

**CERTIFICATE**

The undersigned, Lindsey X. Watchman and Shawna M. Gavin, hereby certify that they are the Chairman and Secretary of the General Council of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation of Oregon, and that at a duly called and regular meeting of said General Council, at the Nixyaawii Governance Center, Mission, Oregon on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of January, 2021, a quorum of said General Council was present, and the following resolution was regularly moved, seconded, and adopted by a vote of 34 FOR, to 0 AGAINST, and 3, ABSTAIN.

**RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS,** The General Council is the Forum of the electorate of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (Confederated Tribes) as defined in Article V, of the Confederated Tribes' Constitution and By-laws adopted on November 4, 1949, and approved by the Secretary of the Interior on December 7, 1949; AND

**WHEREAS,** Our people of the Confederated Tribes – the Walla Walla, Umatilla, and Cayuse - have relied upon the Columbia and Snake Rivers and their tributaries since time immemorial for our food, life, and religion; AND

**WHEREAS,** The Confederated Tribes signed a treaty with the United States federal government on June 9, 1855 which guaranteed in perpetuity the right to fish and hunt in usual and accustomed places and guaranteed abundant salmon populations would be maintained

pursuant to the Treaty of 1855, 12 Stat. 945, in perpetuity and in abundance forever; AND

**WHEREAS,** Annual harvest of salmon from the Snake River basin has declined greatly over the past 50 years due to dams and other factors. The Confederated Tribes has had to limit or close seasons in NE Oregon tributaries over the past 20 years which has limited harvest for tribal members in these usual and accustomed fishing areas. The current harvest does not compare to historic levels, nor is it consistent with the federal promises contained in the Treaty of 1855; AND

**WHEREAS,** Regional scientists and tribal leaders have projected Snake River salmon populations will go extinct within the next 20 years without aggressive action; AND

**WHEREAS,** The health, commerce, livelihood, sustenance, and spiritual and religious lifeblood of the members of the Confederated Tribes have been decimated by the loss of native foods including salmon; AND

**WHEREAS,** The four lower Snake River dams have increased the wealth of non-Indians through enhanced production of electricity, agricultural products, transportation services, and other associated benefits but Tribal peoples have not shared in this increased wealth on a commensurate basis and have endured tremendous inequity and injustice; AND

**WHEREAS,** The construction of the four Lower Snake River Dams inundated more than 150 miles of river habitat,

including over 600 usual and accustomed locations, most of our traditional village sites, 34,000 acres of treaty-based hunting and gathering places, and countless graves of loved ones and sacred and ceremonial places; AND

**WHEREAS,** Both contemporary fisheries science and the wisdom of our elders tells us that dams have been a major cause for the decline in salmon runs and that the four dams on the lower Snake River have a significant impact and continue to limit productivity and harvest opportunities; AND

**WHEREAS,** In 1995 the Board of Trustees, in consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Committee, and the Tribal Water Committee, developed a draft CTUIR Columbia Basin Salmon Policy based upon the testimony of General Council members; AND

**WHEREAS,** The Board of Trustees, in joint Work Session with the Fish and Wildlife Committee, the Tribal Water Committee, the Natural Resources Commission, and the Cultural Resources Commission, reviewed and finalized the 1995 CTUIR Columbia Basin Salmon Policy **which was adopted over 26 years ago that "Salmon are in a state of crisis. We must act immediately and decisively if we are to save them from extinction and restore them to the levels guaranteed in our Treaty"**; AND

**WHEREAS,** It is the standing policy of the 1995 Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation Columbia

Basin Salmon Policy that ***“the health of the Columbia Basin and the Pacific Ocean be restored, and that all salmon and other native species be restored to the same levels and to all rivers in which they lived prior to the Treaty of 1855. We hereby declare that a state of emergency exists in the Columbia Basin and Pacific Ocean which requires immediate action”***; AND

**WHEREAS,** It is the standing policy of the 1995 Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation Columbia Basin Salmon Policy that ***“we support the staged, strategic modification or removal of dams, such as the lower four snake River Dams and the John Day Dam, coincident with development of a New Energy Plan for the region and implementation of aggressive energy conservation programs.”***; AND

**WHEREAS,** The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation Youth Council has adopted, and support removing the four Lower Snake River Dams and have called upon the Umatilla Board of Trustees and President Joseph Biden to remove the Snake River Dams as described in the attached letter of support; AND

**WHEREAS,** The Umatilla Youth Council letter states ***“America made a deal and promised that we would be able to fish forever. We can't fish if there aren't any salmon left. We must restore the lower Snake River to its natural free flowing state so that it can again support salmon, other wildlife and our way of life”***; AND

**WHEREAS,** While dam removal would cause impacts to other non-Indian interests including power production, irrigation, and transportation, those impacts can be avoided, mitigated, and addressed by actions of the U.S. governments and states to uphold the legal and moral promises of our Treaty of 1855, as treaties are the supreme law of the land; AND

**WHEREAS,** That the Confederated Tribes Board of Trustees, the Fish and Wildlife Committee, Cultural Resources Commission, Science and Technology Commission, and Tribal Water Commission take an oath of office pursuant to the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation Constitution, Article II, Purpose, and Article III, Treaty Rights and the Federal Trust Responsibility, to exercise and protect all existing and future tribal rights arising from any source whether treaty, federal statute, state statute, common law, or otherwise; to achieve a maximum degree of self-government in all tribal affairs; and **to protect and promote** the interests of the Indians of the Umatilla Indian Reservation;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,** That the General Council of the Confederated Tribes supports breaching the dams on the Lower Snake River to restore our salmon runs to abundant and harvestable levels and allow our tribal people to reunite with the land, our sacred sites, villages, fishing sites, the sacred Snake River, and the creatures of the Lower Snake River and further support a comprehensive agreement that provides

for all the interests in the Snake River basin who may be impacted by dam breaching; AND

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the General Council direct its Board of Trustees adopt this resolution and direct its Tribal Fish and Wildlife Commission, Cultural Resources Committee, Science and Technology Commission, and Water Commission, and tribal staff and seek support of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission to support and take immediate actions to implement this resolution in support of removing the four lower Snake River dams in order to defend, protect, and restore our Treaty of 1855 Fishing Rights and restore the sacred salmon and Snake River we are obligated by the Creator to protect; AND

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, That the Board of Trustees will develop and implement aggressive legal and legislative actions, economic analysis, develop public support and political actions, and develop regional and national tribal, state, federal, and stakeholder partnership to lead efforts in the region and nationally to remove the four lower Snake River Dams and restore our Snake River salmon populations for future generations as promised in the U.S. Treaty of 1855; AND

And that said Resolution has not been modified, amended, or repealed and is in full force and

effect.

Dated this 21<sup>st</sup> day of January, 2021.



Lindsey X. Watchman, Chair  
General Council



Shawna M. Gavin, Secretary  
General Council