



National Congress of American Indians | 1516 P St NW, Washington, DC 20005 | (202) 466-7767 | www.ncai.org

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## The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #NC-24-023

### Title: Calling Upon the United States Congress and the U.S. Department of the Interior to Address Chronic Underfunding of Tribal Forest Management

**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**, Tribal forests cover about one-third of all Indian trust lands and serve as the economic and cultural backbone for many Indian reservations, providing a renewable resource that supports nearly 20,000 jobs and generates income for tribal governments and individuals, and countless other benefits, such as fuel, foods, medicines, water, and wildlife to tribal communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Indian Forest Resources Management Act (Public Law 101-630) mandates the Secretary of the Interior to undertake a national, independent assessment of Indian forests and forest management every ten years; and



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**WHEREAS**, the fourth Indian Forest Management Assessment Team (“IFMAT”) report was presented to Congress and the Department of the Interior in June 2023, and included the following findings:

- There is significant and persistent inequity of federal funding for Indian forest management versus other federal forests, such as the U.S. Forest Service and BLM
- On a per-acre basis, BIA forestry funding, in real terms, has declined by almost 36% over the last 30 years
- Reduced funding to BIA for forest management resulted in \$400 million in foregone timber revenue to tribes between 2010-2019
- Budget parity between BIA-responsible forests, National Forest System and BLM forests would require an additional \$96 million per year for BIA Forestry and \$42 million in additional wildfire funding; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) advocates on behalf of Indian peoples throughout the United States.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) calls upon the United States Congress and the Department of the Interior to address the chronic underfunding of Indian forest management and to take heed of the many other recommendations contained in the IFMAT report to improve the management of Indian forests held in trust by the United States; 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 unanimously by the Executive Committee on Friday, June 14, 2024, following recommendations of adoption by the relevant Committees and referral from the General Assembly at the 2024 Mid Year Convention of the National Congress of American Indians, held June 1-6, 2024, in Cherokee, NC.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Macarro", written over a horizontal line.

Mark Macarro, President

**ATTEST:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nickolaus Lewis", written over a horizontal line.

Nickolaus Lewis, Recording Secretary



## **2024 Midyear Convention Canyonville, Oregon**

### **RESOLUTION #24 – 20**

#### **“URGE THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS AND THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR TO ADDRESS CHRONIC UNDERFUNDING OF TRIBAL FOREST MANAGEMENT.”**

#### **PREAMBLE**

We, the members of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest 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 rights secured under Indian Treaties, Executive Orders and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and constitution of the United States and several states, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**, the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) are representatives of and advocates for national, regional, and specific tribal concerns; and

**WHEREAS**, ATNI is a regional organization comprised of American Indians/Alaska Natives and tribes in the states of Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Nevada, Northern California, and Alaska; and

**WHEREAS**, the health, safety, welfare, education, economic and employment opportunity, and preservation of cultural and natural resources are primary goals and objectives of ATNI; and

**WHEREAS**, Tribal forests cover about one-third of all Indian trust lands and serve as the economic and cultural backbone for many Indian reservations, providing a renewable resource that supports nearly 20,000 jobs and generates income for tribal governments and individuals, and countless other benefits, such as fuel, foods, medicines, water, and wildlife to tribal communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Indian Forest Resources Management Act (Public Law 101-630) mandates the Secretary of the Interior to undertake a national, independent assessment of Indian forests and forest management every ten years; and

**WHEREAS**, the fourth Indian Forest Management Assessment Team (“IFMAT”) report was presented to Congress and the Department of the Interior in June 2023, and included the following findings:

- There is significant and persistent inequity of federal funding for Indian forest management versus other federal forests, such as the U.S. Forest Service and BLM
- On a per-acre basis, BIA forestry funding, in real terms, has declined by almost 36% over the last 30 years
- Reduced funding to BIA for forest management resulted in \$400 million in foregone timber revenue to tribes between 2010-2019
- Budget parity between BIA-responsible forests, National Forest System and BLM forests would require an additional \$96 million per year for BIA Forestry and \$42 million in additional wildfire funding; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) advocates on behalf of Indian peoples throughout the United States; now

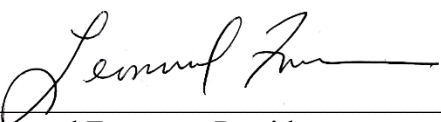
**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that ATNI requests that NCAI pass a resolution urging the Secretary of the Interior to address the issues brought forth in this resolution; and

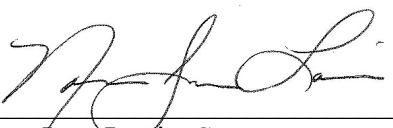
**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that ATNI urges the National Congress of American Indians, the United States Congress and the Department of the Interior to address the chronic underfunding of Indian forest management and to take heed of the many other recommendations contained in the IFMAT report to improve the management of Indian forests held in trust by the United States; and

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

**CERTIFICATION**

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2024 Midyear Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at Seven Feathers Casino, Canyonville, Oregon, May 19 - May 23, 2024, with a quorum present.

  
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Leonard Forsman, President

  
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Norma Jean Louie, Secretary