



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #PDX-20-044

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TITLE: Supporting Tribal Communities that Utilize a Co-Production of Knowledge Approach in Research Engagement

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, through our federally recognized tribal governments, we have the right to participate fully in all levels of decision-making in policies that affect our tribal nations and communities and the exercise of our rights; and

WHEREAS, our traditional territories are an integral part of our identity as American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) peoples, and the water is as important to us as the land; and

WHEREAS, we rely on subsistence and commercial fish, land mammals, marine mammals, birds, berries, and other traditional and irreplaceable resources; and

WHEREAS, as stewards of our lands and waters we have developed inextricable connections that form the foundation of our own understandings of our environments, including marine, freshwater, terrestrial, atmospheric, and ice-related; and

WHEREAS, as traditional knowledge holders, our people hold a living body of knowledge that we have passed on from generation to generation, and that knowledge is continually updated, adapted, and reshaped as our individual and collective experiences and observations inform them; and

WHEREAS, our traditional knowledge is part of, and used in, everyday life, and is inextricably intertwined with our peoples' identity, culture, values, and way of life; and

WHEREAS, we, as the continual inhabitants of North American, every day we see first-hand the profound and devastating effects of climate change on our lands, waters, air, and communities; and

WHEREAS, for many decades we have asked to be active partners with agencies and academics that wish to come onto our lands and waters to conduct research, such as research that informs national security, ecosystem health, economic development, and societal well-being, and which promotes resilient and sustainable communities; and

WHEREAS, due to our rapidly changing climate, our communities are increasingly contacted and visited by researchers from governmental, academic, non-profit, and for-profit entities; and

WHEREAS, this research is often the basis for decisions made by state and federal agencies that greatly affect our lands, waters, air, communities, food security, and sovereignty; and

WHEREAS, research conducted on, near, or about our lands, waters, air, and communities is frequently designed, conducted, and published without notice to our tribal nations and without our involvement or consent; and

WHEREAS, we continue to lack meaningful access and voice in the vast research landscape to ensure that research is formed and conducted in locally relevant and respectful ways; and

WHEREAS, traditional knowledge and western scientific knowledge are equally valuable and traditional knowledge holders and western researchers are equally valuable; and

WHEREAS, a variety of research and advocacy projects purport to focus on building the resilience of our communities but are proposed and crafted without our input or our vision of our resilience and our future; and

WHEREAS, the knowledge derived from local communities or individuals often is not credited to those communities or individuals nor are they compensated, or formally recognized, for their contributions; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NCAI expresses support for tribal nations that seek to adopt a co-production of knowledge approach for research conducted on, near, or about tribal lands, waters, air, and communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that research involving a co-production approach should entail the free, prior, and informed consent of tribal nations to ensure they are equals in the planning, design, conduct, analysis, implementation, and publication of the research, and management of research data and information; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI requests that tribal nations and peoples should be financially compensated for being partners in the co-production of knowledge and, additionally, that researchers respect a tribal nation's decision to decline permission to work in a community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI encourages federal agencies and researchers to meaningfully partner with tribal nations on research, create opportunities for tribal nations to be funded for research, to ensure tribal nations benefit from the research, and support community driven research initiatives, including sharing funding and resources in partnerships with non-tribal researchers.

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