



**2024 Annual Convention  
Ridgefield, Washington**

**RESOLUTION #2024 – 42**

**“VISION FOR TRIBAL WATER RESOURCES”**

**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 natural, 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**, Northwest Tribes and Native communities are uniquely positioned to advance their sovereign, legal, cultural, and basic human right to clean and abundant water; and

**WHEREAS**, for Northwest Tribes water is at the heart of our cultures, spirituality and society. Water sustains us and gives us life; and

**WHEREAS**, Tribes and Native communities view their relationship to the water and the interrelation of natural resources as one of stewardship and reverence. This relationship to water is rooted in creation stories, prayer, and traditions that have been handed down from one generation to the next for countless generations; and

**WHEREAS**, the ATNI hosts the Changing Currents: Tribal Water Summits to bring together leadership and youth from Tribes across the Northwest to share information, foster dialogue & collaboration around common water interests and work toward a shared agenda. This agenda is linked to our history, our culture, our future, our education, our health, our economy, which all have a circle of life; and

**WHEREAS**, today, the relationship and stewardship to water and natural resources is becoming more challenging as the demands and pressures on these resources increases; and

**WHEREAS**, non-Indians are now seeing that water is not unlimited, seeing higher water temperatures, seeing that bodies of water are not dumping ground that increases water pollution making it unsafe to drink or swim in, lower water levels that are impacting our natural resources and their lives; and

**WHEREAS**, federally reserved rights to water for instream flows and for tribal use are among the most precious rights held by Indian tribes under Treaties, statutes, and executive orders establishing Indian reservations; and

**WHEREAS**, our water is being impacted by Climate Change, drought, clean energy, public and environmental health; and

**WHEREAS**, protection of Tribal water interests benefit all in the Pacific Northwest by enhancing the health and resilience of our interconnected watersheds; and

**WHEREAS**, some of the Pacific Northwest states and Federal policy-level entities are now very interested in working with the ATNI Tribes on many issues and water is one of them, which is providing an opportunity for partnership, collaboration and funding to Pacific Northwest Tribes who may be taking the lead in moving to a regional and national strategy; and

**WHEREAS**, each ATNI Tribe has its own priority list for the environmental/human health needs, and have developed and implemented plans on their reservation, and have great success stories to share to assist in developing an ATNI policy-level regional and national strategy plan that include a road map for short/long-term goals, with the pros/cons on moving forward; and

**WHEREAS**, our Tribal youth are learning how to step outside of their comfort zone who can assist in getting the regional and national support for an ATNI Strategy Plan because our youth our future leaders; now

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that ATNI staff work with the ATNI Tribes to start developing an ATNI “Water is Life” Strategy DRAFT Plan that includes telling Tribal success

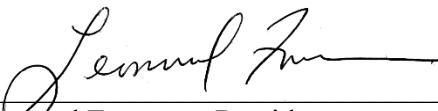
stories, ways to explore getting common data for good management decisions, outreach to universities/colleges to provide an update on the draft at the 2025 ATNI Annual Convention; and

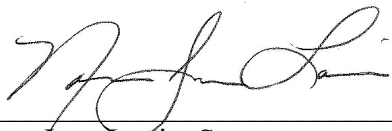
**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that ATNI staff work with ATNI Tribes to affirm the commitments by state and federal governments to meaningful government-to-government consultation and coordination on water policy agendas; demand coordination and engagement across state and federal agencies that make decisions that impact Tribal water resources to proceed consistent with sovereign-to-sovereign commitments through collaboration and partnership; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall be the policy of ATNI until it is withdrawn or modified by a subsequent resolution.

**CERTIFICATION**

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2024 Annual Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of the Northwest Indians, held at ilani Casino Resort, Ridgefield, Washington on September 29 – October 3, 2024 with a quorum present.

  
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Leonard Forsman, President

  
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Norma Jean Louie, Secretary