
Assembly of First Nations

55 Metcalfe Street, Suite 1600
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6L5
Telephone: 613-241-6789 Fax: 613-241-5808
www.afn.ca

SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY
December 6,7,8, 2022, Ottawa, ON



Assemblée des Premières Nations

55, rue Metcalfe, Suite 1600
Ottawa (Ontario) K1P 6L5
Téléphone: 613-241-6789 Télécopieur: 613-241-5808
www.afn.ca

Resolution no. 58/2022

TITLE: Support for an Annual AFN Water Walk

SUBJECT: Water Stewardship

MOVED BY: Chief Andrea Paul, Pictou Landing Band, NS

SECONDED BY: Kúkpi7 Judy Wilson, Neskonalith Indian Band, BC

DECISION Approved by the AFN Executive Committee by consensus.

WHEREAS:

A. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) states:

- i. Article 25: Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.
- ii. Article 26 (1): Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired.
- iii. Article 27: States shall establish and implement, in conjunction with Indigenous peoples concerned, a fair, independent, impartial, open and transparent process, giving due recognition to indigenous peoples' laws, traditions, customs and land tenure systems, to recognize and adjudicate the rights of Indigenous peoples pertaining to their lands, territories and resources, including those which were traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used. Indigenous peoples shall have the right to participate in this process.
- iv. Article 32 (1): Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources.

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 25th day of January, 2023 in Ottawa, Ontario

ROSEANNE ARCHIBALD, NATIONAL CHIEF

58 – 2022
Page 1 of 3

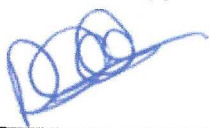
SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY

December 6,7,8, 2022, Ottawa, ON

Resolution no. 58/2022

- v. Article 32 (2): States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the Indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources.
 - vi. Article 32 (3): States shall provide effective mechanisms for just and fair redress for any such activities, and appropriate measures shall be taken to mitigate adverse environmental, economic, social, cultural or spiritual impact.
- B.** In 2003, Grandmothers of the Great Lakes led by Josephine Mandamin came together to answer the call of the water. Later that year, they walked around Lake Superior and in subsequent years around all of the Great Lakes. This work to raise awareness of the sacred relationship with water led to the Water Walk movement wherein many lakes, rivers, streams across Turtle Island have been prayed for, sung to, and walked.
- C.** Since time immemorial, First Nations women have been traditionally known as water protectors and/or water carriers. First Nations characterize water as more-than-human, in which there exists a reciprocal relationship that must be respected. First Nations women share a sacred connection to the spirit of water through their role as child bearers and have particular responsibilities to protect and nurture water.
- D.** Despite colonial disruptions, the sacred relationship with water has endured throughout First Nations across Canada. Communities are situated next to or along bodies of water that serve as vital life sources. The health and well-being of these waterscapes are paramount and directly affect the health and well-being of First Nations communities. In order to holistically address the disconnect to water caused by colonization, First Nations must be given time, space, and resources to nourish these water-based relationships.
- E.** The Water Walk as a ceremonial movement remains a grassroots initiative to bring together the balance between women, men, two-spirit and gender-diverse peoples to strengthen relationships between one another and the water. The sacred roles and responsibilities that each carry are central to the healing and well-being of the First Nations families, communities and nations. Thus, the Water Walks serve as an essential opportunity to reignite unity, foster empowerment, and create awareness.
- F.** With the onslaught of worsening issues related to water, it is increasingly imperative that First Nations leadership and communities come together to collectively reaffirm their responsibility and relationship with the water. The establishment of an Annual day for Water Walks to take place in communities across Canada as well as the establishment of an Annual AFN Water Walk will provide an opportunity for First Nations leadership, women, men, youth, elders, two-spirit and gender-diverse relatives to take meaningful actions for the water.

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 25th day of January, 2023 in Ottawa, Ontario



ROSEANNE ARCHIBALD, NATIONAL CHIEF

58 – 2022

Page 2 of 3

SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY

December 6,7,8, 2022, Ottawa, ON

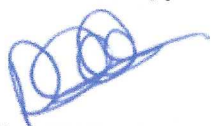
Resolution no. 58/2022

- G. AFN Resolution 43/2021, *Support for First Nations Inherent Rights, Title and Jurisdiction of Water Stewardship, including the Traditional Roles of First Nations Women*, directs the AFN, with guidance from the Advisory Committee on Climate Action and the Environment, to pursue funding to support First Nations water stewardship priorities related to First Nations' inherent rights, title and jurisdiction.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the First Nations-in-Assembly:

1. Support the creation of a National Day of Water Walks that adheres to the customs and protocols of respective Nations.
2. Support the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Water Sector with guidance from the Advisory Committee on Climate Action and the Environment (ACE) and working with relevant Chiefs' Committees and technical bodies, AFN Councils, and Water Walkers as appropriate, to acquire funding and organize an Annual AFN Water Walk that supports, uplifts, raises awareness of the traditional roles of First Nations women and includes youth and gender-diverse people in water stewardship.
3. Call upon AFN political leadership and staff to participate in the Annual AFN Water Walk and for First Nations leadership to commit to leading Water Walks in their home territories.
4. Direct the AFN Water Sector, with guidance from Water Walkers and relevant Chiefs' Committees, to facilitate and engage with communities who want to participate and to advocate for funding to support communities to organize their own Water Walks.

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 25th day of January, 2023 in Ottawa, Ontario



ROSEANNE ARCHIBALD, NATIONAL CHIEF

58 – 2022
Page 3 of 3