

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

- WHEREAS**, the Ridge Fire broke out on July 22, 2000 and ultimately burned more than 8,690 acres of Tribal land; and
- WHEREAS**, there have been many questions concerning the response to the fire and the decisions made in the fire management; and
- WHEREAS**, the Tribal Council has learned that the initial attack of the fire was not adequate to address the strength and potential for growth of the wildfire; and
- WHEREAS**, six crews had been brought in initially from San Carlos, however they were released within 48 hours, and yet log books do not accurately record the release of this crew or other essential fire management activities; and
- WHEREAS**, an adequate explanation has not been provided to the Tribe concerning the strong expansion of the fire, other than to indicate that overnight rain should have reduced the fire impact and strength; and
- WHEREAS**, there was no overnight monitoring of this fire, which would have given much needed information to the Fire Management team; and
- WHEREAS**, the Bear Ridge fire was occurring during this same time and under similar conditions, and yet that crew was not released from the fire, and night-long monitoring was provided; and
- WHEREAS**, a fireline was activated below the main body of the fire inside a canyon, which is contrary to standard fire practices; and
- WHEREAS**, camp crews were given less than one hour to move their belongings during their fire, thereby causing a loss of some of personal belongings; and
- WHEREAS**, public reports indicated there were adequate staff for the fire, however the BIA indicated they were having to scrap the barrel to respond to the fire; and
- WHEREAS**, the Cibecue Ridge is a very sacred site to our people, and is the location of special ceremonies and prayer services; and
- WHEREAS**, the people of Cibecue know they and others receive the blessings from these prayers

each time they pass Cibecue Ridge, making this sacred site of utmost importance to the people; and

**WHEREAS,** the former name selected for this fire, Cibecue Ridge Fire was offensive for some of the community; and

**WHEREAS,** these concerns necessitate an impartial and objective review of the fire management process; and

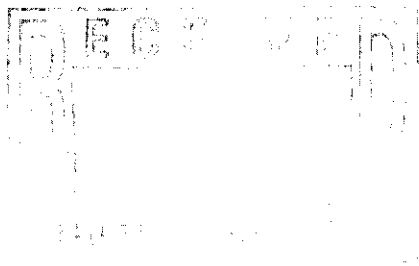
**WHEREAS,** the San Carlos Tribe has demanded a similar investigation when a wildfire overtook their lands following a controlled burning operation on Fort Apache Indian Reservation; and

**WHEREAS,** it is suggested that a team assigned by the BLM and Forest Service could provide independent review of the fire management and the issues raised in this resolution.

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Tribal Council of the White Mountain Apache Tribe that it hereby directs that a special inquiry be conducted into the Ridge fire to assess the management practices and decisions which were made, and which may have lead to the unnecessary fire expansion and resulting damage.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** by the Tribal Council of the White Mountain Apache Tribe that it hereby request an independent team headed by the federal BLM and U.S. Forest Service personnel be assigned to carryout this special investigation and to provide a report within 30 days to the Tribal Council and to the Bureau of Indian Affairs Fire Management team.

The foregoing resolution was on October 5, 2000 duly adopted by a vote of NINE for and ZERO against by the Tribal Council of the White Mountain Apache Tribe, pursuant to authority vested in it by Article IV, Section 1 (a), (f), (h), (t), and (u) of the Constitution of the Tribe, ratified by the Tribe September 30, 1993, and approved by the Secretary of the Interior on November 12, 1993, pursuant to Section 16 of the Act of June 18, 1934 (48 Stat. 984).



[Signature]  
ACTING Chairman of the Tribal Council

[Signature]  
Secretary of the Tribal Council