



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians
Resolution #PDX-20-003

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TITLE: Calling for the Advancement of Meaningful Tribal Co-Management of Federal Lands

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 Article 29 of the 2008 adopted [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People](#), the United Nations declared that Indigenous Peoples have the right to develop the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources; and

WHEREAS, tribal nations actively managed their traditional homelands through traditional cultural practices from time immemorial and have continually resisted European colonists who work to suppress and criminalize such practices; and

WHEREAS, the shared moral obligations among tribal nations is to take active measures through traditional approaches in preventing foreseeable hazards, while protecting, restoring, and enhancing lands for communal benefit; and

WHEREAS, the state of California, in a [Statement of Administration Policy on Native American Ancestral Lands](#), recently directed every state agency to support co-management and access to lands that are within a tribal nation’s ancestral territory; and

WHEREAS, the unique nature of the sovereign-to-sovereign relationship is often overlooked by state and federal agencies and this systemic injustice should be addressed at the forefront of all co-management and/or shared stewardship discussions; and

WHERAS, the lack of co-management has resulted in dangerous and uninhabitable conditions that are detrimental to the health of many indigenous peoples; and

WHERAS, the intergenerational application of indigenous traditional ecological knowledge through co-management of tribal lands and territories will significantly improve the long-term social, cultural, economic and ecologic conditions of and for tribal communities; and

WHEREAS, the federal trust and treaty responsibility to tribal nations extends to management of tribal ancestral homelands including on state and federal lands; and

WHEREAS, public land management must be holistic and inclusive and it must include the fundamental principles and practices of tribal co-management, which brings together the expertise of diverse perspectives to build a collective and participatory framework that can benefit everyone.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) urges Congress to pass legislation and direct federal agencies to include tribal nations in land management decisions at every level of the government based on incorporation of tribal co-management principles and practices ; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI requests that Congress enhance and the Executive Branch recognize tribal legal authorities supporting tribal co-management and directly fund tribal land management on tribal, state, and federal lands

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 2020 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held Nov 8, 2020 - Nov 13, 2020, with a quorum present.



Fawn Sharp, President

ATTEST:



Juana Majel Dixon, Recording Secretary