



## UNITED SOUTH AND EASTERN TRIBES, INC.

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USET Resolution No. 2003:007

### EPA AND TRIBES

- WHEREAS,** United South and Eastern Tribes, Incorporated (USET) is an intertribal organization comprised of twenty-four (24) 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 Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) mission includes the responsibility for human health and environmental protection of all peoples within the external boundaries of the United States; and
- WHEREAS,** EPA has provided states this protection since the early 1970s which has allowed states to progress in the development of their environmental infrastructure and programs with extraordinary support from the EPA over the past 30 years; and
- WHEREAS,** EPA is responsible to 565 federally-recognized Indian Tribes, their 572 governments, and their respective reservations and trust lands in carrying out the agency's mission and statute responsibility; and
- WHEREAS,** according to the Indian Health Service (IHS), American Indian communities have the most serious environmental and hazardous health conditions of any communities in the country; and
- WHEREAS,** the EPA is responsible for carrying out all environmental statutes throughout the country and has *never* fulfilled this responsibility in Indian Country; and
- WHEREAS,** the EPA is not carrying out their federal fiduciary responsibilities, the EPA Indian Policy, and numerous statutes related to Indian Country; and
- WHEREAS,** 551 Indian Tribes do not have Water Quality Standards, few, if any, Tribes have total maximum daily loads, and many are not in full compliance with the *10 Goal EPA system*; and
- WHEREAS,** programs such as *Direct Implementation* and *Direct Implementation Tribal Cooperative Agreements* are available but not being utilized in Indian Country, due to the lack of information about existing programs for American Indians; and
- WHEREAS,** EPA does not currently have an overall strategic plan implemented for Indian Country to ever develop EPA programs for all tribes; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED** that the USET Board of Directors support protecting our families, human health and our environment through adequate EPA resources, technical and financial, and that EPA not be excused from fulfilling their federal fiduciary responsibilities to all Indian Nations; and, be it further
- RESOLVED** that the USET Board of Directors requests President George W. Bush, EPA Administrator Christine Todd-Whitman and Congress protect and improve American Indian programs and their respective environmental budgets based on real identified unmet need

*“Because there is strength in Unity”*

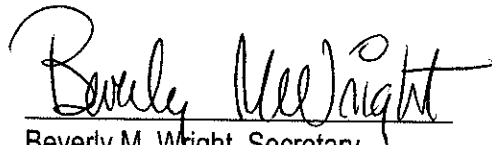
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**CERTIFICATION**

This resolution was duly passed at the USET Board Annual Meeting and EXPO, at which a quorum was present in Uncasville, CT, Thursday, October 31, 2002.



Keller George, President  
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.



Beverly M. Wright, Secretary  
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.