



Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians

2007 Winter Conference Portland, Oregon

RESOLUTION #07 - 11

"MARMES COLLECTION REPATRIATION AND REBURIAL"

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 representatives of and advocates for national, regional, and specific tribal concerns; and

WHEREAS, the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians is a regional organization comprised of American Indians in the states of Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, 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 Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians; and

WHEREAS, the remains of at least 32 individuals and more than 1,300 associated funerary objects of Native American origin were removed from the Marmes Rockshelter and floodplain in the 1960's and have been kept at a repository at Washington State University; and

WHEREAS, despite repeated requests to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the return of the Marmes Collection to their Tribes, these ancestral remains and funerary objects have not been returned for repatriation and reburial according to traditional tribal practices; an

WHEREAS, on April 14, 2006, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Nez Perce Tribe, the Wanapum Band, and the Confederated Tribes of the Yakama Nation filed with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers a joint, intertribal claim for all ancestral remains and funerary objects from the Marmes site; and

WHEREAS, at a meeting on February 12, 2007, with officials of the Walla Walla District of the Army Corps of Engineers and other Corps officials, the leaders of the claimant Tribes were informed that the Corps would make a determination, by the fall of 2007, as to whether the Marmes Collection is "Native American" in origin and thus subject to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act; and

WHEREAS, the Corps officials stated that they will require an additional \$800,000 in Operations and Maintenance funding for FY 2008, to engage the assistance of the Mandatory Center of Expertise in St. Louis, Missouri, to complete the repatriation of the Marmes Collection; and

WHEREAS, Corps officials also stated that they may determine that additional study and examination of the Collection will be needed to determine its cultural affiliation; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that ATNI hereby supports increased FY 2008 funding in the amount of \$800,000 for the work of the Corps and the Mandatory Center of Expertise to speed the repatriation of the Marmes Collection; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Member Tribes of ATNI are encouraged to contact their Congressional delegations to request that an additional \$800,000 is appropriated to the Army Corps of Engineers' FY 2008 Operation and Maintenance Account, Region 17, to expedite the Marmes Collection repatriation; and

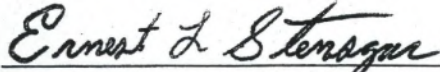
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI hereby requests the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs to support this appropriation in its "Views and Estimates Letter" analyzing the FY 2008 budget; and

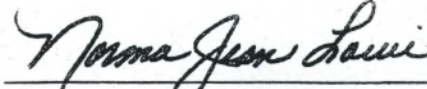
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI hereby absolutely objects to any further "scientific re-examination" of the Marmes Collection by the Corps of Engineers or others, as such study is unnecessary, given applicable law and the facts already established by available studies, reports and other research regarding its cultural affiliation; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that ATNI hereby urges the Army Corps of Engineers: (1) to affirm, by no later than the fall of 2007, that the Marmes Collection is of Native American origin; and (2) that the Corps is to take all necessary steps for the prompt return of the Collection to the claimant Tribes for traditional reburial and repatriation.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2007 Winter Conference of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at the Holiday Inn Airport Hotel in Portland, Oregon on February 15, 2007, with a quorum present.



Ernest L. Stensgar, President

Norma Jean Louie, Secretary