



**2026 Midyear Convention
Ferndale, Washington**

RESOLUTION # 2026 – 029

**“CALLING ON THE UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE TO CONSULT
WITH TRIBAL NATIONS AND PROVIDE FOR ECOLOGICALLY
GUIDED ACTIVE FOREST STEWARDSHIP WITHIN THE NORTHWEST
FOREST PLAN AMENDMENT”**

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 Northwest Indians (ATNI) are the representatives and advocates for national, regional, and specific tribal concerns; and

WHEREAS, the ATNI is a regional organization comprised of American Indians/Alaska Natives and Indian tribal governments 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, on December 18, 2023 the Pacific Northwest and Pacific Southwest Regions of the Forest Service, United States Department of Agriculture (USFS), published a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to amend the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP); and

WHEREAS, USFS-managed lands within the NWFP planning area are the ancestral homelands of Tribal Nations who have stewarded these forests, waters, fish, and wildlife since time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, Tribal Nations seek to engage in active, ecologically-guided forest stewardship on these lands to restore forest health, watershed function, and the diverse and resilient habitats that sustain fish, wildlife, and the cultural foods, medicines, and practices on which Tribal ways of life depend; and

WHEREAS, the NOI recognized that while more than 80 federally recognized Tribal Nations have lands and/or territories within the NWFP boundary, there was limited involvement from Tribal Nations in the development of the original NWFP during the early 1990s; and

WHEREAS, the ATNI adopted Resolution #24-07 during the 2024 Winter Convention urging the USFS to “prioritize the meaningful engagement and government-to-government consultation with Tribes from the NW Forest Planning Area in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process...”; and

WHEREAS, on November 15, 2024 the USFS published a Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) to amend the NWFP; and

WHEREAS, the USFS acknowledged that “tribal involvement in the development of the 1994 NWFP was overlooked and that engaging tribes in addressing the challenges faced in the NWFP area is critical to success,”; and

WHEREAS, many Tribal Nations who were not represented on the Federal Advisory Committee (FAC) provided input on the Amendment through other means including formal government-to-government consultation, comment letters, and participation in a series of NWFP Amendment Tribal Roundtables; and

WHEREAS, much of the input that was provided by Tribal Nations was not incorporated into the Proposed Action or either of the Action Alternatives; and

WHEREAS, the Proposed Action and Action Alternatives each include over 100 Tribal Inclusion plan components intended to honor and elevate Tribal perspectives and priorities; and

WHEREAS, the Proposed Action and Action Alternatives each include over 50 Forest Stewardship plan components intended to guide and constrain forest stewardship activities within the NWFP area; and

WHEREAS, many of the Tribal Nations who provided input outside of the FAC process commented that the Forest Stewardship plan components contain significant new restrictions on active forest stewardship which would prevent achievement of the Tribal Inclusion plan components; and

WHEREAS, the Forest Stewardship plan components include new restrictions on forest stewardship which are based on arbitrary stand and tree-establishment dates, which fail to recognize the past and future role of Indigenous people in stewarding resilient landscapes within the NWFP area; and

WHEREAS, each of the Action Alternatives described in the DEIS would effectively reallocate moist forest stands established before 1905 from the Matrix Land Use Allocation to the Late Successional Reserve Land Use Allocation, resulting in an approximately 57 percent reduction in the acres available for active, ecologically-guided forest stewardship to restore forest health, watershed function, and complex early-seral habitats supporting an abundance of culturally important species, while also providing for ecologically sustainable timber harvest; and

WHEREAS, multiple Tribal Nations have identified the Survey & Manage protocols of the 1994 NWFP as being misaligned with Indigenous approaches to forest stewardship and an unnecessary obstacle to needed forest stewardship activities—including fuels reduction projects to protect Indian trust forests; and

WHEREAS, the USFS is currently developing a Revised Proposed Action which it anticipates to share in the summer of 2026, followed by a Final EIS (FEIS) which it expects to complete in the spring of 2027; and

WHEREAS, although ATNI member Tribal Nations have gone far to build their natural and cultural resources programs, numerous Tribal Nations are capacity-limited to fully engage in this process given the lack of funding support; and

WHEREAS, the USFS has initiated a comprehensive Tribal engagement strategy to discuss potential components of a Revised Proposed Action; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that ATNI calls on the United States Forest Service (USFS) to incorporate Tribal input from the current Tribal engagement process and from direct government-to-government consultation with all Tribal Nations within the Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) planning area into the Revised Proposed Action, consistent with the federal trust responsibility and the principles of free, prior, and informed consent; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI calls on the USFS to coordinate with Tribal Nations to develop Forest Stewardship plan components geared towards promoting ecologically diverse and resilient landscapes with an abundance of culturally important species and wildfire resilience, which often requires active stewardship rather than avoidance; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI calls on the USFS to coordinate with Tribal Nations to remove obstacles in the Plan Amendment of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for active forest stewardship and Tribal co-stewardship, and cultural use across all landscape classifications, Land Use Allocations, and age classes, recognizing that active stewardship is necessary to restore diverse and resilient habitats that sustain fish, wildlife, and the cultural foods, medicines, and practices on which Tribal ways of life depend; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI calls on the USFS to coordinate with Tribal Nations to remove restrictions on active forest stewardship which are based on arbitrary stand and tree-establishment dates; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI calls on the USFS to fulfill the coordination requirements and spirit of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act by coordinating landscape-scale values, long-term desired outcomes, and management direction with Tribal Nations across the NWFP area, regardless of whether the current amendment process formally triggers statutory coordination obligations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI calls on the USFS to coordinate with Tribal Nations to provide plan direction for proactive post-disturbance stewardship across the NWFP area, including in areas that are culturally important to Tribal Nations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI calls on the USFS to coordinate with Tribal Nations to develop Desired Conditions across all forest types and Land Use Allocations, which provide specific and actionable management direction to local forest managers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI calls on the USFS to provide the technical assistance and funding support necessary for Tribal Nations to fully participate in the continued amendment process, including development of the Revised Proposed Action and FEIS, and project development and implementation at the forest level; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI calls on the USFS to provide a response to each Tribal comment, and include an explanation regarding how those comments were or were not incorporated into development of the Revised Proposed Action that will be described in the FEIS; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI calls on the USFS to retain all Tribal Inclusion provisions outlined in Appendix A1 of the Proposed Action described in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), including provisions related to co-stewardship, Indigenous Knowledge, treaty rights, inherent or reserved rights, Tribal workforce, biodiversity, and access and gathering; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI calls on the USFS to actively protect Indigenous Knowledge and culturally sensitive Tribal information through explicit recognition of Tribal data sovereignty, robust intellectual property protections, comprehensive data-sharing agreements that mandate free, prior, and informed consent, and clearly defined exemptions from

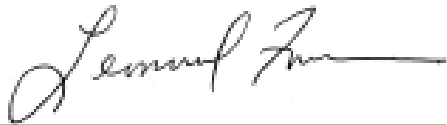
disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, ensuring such protections are consistently applied and enforced across all USFS regions and offices; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final NWFP amendment must incorporate co-management and co-stewardship frameworks, embed Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge, support Tribal-led active stewardship, and include inclusive monitoring and adaptive management strategies co-developed with Tribal Nations; and

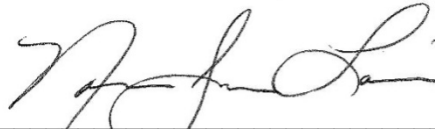
BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this will be the policy of ATNI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution(s).

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing Resolution was adopted at the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians 2026 Midyear Convention held at the Silver Reef Casino Resort in Ferndale, Washington, on May 17-21, 2026, with a quorum present.



Leonard Forsman, President



Norma Jean Louie, Secretary