



**2022 Annual Convention
Tulalip, Washington**

RESOLUTION #2022 – 36

“Request That the US Department of Agriculture and Department of the Interior to Urgently Initiate a Rulemaking Process to Protect the Remaining Mature and Old-Growth Forests and Trees on Ancestral Lands Managed by the US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management ”

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 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 ATNI; and

WHEREAS, mature and old-growth forests and trees store extraordinary amounts of carbon for long periods of time and continue to sequester carbon far into their lives, thus playing a critical role in fighting the climate crisis that threatens Tribal communities and their traditional ways of life across the country; and

WHEREAS, mature and old-growth forests and trees support high levels of biodiversity and thus help recover and ensure the continued flourishing of fish, wildlife, plants, and watersheds critical to the treaty rights, traditional and customary uses of lands that are central to Tribes; and

WHEREAS, mature and old-growth forests and trees play a critical role in protecting and enriching watersheds that provide Tribal people and communities with clean water that has sustained Tribes for time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, durable protections for mature and old-growth forests and trees will secure soil and ecosystem health for future generations; and

WHEREAS, most mature and old-growth forests on the continent have been lost due to European colonization and settlement, but the ancestral lands currently managed by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) still contain important expanses of these forests; and

WHEREAS, these remaining mature and old-growth forests and trees—and the natural values they contain—continue to be threatened by avoidable logging approved by USFS and BLM; and

WHEREAS, President Biden’s Executive Order 14072 rightly recognizes the importance of mature and old-growth forests to Tribes and in the fight against the climate crisis, and directs USFS and BLM to adopt policies to protect these forests from threats; and

WHEREAS, the USFS and BLM have a duty to conduct government-to-government consultation directly with tribal nations and communities in meaningful engagement and inclusive land management processes; and

WHEREAS, Tribal peoples’ longstanding care of the mature and old-growth forests and trees on ancestral lands now managed by the USFS and BLM have been in place for millennia, and the natural values of these forests have long been integral to Tribes’ traditional and customary practices; and

WHEREAS, federal regulations can durably protect and enhance the natural values of these mature and old-growth forests and the inherent right to acquire and use Tribal traditional and customary foods in such forests, comparable to protection of wildlands by the 2001 Roadless Rule; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that ATNI requests that the United States Department of Agriculture and the United States Department of the Interior urgently initiate a rulemaking process to protect the remaining mature and old-growth forests and trees on ancestral lands managed by USFS and BLM from logging, subject to limited exceptions—such as exceptions to the extent necessary for fire risk reduction and ecological restoration—that prioritize retaining the trunks of felled large trees in the forest for their stored carbon and habitat values wherever possible; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI requests that the Departments require USFS and

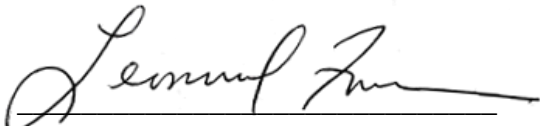
BLM to develop management strategies, in partnership with Tribes, to grow younger forests into old-growth with site-appropriate species composition; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI requests that the Departments prioritize the meaningful engagement and government-to-government consultation with Tribes from across the country in such a rulemaking process and provide the support necessary to Tribes for such participation; and

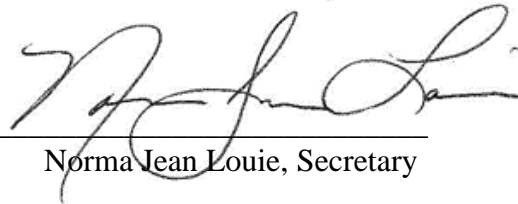
BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that any regulation that results from such a rulemaking process, not infringe on Tribal Treaty rights, respects traditional and customary uses, incorporates Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge, and continues meaningful, supported collaboration with Tribes in an inclusive land management process integrated with Tribal traditional land and forest management practices.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2022 Annual Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, Tulalip Resort and Casino, Tulalip, Washington, on September 18-22, 2022, with a quorum present.



Leonard Forsman, President



Norma Jean Louie, Secretary