2013 Mid-Year Convention
Airway Heights, Washington

RESOLUTION #13 - 30

“OPPOSITION TO ANY/ALL LEGISLATION THAT PROHIBITS HORSE SLAUGHTER FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION OR restricts the TRANSPORT OR SALE OF HORSES IN INTERSTATE OR FOREIGN COMMERCE FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION, also SUPPORTS EFFORTS TO ALLOW TRIBES TO ESTABLISH HORSE SLAUGHTER FACILITIES WITHIN THEIR JURISDICTION”

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 to 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 the ATNI; and

WHEREAS, the Tribes of the Northwest have for many years spent countless man hours and funding protecting and re-establishing the ecosystem from degradation; and

WHEREAS, the Tribes of the Northwest are home to over 30,000 head of unclaimed/feral horses that are overgrazing and destroying the rangeland of many of the northwest reservations and are damaging natural springs, efforts at stream bank restoration, fish habitat, and culturally significant plants; and

WHEREAS, the tribes of ATNI have previously adopted Resolution No. 09-38 in May 2009, "Opposition to any/all horse slaughter Acts, also supporting a Tribal amendment allowing Tribes to establish horse slaughter facilities within their jurisdiction;" and

WHEREAS, the Federal Government has a clear fiduciary trust responsibility to protect the interests, particularly the lands, of Tribal Nations as well as a duty to implement laws passed to benefit those Tribes, yet the Administration failed to consult or communicate with any Tribes prior to taking a position to propose appropriations language reinstating the ban on funding USDA inspectors of horse meat for human consumption; and

WHEREAS, various Members of Congress have sponsored legislation into the House of Representatives (H.R. 1094) and the Senate (S. 541) entitled the Safeguard American Food Exports Act of 2013, to restrict or prohibit the sale or transport of equines and equine parts raised in the United States in interstate or foreign commerce for human consumption; and

WHEREAS, the Economic Development Committee agrees the horse market represents the only economically viable means of reducing the size feral herds damaging reservation environments and would further assist reservation horse producers who need to sustain their livestock operations, in the productive utilization of tribal and allotted lands; and

WHEREAS, there are ample safeguards utilized by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to ensure no drug residue makes its way into horsemeat exported as well as the fact that horsemeat has been successfully tested by overseas countries and importers for many years and consumed safely and without incident by millions of residents in the countries of some of our country’s largest and closest trading partners; and

WHEREAS, the National Tribal Horse Coalition (NTHC), a subcommittee of Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC) requests that the Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) provide a funding source for horse management practices on trust lands; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that ATNI opposes any legislation restricting horse slaughter for human consumption or legislation that removes funding of USDA inspectors of horsemeat for human consumption; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI opposes any legislation to restrict or prohibit the sale or transport of equines and equine parts raised in the United States in interstate or foreign commerce for human consumption; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI supports authorizing Tribes to establish horse slaughter facilities within their jurisdiction; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI supports a request for development of a Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) line item specific for management of overpopulation of horses from the Department of Interior; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that ATNI calls on the Department of Interior/Federal Government to support the Tribes’ position opposing legislation that bans the slaughter of horses for human consumption.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2013 Mid-Year Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at Northern Quest Resort Casino, Airway Heights, Washington on May 13 – 16, 2013 with a quorum present.

Fawn Sharp, President

Norma Jean Louie, Secretary