



2021 Winter Virtual Convention

RESOLUTION #2021 – 06

REQUEST TO RESTORE KEY FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS TO PROTECT TRIBES

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants rights secured under Indian Treaties, Executive Orders, and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and constitution of the United States and several states, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise to promote the welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) are representatives of and advocates for national, regional, and specific tribal concerns; and

WHEREAS, ATNI is a regional organization comprised of American Indians/Alaska Natives and tribes in the states of Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Nevada, Northern California, and Alaska; and

WHEREAS, the health, safety, welfare, education, economic and employment opportunity, and preservation of cultural and natural resources are primary goals and objectives of the ATNI; and

WHEREAS, federal environmental policy agenda set several deregulatory processes in action under the Trump administration; and

WHEREAS, ATNI has consistently sought to reduce the impacts and outcomes of the deregulatory agenda for American Indians/Alaska Natives and tribes in the states of Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Nevada, Northern California, and Alaska; and

WHEREAS, ATNI has observed a threat to natural and cultural resources and risk from the deregulatory actions; and

WHEREAS, ATNI desires to work with the Biden administration to restore the federal government's trust in incremental and affirmative environmental protections; and

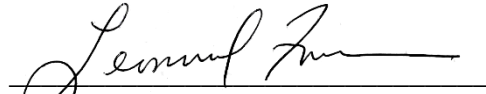
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians requests the Federal Government to:

1. Reinstatement of the 2016 human health water quality criteria for Washington State, which are more protective of tribal communities with significant fish-based subsistence diets than the procedurally and legally deficient 2020 EPA rule; and
2. Rescind the 2020 revisions to Clean Water Act Section 401, and reestablish states' and tribes' prior authority to set conditions under the Section 401 authorities; and
3. Rescind changes to Endangered Species Act criteria conditioned upon tribal treaties, for listing, delisting, and critical habitat determinations, and reinstate science-based decision-making framework; and
4. Rescind the previous administration's revisions to the National Environmental Policy Act, including but not limited to, sections of the Act regarding its guiding and defining language, limited scope of review by requiring high specificity and lower requirements for Agency response;
5. Reinstatement of the 2015 rule defining the Waters of the United States (WOTUS), which is more comprehensively inclusive of all waters than the 2019 rule that shifted away from science and hydrology; and
6. Rescind approval of any current energy terminal and connector pipeline projects in the northwest region; and
7. Rescind the Environmental Protection Agency's Strengthening Transparency in Regulatory Science rule which restricts the use of studies that do not make public information that contains sensitive traditional ecological knowledge; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that ATNI does hereby call upon tribal nations throughout the United States to urge the speedy and resolute restoration of reason and law in environmental regulatory actions.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2021 Winter Virtual Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, Portland, Oregon, on January 25-28-2021, with a quorum present.



Leonard Forsman, President



Norma Jean Louie, Secretary