have learned to gather the traditional foods during the appropriate season and show the utmost respect to nature because it's our way of life.*

*When Covid-19 first hit my school, they closed the campus and sent students home. While at home, I had the opportunity to start fishing more and reconnecting with the great outdoors. Being outdoors and seeing how the local habitat is struggling makes you want to help, so that's what I decided to do.*

*In April of 2020, I decided to put together a page on social media that promotes healthy and clean outdoor lifestyles called Aboriginal Outfitters. I didn't know where I wanted to go with the page- I just knew that I had goals that I wanted to achieve. The page ended up gaining more support than I expected.*

*In September of 2020, there was a very famous launch in New York of the Climate Clock, "a clock that counts down our 'Deadline,' while tracking our progress on key solution pathways." This clock puts climate and habitat at the forefront of our attention and shows us what we need to do when the clock ends, which is to "hopefully transfer into a rapid and firm transition to a safe climate future."*

*I was later informed about the Enloe Dam, and I eventually started the sic ciwx campaign. sic ciwx translates to New River in the ńsǰlǰǰiń Okanagan Salish language. Our goal is to shine a light on the cultural significance of removing the Enloe Dam and restoring the Similkameen River. The Similkameen River holds deep meaning to my family, so it is imperative to us to see the river brought back to its natural state.*

*One of my grandfather's hobbies is digging/ mining for gold. So while my brother and I were children, we would love to go with him to swim or play in the waters while he was looking for gold with his friends or relatives. One of his favorite spots to look for gold was the Similkameen, so we were there often. This is where my family and I gained a relationship with the river. I loved going up there and thought it was beautiful.*

*As I mentioned, I originally started Aboriginal Outfitters to promote clean and healthy outdoor lifestyles. So when I saw the Similkameen was at dangerously high temperatures and low water levels, I felt like I needed to do something and do it quickly.*

*In our pursuit of organizing and seeking to raise awareness about the importance of this land, Aboriginal Outfitters grew into a nonprofit organization. Our goal is to bring awareness and to broaden the way we educate about culture in the greater Okanogan County area.*

*Aboriginal Outfitter's Board of Directors comes from diverse backgrounds and we pride ourselves on having well-rounded, inclusive conversations at every meeting. We don't believe in wasting time or playing the games of small-town politics. We want to see real change in real-time. Our hope is that once we feel properly established locally, to grow our programs throughout Indian Country. We hope to connect to the community in a unique way to help protect our sacred cultural traditions.*

We hope that you are willing to join us in support of the land, the Spirit of the River, and the culture of my people.

*Beverlee Jay Abrahamson*