

**THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF  
AMERICAN INDIANS**

**RESOLUTION #SPO-01-077**

**Title: Support for Joint Federal-Tribal Water Funding Task Force**

**WHEREAS**, we, the members of the National Congress of American 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 the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations, rights secured under Indian treaties and agreements with the United States, and all other rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the health, safety and welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) was established in 1944 and is the oldest and largest national organization of American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments; and

**WHEREAS**, tribal leaders from the western United States and the Secretary of the Interior met on July 15, 1997 to engage in a government-to-government dialogue about the difficult and complicated issues inherent in the resolution of Native American water rights claims. Tribal Leaders expressed substantial concern regarding the insufficient financial support for the implementation of Indian water rights settlement to ensure sustainable homelands; and

**WHEREAS**, the Tribes and the Department of the Interior formed a joint Federal-Tribal Water Funding Task Force to pursue a more detailed analysis of the availability of adequate funding for claims development, negotiation/litigation. settlement implementation, and other tribal funding needs; and

**WHEREAS**, the Task Force consisted of one tribal representative, who was required to be a Tribal Council Member, and one alternate, and representatives from various cognizant federal agencies; and

**WHEREAS**, the Task Force met quarterly in alternating regions and in Washington D.C. with the Secretary of Interior; and

**WHEREAS**, the task force was supported by the Western Governor's Association and the Western States Water Council.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NCAI does hereby support the continuation of the joint Federal-Tribal Water Funding Task Force; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NCAI encourages the Secretary of the Interior to conduct timely centralized and regional meetings with tribal leaders on Indian water rights issues and to work towards resolution of the many facets of Indian water rights claims; and

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

**CERTIFICATION**

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Spokane Convention Center, in Spokane, Washington on November 25-30, 2001 with a quorum present.

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Tex Hall, President

**ATTEST:**

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Colleen Cawston, Recording Secretary

Adopted by the General Assembly during the 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Spokane Convention Center, in Spokane, Washington on November 25-30, 2001.