



2023 Midyear Convention Worley, ID

Resolution #2023 – 30

"Requesting That The United States Department Of The Interior More Effectively And Efficiently Resolve Funding Barriers Which Reduce Tribal Access To Funding"

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, the Federal Government has assumed trust obligations to American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) tribes and people in perpetuity for healthcare, housing, education, public safety, land management, and other legal obligations established through over 300 treaties signed between sovereign tribal nations and the United States (U.S.) that are further enshrined in the U.S. constitution, Supreme Court case law, federal legislation and regulations, and Presidential executive orders; and

WHEREAS, the Biden Administration encourages through the January 26, 2021 Memorandum, "Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships" to improve tribal engagements; and

WHEREAS, the Biden Administration has embraced the need to expand tribal consultation to incorporate the essential importance of tribal co-stewardship and co-management of traditional tribal lands and waters as recently as DOI Assistant Secretary Bryan Newland's statements before the General Assembly of NCAI on February 22, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the Department of the Interior's (DOI's) White House Council on Native American Affairs (WHCNAA) strives to provide meaningful Tribal-Federal engagement and meet the treaty and trust obligations of the federal government to tribes; and

WHEREAS, the DOI has initiated a Secretary's Tribal Advisory Committee (STAC) to support intergovernmental responsibilities and provide advice and recommendations to strengthen the DOI's federal trust relationship with federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Tribes; and

WHEREAS, many federal departments, bureaus, and agencies, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Department of the Interior (DOI), the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the many organizational units therein (including the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), and the National and regional Climate Adaptation Science Center (CASC) network), use various funding mechanisms to transfer allocated federal funds to Tribes to support the self-determination of Tribal Nations and Indigenous communities across the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, there are numerous examples of federal funding that has been allocated to a Tribe or tribal department, but despite the well-meaning efforts of federal leadership and staff, the transfer of funds to the Tribes is often an overly cumbersome process or impossible due to the lack of available funding mechanisms, the lack of federal grants and agreements staff to process awards, the lack of familiarity of federal staff with the existing funding mechanisms, or the lack of agency authority to use funding mechanisms that exist within other departments and agencies; and

WHEREAS, Federal and state governments have developed and adopted many mechanisms to support tribal self-determination, committed to fund them and the actions they

propose, recognizing that financial support must be specifically accessible with adequate technical assistance and support; and there are many examples of federal funds that have taken multiple years or have never been received by Tribes and intertribal organizations that had been obligated to them by a federal entity; now

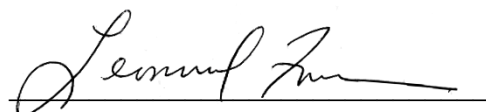
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that ATNI urges the federal government, the Department of the Interior, and the governmental entities therein to: (1) more efficiently and effectively streamline and consolidate federal funding processes by establishing the legal authorities necessary to provide timely and efficient transfer of funding through direct cooperative agreements, grants, and other appropriate funding mechanisms to federally recognized tribes, tribal entities; (2) seek better coordination within federal agencies and administrative processes to remove barriers tribes' access to federal funding; (3) provide training for federal staff and contractors to ensure that they are sufficiently familiar with the available funding mechanisms and that are trained to utilize those mechanisms in a timely fashion and that their efforts honor the federal trust responsibility to support tribal sovereignty, self-determination, the federal trust responsibility, and treaty rights; and (4) to develop funding mechanisms for Tribes that honor and respect Tribal Sovereignty and the Trust Responsibility that the federal government has to Tribal Nations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI calls upon Congress, the Biden Administration, the DOI, USDA, BIA, USGS, CASC Network, and other federal entities to provide direct, recurring, and sustainable funding mechanisms to tribes and tribal organizations in the Northwest and throughout Indian Country so that the scientific research needs requested by Tribal Nations are adequately met; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution be forwarded to the National Congress of American Indians for consideration and vote.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2023 Midyear Annual Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at the Coeur d'Alene Casino Resort - Hotel, Worley, Idaho, on May 8-11, 2023, with a quorum present.



Leonard Forsman, President



Norma Jean Louie, Secretary