



United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

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USET Resolution No. 2013:017

SUPPORT FOR ST. REGIS MOHAWK TRIBE FOR PROPER ENVIRONMENTAL REMEDIATION OF THE GRASSE RIVER

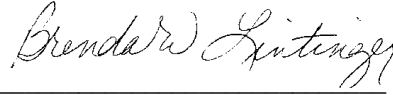
- WHEREAS,** United South and Eastern Tribes, Incorporated (USET) is an intertribal organization comprised of twenty-six (26) federally recognized Tribes; and
- WHEREAS,** the actions taken by the USET Board of Directors officially represent the intentions of each member Tribe, as the Board of Directors comprises delegates from the member Tribes' leadership; and
- WHEREAS,** the USET Board of Directors is working for the best interest of its member Tribes, and their citizens, to protect, promote, and enhance opportunities; and
- WHEREAS,** the health and welfare of the members of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe located in upstate New York, are threatened by persistent industrial contamination (mainly polychlorinated biphenyls [PCBs]) in the sediment of the Grasse River caused by Alcoa Aluminum, estimated at 1.5 million cubic yards; and
- WHEREAS,** the Grasse River is within the original boundary of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe Reservation territory; and
- WHEREAS,** this contamination has caused the members of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe to stop their traditional fishing, which has forced a departure from their traditional diet, causing the rate of diabetes to increase to epidemic proportions in the Tribal population; and
- WHEREAS,** the Grasse River is upstream of the source of drinking water for the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, causing increased expense due to the treatment necessary to make the drinking water safe for an estimated population of 3,500 people; and
- WHEREAS,** the United States (U.S.) Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has proposed a remedial action that will leave the overwhelming majority of the contamination in the Grasse River, including areas that are prone to ice jams, scour and erosion events, and further proposes to cap most of the contamination; and
- WHEREAS,** said cap is designed to cover the contamination with sand or stone without permanently removing contamination by dredging; and
- WHEREAS,** a previous pilot capping project on the Grasse River was a failure due to seasonal ice scour; and
- WHEREAS,** the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe has proposed complete removal of all contamination by dredging; and
- WHEREAS,** the EPA Region 2 has identified Akwesasne as a Potential Environmental Justice Community; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors supports the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe's request for dredging of all contamination of the Grasse River and recommends the designation of Akwesasne as an Environmental Justice Community and opposes the United States Environmental Protection Agency's proposed remedy of capping the contamination for the Grasse River Superfund site.

CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET Impact Week Meeting, at which a quorum was present, in Arlington, VA, on Thursday, February 7, 2013.



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



Brenda Lintinger, Secretary
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

“Because there is strength in Unity”