

**ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS – SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY
DECEMBER 8, 9, & 10, 2015; GATINEAU, QC Resolution no. 60/2015**

TITLE: SUBJECT: MOVED BY: SECONDED BY: DECISION

Support for a National Guardian Program

Lands and Resources

Chief Jean-Charles Piétacho, Conseil des Innue de Ekuanitshit, QC Chief Tammy Cook-Searson,
Lac La Ronge First Nation, SK Carried by Consensus

WHEREAS:

1. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states:
 - i. Article 3: Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.
 - ii. 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.
2. All First Nations have a profound relationship with the land and all of its resources based on occupation since time immemorial and this relationship is expressed by a cultural responsibility for the land. As such, First Nations are the rightful managers and watchers of our lands.
3. First Nations are also responsible for ensuring First Nations knowledge on land management is respected and maintained.
4. First Nations lands are under unprecedented development pressure and we urgently need financial and technical capacity to ensure that any and all development or protection plans meet the needs, desires and aspirations of our communities as directed by our communities.
5. In Australia, the Working on Country program has produced stable and meaningful employment for a large number of trained rangers across Indigenous Australia, which has resulted in the unprecedented improvement of socioeconomic conditions for participating communities, and in better planning and management plans and tools, including the establishment of Indigenous Protected Areas.
6. Dechinta, Bush University Centre for Research and Learning, in the Northwest Territories, is recognized for its leadership in Indigenous land-based education, and has developed and is delivering a university-accredited pilot Indigenous Boreal Guardians Program and is working towards the development of a permanent Indigenous Guardians program, which it is hoped can be applied at a local and regional level across Canada.
7. There are a number of successful community-based Guardian and Ranger programs across Canada.

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

1. Fully support the concept of Indigenous Guardian programs to support First Nations land management and oversight in their territories based on a cultural responsibility for the land.
2. Mandate the National Chief and Executive to support and assist in the development of a concerted and grassroots-led effort for a nationally-funded Indigenous Guardians program in Canada.

**Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 10th day of December 2015 in Gatineau,
Québec**

PERRY BELLEGARDE, NATIONAL CHIEF 60 – 2015

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