



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #SPO-16-027

TITLE: Support for the Makah Warmhouse Beach Dump Superfund Site Cleanup and Removal

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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, 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, for decades the Warmhouse Beach Dump has been situated on a hill above the Strait of Juan de Fuca, overlooking the traditional Makah seasonal camp called Warmhouse Beach, or Qidi·qabit, to the northwest and with a view of Vancouver Island to the north; and

WHEREAS, this seasonal camp has been historically and traditionally used as a processing station, where people would stay for several months per year in order to situate themselves close to abundant resources, including shellfish, fish, and sea mammals, which were brought in to Qidi·qabit and processed (filleted, butchered, smoked, dried) in order to be stored for winter use, and where Makahs put up surpluses of food during these peak months in order to have sufficient food supplies for days when the weather prohibited fishing, hunting and gathering; and

WHEREAS, people gathered and consumed plants and fresh water while camping at Warmhouse, and Makah Elders talk about spending several months there each year, and while there, you did not have to paddle your canoes all the way to the villages of Di·ya and Bi?id'a, which was also used as a place where canoes could land during rough weather any time of the year; and

WHEREAS, even though the ocean's resources were abundant, supplementing diets with foods gathered from the upland was important for nutritional balance, including sprouts, berries, roots, and shoots which would have been in season while people were at Warmhouse and tree bark, limbs and roots would have been harvested during that time of the year; and

WHEREAS, in addition to taking resources from the waters of the Pacific Ocean and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, gathering shellfish and seaweed from the intertidal zone, and harvesting plant resources, the Makah have always hunted land mammals and birds in the vicinity of Warmhouse (Jennifer Sepez-Dissertation: 'Political and Social Ecology of Contemporary Makah Subsistence Hunting, Fishing, and Shellfishing Practices); and

WHEREAS, the Makah Warmhouse Beach Dump has been designated a superfund site by the Environmental Protection Agency; and

WHEREAS, a complete removal is critical to the use of the Makah Tribe's natural and cultural resources; and

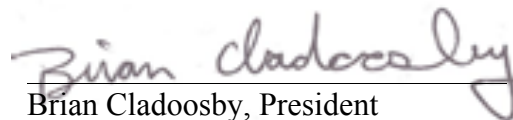
WHEREAS, the removal and clean-up of superfund sites is of great importance throughout Indian Country as many tribes have lands and historic homelands impacted by hazardous waste dumping.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the National Congress of American Indians does here support the Makah Tribe for a total removal of the Warmhouse Beach Dump to protect its natural and cultural resources.

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 2016 Midyear Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Spokane Convention Center, June 27 to June 30, 2016, with a quorum present.


Brian Cladoosby, President

ATTEST:


Aaron Payment, Recording Secretary