



**COALITION OF LARGE TRIBES**

Blackfeet Nation • Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe • Crow Nation • Eastern Shoshone Tribe  
Fort Belknap Indian Community • Mandan, Hidatsa & Arikara Nation • Navajo Nation • Northern Arapaho Tribe  
Oglala Sioux Tribe • Rosebud Sioux Tribe • Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation  
Shoshone Bannock Tribes • Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate • Spokane Tribe • Ute Indian Tribe

**Coalition of Large Tribes (COLT)**

**Resolution: 12-09-2023 Resolution #02-2023 (DV-Las Vegas)**

**Resolution of COLT to Declare Position on Federal Indian Water Rights Policy of the United States**

**WHEREAS**, the Coalition of Large Tribes (COLT) was formally established in early April 2011, and is comprised of Tribes with large land base, including the Blackfeet Tribe of Montana • Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe • Crow Nation • Eastern Shoshone Tribe • Fort Belknap Indian Community • Mandan, Hidatsa & Arikara Nations • Navajo Nation • Northern Arapaho Tribe • Oglala Sioux Tribe • Rosebud Sioux Tribe • Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation • Shoshone Bannock Tribes • Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate • Spokane Tribe • Ute Indian Tribe, and is Chaired by Hon. Marvin Weatherwax, Blackfeet Tribal Business Council; and

**WHEREAS**, COLT was organized to provide a unified advocacy base on all issues affecting Tribes that govern large trust land bases and that strive to ensure the most beneficial use of those lands for tribes and individual Indian landowners; and

**WHEREAS**, COLT-member Tribes have become aware of representatives of the U.S. Department of the Interior seeking input on the Administration’s federal Indian water policy including the Federal Criteria and Procedures for Indian water rights settlements (Federal Register, Vol. 55, No. 48, March 12, 1990); and

**WHEREAS**, recent COLT-member Tribes’ Indian water rights settlement legislation has, in practice, caused a substantive and monetary change to issues previously not allowed for COLT members that have previously settled their own water rights claims; and

**WHEREAS**, the beneficial shift in the paradigm of Indian water rights settlement terms should be made available to all tribal nations and especially COLT members that have previously settled their water rights claims with the United States, state governments, and local non-Indian citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, the original federal criteria and procedures from 1990 have often been overly restrictive with its process and negotiations that required a direct relationship to water, valued claims at a much lesser amount, did not allow for restoration of tribal homelands, did not include



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wastewater infrastructure, and have often provided for too much authority to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation with regard to implementation of such settlements; and

**WHEREAS**, the unique nature, history, background and circumstances of tribal nations should be taken into account including independent tribal water systems that have a tremendous need for wastewater funding and are experiencing EPA enforcement issues without the necessary resources; and

**WHEREAS**, COLT members are expressing their collective concern regarding - what is a reasonable settlement amount for tribal nations' water rights, DOI's funding and capacity to negotiate such settlements and providing opportunities for tribal nations that are willing and ready to commence negotiations with the United States.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that COLT hereby requests a formal meeting to discuss all of the aforementioned issues of concern with DOI's Indian water rights political appointee as well as the Secretary's Indian Water Rights Office (SIWRO) at COLT's next quarterly meeting; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall be the policy of COLT until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

**CERTIFICATION**

This resolution was enacted at a duly called meeting of the Coalition of Large Tribes held in Las Vegas, Nevada within the home state of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation on December 9, 2023 at which a quorum was present, with the resolution approved unanimously.

Dated this December 9, 2023.

Attest:

Marvin Weatherwax, Chairman, Coalition of Large Tribes

Crystalyne Curley, Secretary, Coalition of Large Tribes