



USET

SOVEREIGNTY PROTECTION FUND

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USET SPF Resolution No. 2019 SPF:005

OPPOSITION TO DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR REORGANIZATION

- WHEREAS,** United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF) is an intertribal organization comprised of twenty-seven (27) federally recognized Tribal Nations; and
- WHEREAS,** the actions taken by the USET SPF Board of Directors officially represent the intentions of each member Tribal Nation, as the Board of Directors comprises delegates from the member Tribal Nations' leadership; and
- WHEREAS,** on March 13, 2017, President Trump issued Executive Order (EO) 13781, *Comprehensive Plan for Reorganizing the Executive Branch*, intended to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of the executive branch by directing the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to propose a plan to reorganize governmental functions and eliminate unnecessary agencies; and
- WHEREAS,** on May 16, 2017, the Department of the Interior (DOI) initiated consultation with Tribal Nations on implementation of EO 13781, but because this did not include specific questions or proposals, USET SPF was only able to provide comments of a general nature; and
- WHEREAS,** as a result of the EO, the Secretary of the Interior, Ryan Zinke, has proposed to reorganize the DOI, including the establishment of thirteen (13) unified regional office boundaries across all the Department's Bureaus; and
- WHEREAS,** despite publicized meetings with DOI officials and state and local governments on the development of the proposal, Tribal Nations were not engaged in this manner, notwithstanding trust and treaty obligations, and Tribal consultation was not initiated until May 17, 2018; and
- WHEREAS,** the current proposal would split the USET SPF region, currently the Bureau of Indian Affairs' (BIA) Eastern Region, into up to five (5) separate regions based on watersheds and state boundaries, which would be unified across the entire DOI system, with each headed up by a regional director whose priorities will consist of: conservation, recreation, and permitting; and
- WHEREAS,** thus far, DOI has not provided any sense of how the trust responsibility will be upheld through the reorganization, nor its benefits to Indian Country or even a clear sense of cost/benefits, in spite of repeated requests from USET SPF and others throughout Indian Country; and
- WHEREAS,** USET SPF has repeatedly communicated its priorities and questions regarding the reorganization to DOI, without receiving a response or answers; and

- WHEREAS,** nonetheless, DOI requested a total of \$14 million in federal appropriations to begin work on the reorganization, including \$900,000 in “pre-planning” dollars from BIA; and
- WHEREAS,** DOI has been engaging in significant restructuring activity for BIA, including key personnel reassignments, also in the absence of Tribal consultation; and
- WHEREAS,** it has been announced that DOI is moving forward with the reorganization for all departments and bureaus without Tribal consultation, with the exception of the BIA, even though each agency and operating division within DOI shares in the trust responsibility and obligation to Tribal Nations; and
- WHEREAS,** in December 2010, the United States recognized the rights of its First Peoples through its support of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), whose provisions and principles support and promote the purposes of this resolution; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED** the USET SPF Board of Directors repudiates the manner in which the Department of the Interior has conducted itself surrounding the proposed reorganization as it relates to Indian Country; and, be it further
- RESOLVED** in the absence of necessary information regarding its implications, the USET SPF Board of Directors stands opposed to the reorganization of the Department of the Interior.

CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET SPF Annual Meeting held on the Sovereign Territory of the Seneca Nation of Indians, at which a quorum was present on October 11, 2018.



Chief Kirk E. Francis, Sr., President
United South and Eastern Tribes
Sovereignty Protection Fund



Chief Lynn Malerba, Secretary
United South and Eastern Tribes
Sovereignty Protection Fund