



2022 Mid-Year Convention

RESOLUTION #2022 – 26

Calling on the Environmental Protection Agency to preserve funding levels under the Indian General Assistance Grant Program for Tribes in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska and to allow funding of existing Intertribal Consortia

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 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 (AI/AN) and tribes in the states of Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Nevada, Northern California, and Alaska; and

WHEREAS, ATNI recognizes that federal, federally approved and federally funded projects regularly adversely impact Tribal cultural resources as well as sites of religious and traditional significance despite the regulations put in place to protect them; and

WHEREAS, under the Indian Environmental General Assistance Act of 1992 (42 U.S.C. § 4368b), Congress authorized the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to award General Assistance Program (“GAP”) funds to Tribal governments and intertribal consortia “for the purpose of planning, developing, and establishing the capability to implement programs administered by the Environmental Protection Agency”; and

WHEREAS, the Act also authorized the EPA to award GAP funds for “the development and implementation of solid and hazardous waste programs for Indian lands;” and

WHEREAS, GAP is unique and critical among federal programs in that it provides a foundation which Tribes can leverage to support other greatly-needed programs, such as planning for climate change and natural resource management, energy efficiency activities, and small-scale renewable energy projects; and

WHEREAS, GAP funding is particularly critical to Alaska Native villages, where it provides 99 percent of the overall funding to address their fundamental and often dire needs, such as safe drinking water and basic sanitation facilities and an on-the-ground presence to help confront profound climate change impacts, such as eroding shorelines, thawing permafrost, threats to subsistence resources, and the permanent relocation of Alaska Native communities; and

WHEREAS, EPA Tribal implementation programs have not kept pace with GAP funding or the expansive urgency of Tribal environmental programs or needs over the years, Tribes are forced to perform expanded duties with no commiserate funding; and

WHEREAS, allocations of GAP funds under current EPA policy is based upon the total number of federally-recognized Tribes in each EPA region; and

WHEREAS, in Fiscal Year 2020, EPA funded 233 Tribes and 24 intertribal consortia in Alaska, Idaho, Washington, and Oregon; and

WHEREAS, intertribal consortia in EPA Region 10 provide essential environmental services to Tribes for building environmental capacity and improving human health and the environment; and

WHEREAS, EPA has developed a proposed GAP allocation policy and GAP Guidance that changes GAP funding allocation to each EPA region by basing the allocation upon the number of current GAP recipients, which will result in a reduction of at least \$ 1.5 million in GAP funds for Tribes and intertribal consortia in EPA Region 10 at a time when GAP funds are increasing; and

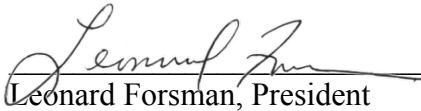
WHEREAS, proposed changes to GAP Guidance and reduction of GAP funds will significantly reduce funds available to intertribal consortium and potential in EPA Region 10 and will reduce the ability of Tribes and intertribal consortium to act to protect the health and welfare of Tribes in Region 10; now

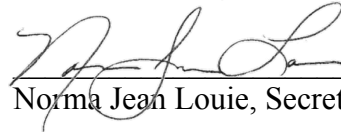
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that ATNI calls upon the EPA to preserve existing GAP funding levels for Tribes and intertribal consortium in EPA Region 10 and to allow funding of existing intertribal consortium; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI further calls on EPA to cease revisions to GAP Guidance and adjustments to allocation formulas and instead work to increase funding programs and allocations processes necessary for meaningful and necessary implementation of Tribal Environmental Protection Programs while preserving and building from the established GAP.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2022 Mid Year Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians held at Silver Reef Casino and Resort, Ferndale, Washington, May 16-19-2022, with a quorum present.


Leonard Forsman, President


Norma Jean Louie, Secretary