



UNITED SOUTH AND EASTERN TRIBES, INC.

USET Resolution No. 2005:006

SUPPORT OF THE SOKAOGON CHIPPEWA TO PROTECT ITS ANCESTRAL LANDS AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

- 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,** for centuries the Sokaogon Chippewa have lived in the Great Lakes region of Northeast Wisconsin and, as good stewards, have faithfully protected their lands and waters for the Seventh Generation; and
- WHEREAS,** the Sokaogon Chippewa lost all their lands in 19th Century treaties with the federal government until the Tribe was recognized in 1939 and provided with an 1850 acre reservation surrounding Mushgigkwawasigoegaons or "Rice Lake", an abundant source of manomin ("wild rice") – the food that grows on water – which still provides needed food and the means to practice important Sokaogon cultural traditions; and
- WHEREAS,** for the last 28 years the Sokaogon people were forced to divert all their financial resources and energies to fight the development of a massive zinc sulfide mine located one mile upstream from their Reservation and at the headwaters of the Wolf River, one of the last pristine rivers in the United States of America; and
- WHEREAS,** in waging this battle against the mine the Sokaogon became the first Tribe east of the Mississippi to obtain "Treatment as a State" status under the Clean Water Act and to win a major court battle which not only upheld the Tribe's non-degradation water quality standards, but gave other American Indian Tribes legal authority to protect all Tribal Waters from careless "progress" and development; and
- WHEREAS,** due in part to the Sokaogon steadfast opposition to the Crandon Mine and the Tribe's non-degradation water quality standards, the last multinational mining company to push for development of the Crandon Mine, BHPBilliton, has pulled out of the project giving the Sokaogon an opportunity to purchase the Nicolet Minerals Company, reacquire 2000 acres of its ancestral lands next to its Reservation and permanently protect the headwaters of the Wolf River and manomin for all future generations; and
- WHEREAS,** the Sokaogon have very limited financial resources, in October 2003 the Tribe took responsibility for an 8 million dollar note to BHPBilliton as a means to buy and permanently protect Tribal lands and waters from the threat of sulfide mining; and
- WHEREAS,** the Tribe must pay off this debt by March 2006 to avoid foreclosure proceedings; and
- WHEREAS,** the Sokaogon people desperately need financial assistance from all sources to permanently protect their ancestral lands and cultural resources and continue to set an important example of how American Indians can be effective leaders in the fight to preserve clean water for all plants, animals and future generations; therefore, be it

"Because there is strength in Unity"

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RESOLVED that the USET Board of Directors commend the Sokaogon Chippewa for fighting to protect American Indian lands, waters and cultural values against powerful multinational mining companies for the past 28 years and encourages USET members to assist the Sokaogon people to secure their ancestral lands and forever protect the headwaters of the Wolf River from the threat of sulfide mining by all possible means.

CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET Annual Meeting & EXPO, at which a quorum was present, in Verona, NY, on Thursday, October 28, 2004.



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



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