

**RESOLUTION OF THE
WHITE MOUNTAIN APACHE TRIBE OF THE
FORT APACHE INDIAN RESERVATION**

The Economic Crisis Created by
Bureau of Indian Affairs' Overcutting

- WHEREAS,** the Tribal Council, in Resolution No. 11-90-266, adopted November 29, 1990, outlined the economic crisis confronting the White Mountain Apache Tribe because the quality and quantity of commercially valuable timber in the remaining tribal forests have been sharply diminished by the intentional overcutting as required by the Bureau of Indian Affairs; and
- WHEREAS,** the Bureau of Indian Affairs over the last twenty years has misinformed the Tribal Council that the annual allowable cut of the forest at a rate of 93 million board feet comported with the Congressional sustained-yield mandate and required the Tribe to expand its sawmill and related facilities to process the 93 million board feet cut, warning that if the Tribe did not expand the sawmill the timber up to that amount would be sold on the open market to off-reservation sawmills; and
- WHEREAS,** as a result of that directive the Tribal Council approved a \$37-million expansion for the Fort Apache Timber Company which was completed in the early 1980s; and
- WHEREAS,** BIA Foresters, Messrs. Williams and Reinhold now admit that the Tribe's forests will continue to diminish as to the quality and quantity of commercial-seized timber remaining therein; and
- WHEREAS,** the Bureau of Indian Affairs has also now informed the Tribe that the annual allowable cut should be reduced from 93 million board feet to 69 million board feet, which cut would include the harvest of timber from areas which had not been previously cut and from cable logging areas resulting in extremely high costs of harvest; and

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, having acknowledged the disastrous results of its required overcutting of the Tribe's forests, now informs the Tribe that hereafter the annual cut will be drastically reduced both as to the quantity of timber available for harvest and the value of the timber harvested predicated upon these facts:

(a) that 76.8 of the high site pine trees harvested for logs delivered to the sawmill will be fourteen inches or less (DBH) and will yield only twenty-five percent of the volume of lumber available for sale, and

(b) that twenty-five percent of the high site pine trees harvested for logs delivered to the sawmill over fourteen inches (DBH) will yield seventy-five percent of the volume of lumber available for sale; and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Council condemns the Bureau of Indian Affairs for forcing it to convert its sawmill at a cost of \$37M to overcut its forests and that same Bureau now informs the Tribal Council that it must spend millions of dollars to convert its sawmill to process a drastically reduced annual allowable cut involving predominately small logs; and

Reduction to 61 Million Requires
Strictest Forest Management

WHEREAS, the Tribe's natural resource and forestry consultants advise the Tribal Council that, if the annual allowable cut of the Tribe's forest is reduced to 61 million board feet, the continuing decline in the value of the remaining forest will stop but there will be no recovery of the forest; and

WHEREAS, those consultants advise, moreover, that the 61 million board feet cut will arrest the diminishment of the value of the forest only if the forest is strictly maintained using the best silvacultural practices and requiring that the tree-marking process be conducted with skill and a high degree of selectivity to the end that only the trees which should be harvested will be taken and other trees will be left to achieve greater maturity than has been the practice in the past and there must be strict regulation of prescribed burning to avoid destruction of regeneration of new growth, as has repeatedly occurred in the past; and

WHEREAS, even a reduction of the annual allowable cut to 61 million board feet will result in 50 employees being laid

off with subsequent hardship to at least as many tribal families, a reduction of \$600,000 stumpage payments to the Tribe, and an annual reduction of \$300,000 in profits for the Fort Apache Timber Company, the principal enterprise and economic mainstay of the White Mountain Apache Tribe; and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Council is further advised that the tribal forests may only recover by reduction of the annual allowable cut to 41 million board feet per year, which would result in a lay-off of almost 100 workers, a \$1.2 million reduction in stumpage payments to the Tribe, and a \$600,000 reduction in profits for the tribal sawmill; and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Council concludes that it is in the economic interest of the White Mountain Apache Tribe to sustain its commercially valuable timber in the forest rather than continuing to diminish its irreplaceable resource which is understocked in large areas due to prior overcutting practices of the Bureau of Indian Affairs; and

WHEREAS, the FATCO Board of Directors, working together with the Tribal Council, is exploring alternative wood products to be manufactured by the sawmill, but that the alternatives with the best market outlook for the Tribe would entail a three to five-year-time period in which to convert the sawmill to accommodate smaller logs as well as to manufacture alternate wood products such as plywood and parallam products, and would require a great wood and parallam products, and would require a great infusion of capital not available to the Tribe; and

Rehabilitation of Livestock
and Agricultural Economy
Imperatively Required

WHEREAS, it is imperative that the White Mountain Apache Tribe create alternative industries rather than relying on its overcut tribal forests to sustain employment on the reservation, create jobs for the explosive population growth, and to fund governmental services for the tribal people; and

WHEREAS, restoration of the livestock industry through recovery of the tribal grazing range, development of feedlots, irrigated pastures, and agricultural production through the development of livestock feed, including alfalfa, and hydroelectric dam construction would provide diversification and a viable alternative to sole reliance on a forest products industry for the Tribe; and

WHEREAS, in the interim, while the Tribe explores diversification in its forest products manufacturing, the Tribe should proceed with the development of the Canyon Day Irrigation Project and the Miner Flat Dam which will provide hydroelectric power and will impound water in an amount sufficient to allow the Tribe to irrigate an additional 2,000 acres at the Canyon Day Irrigation Project, thereby allowing the creation of feedlots and production of alfalfa feed for development of the tribal livestock industry; and

WHEREAS, although the Congress of the United States has appropriated funds for the Miner Flat Dam required to rehabilitate the livestock and agricultural economies, the Bureau of Indian Affairs has consistently obstructed the construction of Miner Flat Dam by raising a variety of needless objections including but not limited to unnecessary additional drilling preservation of the loach minnow and the economic feasibility of the capitalized dam, whereby the Bureau would limit the tribe to a water duty far below the minimum necessary to sustain feed crops required to rejuvenate and restore the livestock industry on the reservation; and

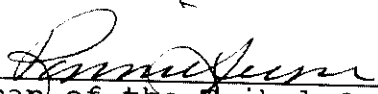
WHEREAS, the development of Miner Flat Dam and the production of livestock feed and irrigated pasture will afford an opportunity for the rangeland to recover from the consequences of overgrazing which reduced the original carrying capacity of the reservation from 41,000 head of livestock to 17,000 head due to the fact that the Bureau of Indian Affairs allowed non-Indian livestock owners to overgraze the once-fine rangeland to the point of destruction, giving rise to erosion which, if not corrected, will result in the reservation being literally washed away, underscoring the need for expanding the Canyon Day Irrigation Project through construction and operation of Miner Flat Dam and Reservoir; and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Council concludes that Tribal Chairman Ronnie Lupe should be directed to proceed to Washington, D.C. to meet with officials in the Department of the Interior fully to explain the economic and social crises with which the Tribe is confronted and to obtain cooperation and assistance from those officials in petitioning the United States Congress to provide the necessary funding for the purposes set out in the paragraph which follows.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Tribal Council of the White Mountain Apache Tribe that Chairman Ronnie Lupe proceed to Washington, D.C. to meet with officials in the Department of the Interior and to take such action as is necessary to petition the United States Congress for financial assistance:

- (1) to convert the Tribe's sawmill to process the smaller log;
- (2) to provide for the manufacture of alternative wood products;
- (3) to provide funding for emergency relief through employee job training which will be necessary when the annual allowable cut is reduced in order to preserve the Tribe's remaining forests; and
- (4) to complete the construction of the Miner Flat Dam Project, as originally approved by the Congress of the United States.

The foregoing resolution was on JANUARY 24, 1991, duly adopted by a vote of EIGHT for and ONE against by the Tribal Council of the White Mountain Apache Tribe, pursuant to authority vested in it by Article V, Section 1 (i) of the Amended Constitution and Bylaws of the Tribe, ratified by the Tribe June 27, 1958, and approved by the Secretary of the Interior on May 29, 1958, pursuant to Section 16 of the Act of June 18, 1934 (48 Stat. 984).



Chairman of the Tribal Council



Secretary of the Tribal Council

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FORT APACHE INDIAN AGENCY
WHITERIVER, ARIZONA