

**THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF  
AMERICAN INDIANS**

**RESOLUTION #SPO-01-092**

**Title: Trust Protection for Sacred Sites**

**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**, the Native Peoples of the United States continue to witness the loss and destruction of sacred lands that are critical to the preservation of traditional cultural values and beliefs; and

**WHEREAS**, there does not now exist a mechanism whereby tribes can systematically identify and address the need to preserve these sacred lands; and

**WHEREAS**, funding to acquire these lands are largely unavailable to tribal communities who have the knowledge and expertise to understand the cultural value of these sites and resources; and

**WHEREAS**, a legislative initiative needed to provide funding for an American Indian Sacred Lands Foundation, and amend the National Historic Preservation Act to strengthen Section 106.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NCAI does hereby support an amendment to the trust statutes administered by the BIA allowing for the purchase and transfer of sacred lands outside of Indian Reservation Boundaries to trust status as well as amendments to the American Indian Freedom of Religion Act, the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act to provide greater protection of these sacred sites, areas, and resources; 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**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.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.