



## UNITED SOUTH AND EASTERN TRIBES, INC.

---

---

USET Resolution No. 2003:067

### SACRED SITES PROTECTION


- 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,** properties of religious and cultural significance to tribes are frequently threatened or destroyed by private and government sponsored development; and
- WHEREAS,** legal remedies such as the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, Executive Order 13,007 and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), although they may occasionally provide the basis for protecting sites, are often ineffectively implemented and provide only limited (if any) legal redress to aggrieved traditional Indian religious practitioners and tribes; and
- WHEREAS** thousands of sacred sites are currently threatened in the south and east, including but not limited to (e.g.): Penobscot River in Maine, Conley site in Louisiana; the Sacred Landscape Corridor within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Ocmulgee Old Fields in Georgia; Tuckaleechee Cove in Tennessee; the Buckeye Knoll Site in Texas, and numerous other places; and
- WHEREAS,** Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires that whenever a federal undertaking could affect a property of religious and cultural significance to a federally recognized tribe, the responsible federal agency must engage in an extensive review process, including government-to-government consultation with all affected federally recognized tribes; and
- WHEREAS,** many, if not all, federal agencies have not been in compliance with Executive Orders 13-007 regarding sacred sites and 13-175 regarding consultation or the National Historic Preservation Act (16 USC 470 et. Seq.; 36 CFR 800), concerning Indian rights to protect sites of traditional religious and cultural significance to tribes; and
- WHEREAS,** USET's Culture and Heritage Committee has for many years supported and played a key role in efforts to strengthen legal protections for sacred places and to secure administrative accommodations for the use of sacred places by Indian practitioners; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED** that the USET Board of Directors supports the Sacred Places Protection Coalition (also called the Sacred Lands Protection Coalition) to develop statutory and regulatory Sacred Sites protection, and in particular, to focus upon the sacred site protection efforts in the South and Eastern United States; and, be it further
- RESOLVED** that the USET Board of Directors will seek participation in Congressional Oversight Hearings on threats to sacred places with the goals of strengthening federal law, administrative policies, procedures and regulations relevant to sacred sites protection.

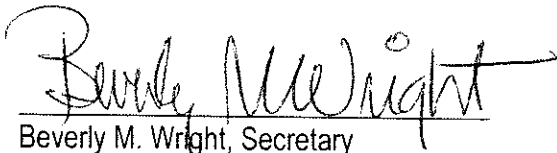
*“Because there is strength in Unity”*

USET Resolution No. 2003:067

**CERTIFICATION**

This resolution was duly passed at the USET Impact Week Meeting, at which a quorum was present, in Arlington, VA, Thursday, February 6, 2003.

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

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