



2022 Mid-Year Conference Ferndale, Washington

RESOLUTION #2022 – 29

Call Upon Congress to Introduce and Pass Legislation to Ensure Officials at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Understand Their Trust Obligations and Work to Address the Unique Issues Affecting Tribal Communities by Creating a NOAA Tribal Advisory Committee

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 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 the 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/NA) 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, tribal nations have been wildlife and fisheries managers and protectors of ecosystems and the environment since time immemorial and have a sacred responsibility to protect our natural resources and ways of life for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, American Indian and Alaska Natives depend upon the health of their ecosystems and natural resources for social, economic, and cultural vitality; and

WHEREAS, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) within the U.S. Department of Commerce is charged to provide science-based conservation and management for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, marine mammals, endangered species and their habitats, and ocean resources, spaces, and conditions; and

WHEREAS, too often Tribal Nations report challenges in accessing NOAA programs and voice in policy decisions that impact Tribal Nations and our tribal citizens; and

WHEREAS, increased engagement with Tribal Nations would help improve access to NOAA programs and improve conservation amongst all government entities and stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, a NOAA Tribal Advisory Committee (NOAATAC) would provide vital opportunities for collaboration, communication, and coordination between NOAA and tribal nations; and

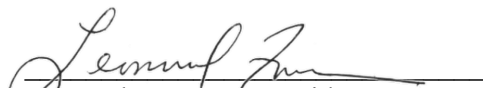
WHEREAS, the NOAATAC would advise the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere & NOAA Administrator on how to improve programs and services for Tribal Nations, identify timely issues related to NOAA programs, propose solutions to identified issues, provide a forum for discussion, inform NOAA's research agenda and program development to meet the needs of Tribes, and help facilitate getting useful feedback from across Indian Country; and


WHEREAS, there exists precedence in Congress establishing a Tribal Advisory Committee at the Agency level as evident in the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Service and its Tribal Technical Advisory Group, which was codified in the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe Veteran's HealthCare and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 (S.524); now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that ATNI calls upon Congress to introduce and pass legislation to ensure officials at NOAA understand their trust obligations and work to address the unique issues affecting tribal communities by creating a NOAATAC.

CERTIFICATION

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


Leonard Forsman, President


Norma Jean Louie, Secretary