



United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.  
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**USET Resolution No. 2010:029**

**SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDING OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOREST SERVICE'S CEREMONIAL STONE STRUCTURES AND LANDSCAPES INVENTORY PILOT PROJECT**

- WHEREAS,** United South and Eastern Tribes Incorporated (USET) is an intertribal organization comprised of twenty-five (25) federally recognized Tribes; and
- WHEREAS,** the actions taken by the USET Board of Directors officially represent the intentions of each member Tribe, as the Board of Directors comprises delegates from the member Tribes' leadership; and
- WHEREAS,** United South and Eastern Tribes Incorporated (USET) is an intertribal organization comprised of twenty-five (25) federally recognized Tribes; and
- WHEREAS,** the actions taken by the USET Board of Directors officially represent the intentions of each member Tribe, as the Board of Directors comprises delegates from the member Tribes' leadership; and
- WHEREAS,** within the ancestral territories of the USET Tribes there exists sacred ceremonial stone landscapes and their stone structures which are of particular cultural significance to many USET member Tribes; and
- WHEREAS,** for thousands of years before the emigration of Europeans, USET Tribal ancestors used these sacred stone structures and landscapes to sustain the people's reliance on Mother Earth and the spirit energies of balance and harmony; these stone structures and landscapes remain of significant spiritual and cultural value today; and
- WHEREAS,** during and following the Colonial oppression of the South and Eastern Tribes, many cultural and ceremonial practices, including ceremonial use of stones and stone landscapes, were suppressed; and
- WHEREAS,** federal laws exist, including, but not limited to, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) as amended, with 36 CFR Part 800; the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, Executive Order 13007, and all other related laws, rules, regulations and executive orders support the rights of Indian Tribes, but only now are gradually being utilized to proactively influence protection of ceremonial stone landscape sites; and
- WHEREAS,** in 2007, USET Resolution 2007:037 titled "Sacred Ceremonial Stone Landscapes Found in Ancestral Territories of the United South and Eastern Tribes..." made note that sacred stone landscapes exist, are of cultural value, and requested federal agencies, including the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service, to work to understand and preserve these stone landscapes; and
- WHEREAS,** a December 11, 2008 decision by the National Park Service's Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places that a ceremonial site containing ceremonial stone structures in Montague, Massachusetts was eligible for listing in the National Register heralded a new day in the appreciation of the significance of such sacred sites; and
- WHEREAS,** the USDA Forest Service, in partnership with USET, has proposed the development of the Ceremonial Stone Structures and Landscapes Inventory Pilot Project, which will focus on the Talladega District of the Talladega National Forest in Alabama, due to its concentration of stone structures, prior archeological

surveys that document pre-contact American Indian populations in the area, and the absence of historical field clearing in the area; and

**WHEREAS,** the proposed Ceremonial Stone Structures and Landscape Inventory Pilot Project has as a key component the interpretation of the significance of such structures and landscapes by the USET partners in the Pilot Project; and

**WHEREAS,** the proposed Ceremonial Stone Structures and Landscapes Inventory Pilot Project represents the first such partnership between USET and the USDA Forest Service that has the potential not only to influence increased protection of Ceremonial Stone Structures and Landscapes on lands managed by the USDA Forest Service, but also to serve as a model for future partnerships between USET and other federal land managing agencies; and

**WHEREAS,** the proposed Ceremonial Stone Structures and Landscapes Inventory Pilot Project has tremendous potential to affect the appreciation of the significance and Native American origin of Ceremonial Stone Structures and Landscapes in the broader area of cultural resource management; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors commends the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service for proposing this historic partnership with USET member Tribes through the United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. and the objectives of this proposed Pilot Project; and, be it further

**RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors strongly encourages the leadership of the USDA Forest Service to fully support and fund this proposed Pilot Project in order to ensure that it produces a comprehensive inventory/interpretation of Ceremonial Stone Structures and Landscapes within the Talladega District and contributes to the agency's understanding of the significance of Ceremonial Stone Structures and Landscapes to the living, vital cultures of many USET member Tribes, thus ensuring that such structures and landscapes located on lands managed by the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service receive full protections as significant cultural resources and serves as a model for future partnerships with USET.

### CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET Semi-Annual Meeting, at which a quorum was present, in Mobile, AL, on Thursday, June 17, 2010.



Brian Patterson, President  
United South and Eastern Tribe, Inc.



Robert McGhee, Secretary  
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

*"Because there is strength in Unity"*