



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #SAC-12-001

TITLE: Support for the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe Reservation Expansion Act

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 Duckwater Shoshone Tribe is a member of NCAI, in good standing and is one of nine federally recognized tribal governments which comprise the Western Shoshone Nation; and

WHEREAS, the Western Shoshone Nation traditionally used and occupied a vast area of the Great Basin, including lands in Idaho, Nevada and California; and

WHEREAS, the 1863 Treaty of Ruby Valley delineated the ancestral lands of the Western Shoshone Nation encompassing over 60 million acres extending from the Snake River in Idaho through Central Nevada to San Bernardino County California, including millions of acres surrounding the present Duckwater Shoshone Reservation on all sides and the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe has never ceded or abandoned its ancestral lands; and

WHEREAS, the ancestral lands of the Western Shoshone Nation provided the Duckwater Shoshone people with a homeland, an economic base and an adequate livelihood for thousands of years, and these lands have deep religious and cultural significance to the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe and the Duckwater Shoshone people; and

WHEREAS, the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe has historically and for more than half a century used and occupied approximately 442,000 acres of Duckwater Shoshone ancestral lands, known as the Duckwater Shoshone Grazing Area, pursuant to grazing permits issued by the Bureau of Land management, which was appropriated by the United States Bureau of Land Management in the last century and is now managed as public lands, for livestock grazing, hunting and gathering and other traditional purposes; and

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WHEREAS, the Duckwater Shoshone Reservation consists of only 3,785 acres of tribal trust lands, and have 396 enrolled members of the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe, of whom 279 live outside the Reservation in distant communities, primarily because the resources and economy at Duckwater Reservation are insufficient to afford them a livelihood; and

WHEREAS, there is an immediate and critical need to provide an economically and culturally adequate land base for the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe's existing and future membership and to ensure the Tribe's cultural, political and economic survival through this century; and

WHEREAS, the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe is requesting that the United States Congress legislatively transfer approximately 235,000 acres of Duckwater Shoshone ancestral lands within the Duckwater Shoshone Grazing Area to the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe to add to and expand the Duckwater Shoshone Reservation; and

WHEREAS, the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe has prepared a Sustainability Plan for the utilization and economic development of the existing Duckwater Shoshone Reservation, and, lands transferred to Duckwater tribal ownership pursuant to this Act, including the active development of renewable wind and solar energy, as well as geothermal use for energy efficiency.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NCAI, on behalf of their membership, hereby recognizes the critical necessity to expand the Duckwater Shoshone Reservation land base from 3,785 acres to approximately 235,000 acres to ensure the Duckwater Shoshone Tribes cultural, political and economic survival; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI fully supports the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe Reservation Expansion Act and urges the Nevada Congressional delegation to sponsor and support the Duckwater bill in both the United States Senate and the House of Representatives as a means to protect tribal sovereignty, self-determination, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the health, safety and welfare of the Indian people; 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 2012 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Sacramento Convention Center from October 21-26, 2012 in Sacramento, California, with a quorum present.



President

ATTEST:



Recording Secretary