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## Assembly of First Nations

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## Assemblée des Premières Nations

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**ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
JULY 25, 26, & 27, 2017, REGINA, SK**

**Resolution no. 13/2017**

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**TITLE:** Chronic Wasting Disease

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**SUBJECT:** Health

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**MOVED BY:** Chief Stanley Grier, Piikani Nation, AB

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**SECONDED BY:** Chief Byron Louis, Okanagan Indian Band, BC

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**DECISION** Carried by Consensus

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### WHEREAS:

A. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples affirms:

- i. Article 29 (1). Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for indigenous peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.

B. First Nations have, since time immemorial, relied on the wildlife we gather and consume for sustenance, survival, and ceremonial purposes. These wildlife resources given to First Nations by the Creator have important purposes in our ceremonies, songs, prayer, and traditional ways handed down through generation after generation.

C. Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a newly emerged infectious disease affecting deer, elk, moose, and possibly caribou. CWD is always fatal and can remain viable in the soil for years. CWD is similar to mad cow disease, and though the risk of transfer to people may be low, Health Canada advises that no CWD-infected material should be used or consumed by humans or animals. Transfer of CWD via plants has also been demonstrated, threatening agricultural markets and the entire economy.

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**PERRY BELLEGARDE, NATIONAL CHIEF**

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- D. CWD threatens irreparable harm to wildlife and to First Nations rights to hunt, fish and gather as promised under the numbered Treaties across Canada. Impacts on wildlife are already projected to be severe, with direct implications for reliant peoples and communities—especially if the disease is allowed to transfer into caribou that are known to be susceptible. Additional multiplying and socio-economic impacts threaten hundreds of First Nations in Canada.
- E. The complexity and interaction of sciences and disciplines involved in the CWD issue, including First Nations' traditional knowledge, are wide-ranging and extremely challenging, yet virtually all vital stakeholders and experts have been excluded from key policy processes. That flawed approach continues to compromise First Nations interests going forward as shown in a June 30, 2017 update to Canada's CWD protocol.
- F. To secure, maintain, and protect First Nation's rights and interests, full and informed access and meaningful participation in all policy and regulatory processes is vital.
- G. In 2017, Piikani First Nation formalized a working partnership with the Alliance for Public Wildlife (APW). This partnership is ensuring that the Piikani First Nation is included in all policy and regulatory processes on CWD.
- H. The now extreme urgency of the current crisis underscores the need for informed, effective, and cost-efficient representation for all First Nations, and to extend the Piikani / APW partnership nationally to address and adequately represent First Nation interests in confronting this crisis.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Chiefs-in-Assembly:**

1. Direct the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to formally support Piikani First Nation and the Alliance for Public Wildlife (APW) (per their formal partnership) in their efforts of consultation and advocacy in informing Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) policies and frameworks.
2. Direct the AFN to work in collaboration with the Piikani / APW, federal, provincial/territorial, and First Nations governments to secure necessary resources to address and prevent the impacts of CWD.
3. Direct the AFN to report annually to the Chiefs in Assembly on the progress of this work.

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