



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #ABQ-19-083

TITLE: Support for Reconsideration of Allowing U.S. Tribal Representatives as Engaged Participants in the Negotiation of the Columbia River Treaty

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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 and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 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, in the 1960s the first Columbia River Treaty that focused primarily on power production and flood control was negotiated; and

WHEREAS, the United States and Canada are now in the process of renegotiating the terms of this treaty; and

WHEREAS, the United States has a government to government obligation to protect the treaty and indigenous rights and resources of all tribal nations; and

WHEREAS, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation has two boundaries on the Columbia River and is a confederation of twelve tribes with approximately 9500 members and is one of 15 Columbia River Tribes¹ having interest in the renegotiation with Canada with respect to protecting their collective tribal resources; and

¹ The Burns Paiute Tribe, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Nation, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, the Kalispel Tribe of Indians, the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, the Nez Perce Tribe, the Fort McDermitt Paiute Shoshone Tribe, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Reservation, the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation, and the Spokane Tribe of Indians, with support from the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, Upper Columbia United Tribes, and the Upper Snake River Tribes. Tribal organizations have been working together to consider the effects and alternatives related to the Columbia River Treaty.

WHEREAS, salmon and other anadromous fish are an important part of the religion, culture and subsistence of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, which has been working with other entities to study the feasibility of passage for Chinook and Sockeye salmon over the Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee Dams; and

WHEREAS, it is essential that the U.S. negotiating team consider the importance of having U.S. tribal participants regarding the fish passage interest in the treaty negotiation process, as called for by the 2013 U.S. Entity Regional Recommendation for the Future of the Columbia River Treaty after 2024 (Regional Recommendation); and

WHEREAS, since the United States and Canada are presently negotiating the Columbia River Treaty and Canada has allowed three Canadian First Nations as tribal observers, it is necessary to submit a resolution in support; and

WHEREAS, there is a precedent for tribal participation in International Agreements such as the US/Canada Pacific Salmon Treaty of 1985.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) hereby support the request of all Columbia River Tribes that the federal negotiation team include U.S. tribal participants regarding negotiations of the Columbia River Treaty, including priority for fish passage documented within the Northwest Regional Recommendation as part of the U.S. negotiation strategy for the negotiation of the Columbia River Treaty; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI will assist the Columbia River Tribes in negotiating with the US State Department to include direct participation in treaty negotiations to protect the tribes' treaty and indigenous resource rights; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI expects that the US State Department to honor the requests of the Columbia River Tribes to be participants in the Columbia River Treaty negotiation process; and

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

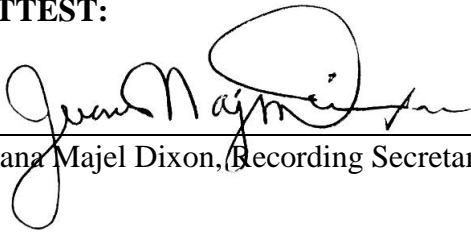
CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2019 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Albuquerque Convention Center, October 20-25, 2019, with a quorum present.



Fawn Sharp, President

ATTEST:



Juana Majel Dixon, Recording Secretary