



# USET

SOVEREIGNTY PROTECTION FUND

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## USET SPF Resolution No. 2019 SPF:017


### **URGING THE FULL FUNDING AND EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS WATER MANAGEMENT, PLANNING, AND PRE-DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**


- WHEREAS,** United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF) is an intertribal organization comprised of twenty-seven (27) federally recognized Tribal Nations; and
- WHEREAS,** the actions taken by the USET SPF Board of Directors officially represent the intentions of each member Tribal Nation, as the Board of Directors comprises delegates from the member Tribal Nations' leadership; and
- WHEREAS,** USET SPF Tribal Nations actively seek funds from the Water Resources Management, Planning and Pre-Development (WMPPD) program each fiscal year (FY) from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) for critical projects to ensure that Tribal Nation Water Resources are protected; and
- WHEREAS,** from FY 2015 to FY 2019, BIA has allocated approximately \$6.4 million dollars for WMPPD projects nationwide while receiving proposals in the approximate amount of \$13 million dollars, which is more than double the funding level; and
- WHEREAS,** in FY 2015, BIA Eastern Region Office (ERO) was allocated only \$118,000 for WMPPD projects and partially funded four of eight Tribal Nation proposals, yet no Tribal Nation was awarded sufficient funding to complete a project in full; and
- WHEREAS,** this pattern has continued in subsequent FYs, with funding allocated to ERO from BIA Central Office which is deeply inadequate in spite of much more substantial requests from the region, ultimately resulting in WMPPD proposals from USET SPF Tribal Nations decreasing over time due to lack of sufficient funding; and
- WHEREAS** this pattern of inadequate and decreasing funding for the BIA ERO can be seen in the following trend: FY2016: \$1,271,524 requested; 8 proposals received; \$275,000 funding allocated; and 2 projects funded; FY2017: \$781,322 requested; 6 proposals received; \$235,700 funding allocated; and 2 projects funded; FY2018: \$395,295 requested; 5 proposals received; \$108,200 funding allocated; and 1 project funded; and FY2019 \$216,940 requested; 2 proposals received; and no allocation or funding decisions made; and
- WHEREAS,** despite the demonstrated demand for these dollars, the President's Budget Request for FY 2019 contained a reduction of \$1.7 million for the WMPPD program, misleading Congress about the program's necessity; and
- WHEREAS,** it appears that WMPPD funding is being distributed in an inequitable manner, with the Tribal Nations of only a few BIA regions receiving the bulk of WMPPD program funds, although vital projects exist in all regions, including the Eastern Region; a

- WHEREAS,** WMPPD funding distribution decisions are made by the Water Funding Prioritization team at BIA Central Office, which is comprised of Regional and Central Office staff, and ERO may not currently be represented on this team; and
- WHEREAS,** ERO should serve on the Water Funding Prioritization team in order to ensure the priorities of the USET region are duly considered during the award process; 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 SPF Board of Directors requests that BIA Eastern Region Office ensure it is adequately represented on the Water Funding Prioritization team at BIA Central Office, so that USET SPF Tribal Nations' projects will be fairly considered; and be it further
- RESOLVED** the USET SPF Board of Directors urges BIA to request adequate funding for Water Management, Planning, and Pre-Development program from Congress to meet the demonstrated demand from across Indian Country and to provide for an equitable distribution of this funding across BIA regions in fulfillment of its trust obligation.

### CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET SPF Impact Week Meeting, at which a quorum was present, in Arlington, VA, March 7, 2019.

  
Chief Kirk E. Francis, Sr., President  
United South and Eastern Tribes  
Sovereignty Protection Fund

  
Chief Lynn Malerba, Secretary  
United South and Eastern Tribes  
Sovereignty Protection Fund