USET Welcomes Three New Tribal Nation Members At Annual Meeting

(Sovereign Territory of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians)— Three Tribal Nations were welcomed as new members of the Annual Meeting of United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET) and United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF).

The Tribal Nations are the Rappahannock Tribe, the Chickahominy Indian Tribe, and the Chickahominy Indian Tribe-Eastern Division. Working together with USET staff, these Tribal Nations will further support the well-being of their Tribal citizens through health, environmental, and economic development programs. USET membership now includes 30 Tribal Nations in the south and eastern United States.

Once the USET/USET SPF Board approved of the additions, the new Tribal Leaders were seated at the table with current member leadership. USET/USET SPF Secretary Lynn Malerba, Lifetime Chief of the Mohegan Tribe of Connecticut commented, “We are so pleased to welcome three new members to our USET family. We believe they will enhance our collective efforts by bringing their own unique experiences, culture, and history to the conversation and our advocacy efforts.”

The mission of the Rappahannock is to preserve Rappahannock culture, social structures, and political structures while educating the public on the rich contributions that Rappahannocks continue to make in Virginia and the nation. The Chickahominy Indian Tribe are an Algonquian people whose lands once stretched from the southeastern coastal plain to near the Arctic Circle. Although sometimes referred to as Powhatan, the Chickahominy were independent people, never under the control of Chief Powhatan. The Chickahominy Indian Tribe-Eastern Division shares an early history with the Chickahominy Indian Tribe. Then in 1921, they organized as the Chickahominy Indians Eastern Division.

The three Tribal Nations were federally recognized on January 29, 2018, through the Thomasina E. Jordan Indian Tribes of Virginia Federal Recognition Act.

At the Annual Meeting, Tribal leaders from across the south and eastern United States are discussing important topics such as protecting Tribal Nation homelands, constitutionality threats and challenges, reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, and protecting sovereign immunity in Indian Country. Tribal leaders and other attendees are celebrating 50 years of USET, which was founded on May 27, 1969.