



United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

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USET Resolution No. 2015:006

CLARIFICATION OF GENERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM GUIDANCE BY THE UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

- 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 United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), in response to the Office of Inspector General's Audit Report titled "*Framework for Developing Tribal Capacity Needed in the Indian General Assistance Program*," developed the document titled "*Guidance on the Award and Management of General Assistance Agreements for Tribes and Intertribal Consortia*"; and
- WHEREAS,** the nine EPA Regions have various interpretations of eligible projects funded by the General Assistance Program (GAP); and
- WHEREAS,** these different interpretations have caused confusion among Tribes throughout Indian Country; and
- WHEREAS,** Tribes have expressed the need to maintain flexibility in the GAP program, especially in providing assistance to Tribes with existing Clean Water Act programs, as there are extenuating circumstances which may require the Tribes to expand their water programs; and
- WHEREAS,** Tribes face complex environmental challenges, such as climate change and toxic algae blooms, resulting in more environmental damage and the need to address and document the changes with no additional dollars except for GAP funds; 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 Board of Directors requests the Environmental Protection Agency American Indian Environmental Office clearly direct the nine Environmental Protection Agency Regions to maintain maximum flexibility and uniformity in addressing Tribal Priorities for capacity building for General Assistance Program funding.

CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET Annual Meeting, at which a quorum was present, in Verona, NY, on Thursday, December 4, 2014.

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

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

"Because there is strength in Unity"