



# NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

## The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #ABQ-10-086

### TITLE: Ensuring Tribal Equity in the Department of Interior's Climate Change Adaption Initiative

**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 Department of the Interior (DOI) began a Climate Change Adaptation Initiative (CCA Initiative) in September 2009 to provide a strategy for the nation to effectively help natural resources adapt to the impacts of climate change; and

**WHEREAS**, the Administration's fiscal 2011 budget request for the DOI CCA Initiative is \$171.3 million, an increase of \$35.4 million over 2010. The \$136 million for the initiative in 2010 did not include any funding for tribes. Despite a substantial increase in the overall funding request, the situation for tribes is nearly as bad in the 2011 budget. Of the \$171.3 million, only \$200,000 goes to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to involve and assist Indian tribes in the Pacific Northwest; and

**WHEREAS**, the DOI CCA Initiative has lacked substantive involvement by Indian tribes in the formulation and implementation of the DOI CCA Initiative; and

**WHEREAS**, it is unclear how and if Indian tribes will be involved in the development of the DOI CCA Initiative's Regional Science Centers and Landscape Conservation Cooperatives; and

**WHEREAS**, the lack of involvement of and funding for Indian tribes in the DOI CCA Initiative is highly inequitable, especially considering the disproportionate effect of climate change on Indian tribes and their homelands, the fact that Indian Trust lands make up a significant portion of DOI's land management responsibilities, and the general support of Indian tribes for identifying and implementation adaptation solutions to climate change; and

**WHEREAS**, federal funding for tribal natural resources conservation and management has been historically underfunded and there is no federal program or funding that specifically supports tribal climate adaptation efforts.

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#### NCAI HEADQUARTERS

1516 P Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20005  
202.466.7767  
202.466.7797 fax  
[www.ncai.org](http://www.ncai.org)

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NCAI requests that the 2011 DOI CCA Initiative allocation to tribes via the BIA should be increased to a more equitable level, such as \$8.55 million, or 5% of DOI's CCA Initiative, for tribes to address and adapt to the impacts of climate change; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the DOI CCA Initiative allocation to tribes via the BIA should be maintained at no less than 5% in all futures years; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, it is imperative that DOI incorporates the perspectives and needs of Indian tribes in the DOI CCA Initiative, and the first step in accomplishing this is for DOI to conduct government-to-government consultation with Indian tribes on all aspects of the DOI CCA Initiative to equitably involve tribes. This consultation must be conducted in all regions of the U.S. to gather the full input of the nation's 565 federally-recognized tribes; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, each of the DOI CCA Initiative's regional planning groups, such as the Regional Science Centers and Landscape Conservation Cooperatives, should include representation from Indian tribes; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that Indian tribes must have a broader seat at the table in DOI's Climate Change Adaptation Initiative and a more equitable share of the funding; and

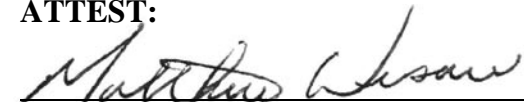
**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

**CERTIFICATION**

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2010 Annual Convention of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Albuquerque Convention Center in Albuquerque, NM on November 14-19, 2010, with a quorum present.

  
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President

**ATTEST:**

  
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Recording Secretary