

2009 Winter Conference Tulalip, Washington

RESOLUTION #09 - 23

“RIGHT OF FIRST REFUSAL”

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, ATNI is a regional organization comprised of American Indians 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, tribes of the Pacific Northwest have rights to, and interest in, natural and cultural resources on which our shared tribal religious and cultural practices are based; these practices include fishing, hunting, gathering and other activities through which we carry on our tribal traditions and ways of life; and

WHEREAS, in the case of our ancestral lands, our history, and traditions that have been passed down through generations since time immemorial, teaches that we are the caretakers and stewards of these lands; and

WHEREAS, despite the taking of a larger portion of these lands, the tribes have never lost sight of our traditional teachings that we are guardians of the lands; and

WHEREAS, the tribes desire to re-acquire all lands within our traditional territories and usual and accustomed areas whenever a reasonable opportunity permits; and

WHEREAS, today the federal government and states regularly categorize lands as excess or surplus or dispose of or sell that are located within each tribe's respective traditional territories, and/or usual and accustomed areas; and

WHEREAS, the Government gave unfair compensation to many tribes across the nation for many of these lands at unfair rates; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Government and States enjoy all the benefits and proceeds of those sales, which are typically far beyond what they paid for them; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to correct the injustices upon tribes by the dishonorable taking of Indian lands and, equally, the unfair compensation given to tribes for those lands, the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians recommends that the Government consider establishing a process that would grant Indian tribes and/or the Secretary of the Interior a "right of first refusal" to purchase or acquire now owned or subsequently acquired federal or state lands that are categorized as excess, surplus, or otherwise offered for sale or lease in each tribe's respective traditional territories, and/or usual and accustomed areas; and

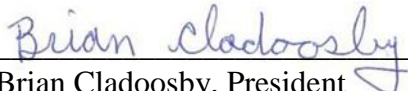
WHEREAS, any such right of first refusal that inures to an Indian tribe shall allow the tribe to acquire the land at a nominal or discounted rate, similar to compensation paid to such tribes at the time of the conveyance or taking of the land from the tribes; and

WHEREAS, any such right of first refusal that inures to the Secretary of the Interior shall require the Secretary to acquire such land into trust for the benefit of the respective tribe; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians strongly urges the U.S. Government and states to consider and implement the aforementioned recommendation.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2009 Winter Conference of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at the Tulalip Resort and Casino, Tulalip, Washington on February 16-19, 2009 with a quorum present.



Brian Cladoosby, President



Norma Louie, Secretary

