



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #ANC-14-044

TITLE: Support for Declaration of Fraser River Sockeye Fishery Disaster and Urging Congress to Appropriate Funds for Disaster Relief

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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, the Lummi Nation, Nooksack Tribe, Tulalip Tribes, Swinomish Tribe, Suquamish Tribe, Makah Tribe, Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, and Port Gamble S'Klallam (Nine Treaty Tribes) have treaty-reserved rights to catch Fraser River sockeye in U.S. waters; and

WHEREAS, since time immemorial the sockeye fishery for the Nine Treaty Tribes has been the main staple salmon species and, in recent years, the most profitable of all salmon species, the decline of the Fraser River sockeye in the past 30 years has forced fishermen to seek other fishery treaty right opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the non-existent 2013 Fraser River sockeye run disturbs our way of life, culture, spirituality, and traditional ties to the Fraser River sockeye salmon is irreplaceable, although this negative impact far outweighs the financial impact, the lack of sockeye puts a strain on our fisherman to be able to put food on their tables and pay for basic living costs; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker determined a commercial fishery failure for the 2013 Fraser River sockeye salmon fishery in Washington State, under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act; and

WHEREAS, the declaration of a fishery disaster allows Congress to appropriate funds to provide economic assistance to fishermen and communities in distress; and

WHEREAS, in order to mitigate and address the fishery disaster it is the U.S. government's duty to carry out its treaty, trust, fiduciary, statutory, and moral obligations to the Nine Treaty Tribes by appropriating funds for direct financial assistance to affected fishermen, funds to restore the fishery, and prevent a fishery failure in the future.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NCAI does hereby support the U.S. Secretary of Commerce's decision of determining a commercial fishery failure for the 2013 Fraser River sockeye salmon fishery in Washington State; and

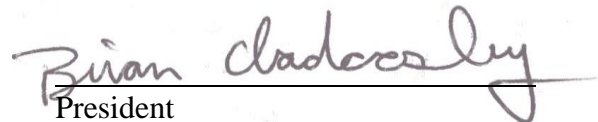
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI urges Congress to appropriate funds for disaster relief for direct financial assistance to affected fishermen, funds to restore the fishery, and prevent a fishery failure in the future; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI supports all Nine Treaty Tribes that have been negatively affected by the commercial fishery failure for the 2013 Fraser River sockeye salmon fishery in Washington State; and

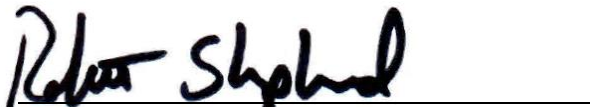
BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2014 Mid-Year Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Dena'ina Civic & Convention Center, June 8-11, 2014 in Anchorage, Alaska, with a quorum present.


President

ATTEST:


Recording Secretary