



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #PDX-11-076

TITLE: Support for Amending the Bureau of Land Management's Resource Management Plan to Prohibit Rock Climbing in Castle Rocks and Cedar Fields, Idaho

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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, there are federal laws that protect and preserve the natural and cultural resources of historic properties and preserve and protect non-renewable resources, such as—but not limited to—the following: Antiquities Act of 1906, Historic Sites Act of 1935; Archaeological Recovery Act of 1960; American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978; National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended; Archaeological Resource Protection Act of 1979, as amended; and Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990; and

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Land Management has prepared a Notice of Intent to amend its Resource Management Plan (RMP), to be followed by a scoping process that will aim to identify potential issues within the Castle Rocks and Cedar Fields areas of southern Idaho, which are part of the aboriginal lands of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of Idaho; and

WHEREAS, the BLM's RPM planning area is located in Cassia and Power counties, Idaho, and encompasses approximately 1,556 acres of public land that contains the American Falls Archaeological District at Cedar Fields and the historic properties at Castle Rocks, which could potentially be damaged or adversely affected if the RMP is not amended; and

WHEREAS, ongoing rock climbing activities and associated climbing, staging, camping, and construction of new trails in these areas have the potential to damage tribal cultural resources; and

WHEREAS, the RMP amendments, with an associated National Environmental Policy Act document, consider the permanent designation of no climbing, no staging, no camping, and no construction of new trails at Castle Rocks Inter-Agency Recreation Area and at Cedar Fields; and

WHEREAS, a prohibition of these activities is necessary to protect historic properties from further disturbance that negatively impact cultural resources significant to the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes at Castle Rocks and Cedar Fields that are considered traditional cultural properties and sacred sites—with place names, stories, traditions, and burials known to tribal members; and

WHEREAS, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes request support of the National Congress of American Indians to help in the protection and preservation of the tribes' ancestral lands in Castle Rocks and Cedar Fields that are under threat by individuals in pursuit of "recreational freedom" to pursue rock climbing; and

WHEREAS, the rock climbing recreationists are engaging national climbing groups and lobbying resource users of public lands in their fight against the closure of the Castle Rocks and Cedar Fields area to rock climbing; and

WHEREAS, the damage to cultural sites from rock climbers is done without regard to federal law, as well as their moral responsibility to the first peoples of this land.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NCAI supports any amendments of the Bureau of Land Management's Resource Management Plan that would prohibit rock climbing in the Tribes' ancestral lands known as Castle Rocks and Cedar Fields, Idaho, in order to protect traditional cultural properties and sacred sites important to the Tribes; and

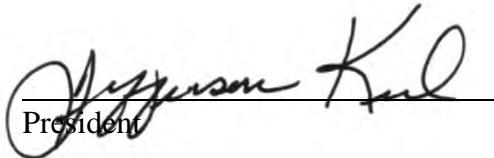
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the closure to rock climbing in the Castle Rocks and Cedar Fields, Idaho, areas include the removal of rock climbing equipment, including bolts and anchors; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NCAI supports these amendments in accordance with their formal policy statement on sacred places and that these changes are for the benefit of all Indian tribes that have natural and cultural resources that are utilized and held in trust by the United State of America and its branches of government; 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 2011 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland, Oregon on October 30 – November 4, 2011, with a quorum present.



President

ATTEST:



Recording Secretary