

A Resolution for the Acknowledgement of the Historic Native American Indian Tribes First Nations of Tennessee

<Formerly passed by the Tennessee Commission of Indian Affairs on 4 march 2006, Nashville >

1. **WHEREAS**, the area that now encompasses the Great State of Tennessee was once the homeland and tribal hunting grounds of a number of First Nations People who had great attachment to the land and who did staunchly defend their right to live, hunt, and draw nourishment from that land; and
2. **WHEREAS**, those same people were decimated by imported diseases, warfare, and continual encroachment upon their land, their livelihood, and their way of life; and
3. **WHEREAS**, as their numbers dwindled, their rights were usurped at the whim of foreign governments; and whether by choice, by force, or by treaty, these First Nations were made to give up their Natural Birthright and remove to other lands; and
4. **WHEREAS**, although the ~~tribes~~ **nations** themselves were removed, many individuals managed to remain behind in the lands of their nativity; or, after removal, to return to the lands of their ancestry; and
5. **WHEREAS**, the Eastern Ridge and Valley Region of the Tennessee River and its tributaries was known to be the home of the **Yuchi Tribe**, the **Koasati Tribe**, and the **Tuskegee Tribe** in times of earliest contact with the white man; and the evidence of early **Muscogee (Creek)** occupation in the same region is exhibited by the names of historic Indian towns such as Tallassee and Etowah; and
6. **WHEREAS**, the ~~tribes~~ **nations** in this region were later supplanted by the **Cherokee Tribe**, who, in many cases, kept the same town names established by the earlier ~~tribes~~ **nations**; and went on to establish numerous new towns such as Tellico, Echota, and Settico; and claimed all of Middle Tennessee as their territorial hunting ground; and who, after 1729, allowed a band of the **Natchez Tribe** to establish a town in what is now known as Monroe County, in an area that is still known as Notchy Creek; and
7. **WHEREAS**, a part of the **Chiaha** ~~tribe~~ **was** **were** encountered by De Soto in 1540, in the territory now forming this State, ~~probably~~, as shown by Mr. J. Y. Brame, on what is now Burns Island and are also mentioned in connection with the explorations of Juan Pardo in 1567; and
8. **WHEREAS**, the **Mosopelia** ~~tribe~~ established themselves on Cumberland River and at one or two points on the Tennessee shore of the Mississippi on their way from Ohio to Mississippi; and
9. **WHEREAS**, we are informed by one of the French explorers that the **Kaskinampo** lived upon Cumberland River where there is evidence that, when they first moved to the Tennessee, they may have settled for a short time near its mouth, and that both the Cumberland and the Tennessee were known by their name yet they stuck persistently to the latter stream until well along in the eighteenth century wherein, after the early years of the eighteenth century there is reason to believe that they united with the Koasati; and
10. **WHEREAS**, while primarily living in York and Lancaster counties of South Carolina, the Catawba extended their settlement into the neighboring state of Tennessee; and
11. **WHEREAS**, about the time of the American Revolution, a war chief known as Dragging Canoe, and his followers, did separate from the Cherokee Nation and form a new ~~tribe~~ **band** known as the **Chickamauga**; and they established new towns in the lower Tennessee and Sequatchie River valleys, both within Tennessee and the neighboring states of Georgia and Alabama; and

12. **WHEREAS**, the **Chickasaw Tribe** once occupied the area that was known as the Chickasaw Bluffs, and is now within the City of Memphis; and the Chickasaws claimed all of Middle Tennessee and West Tennessee as their territorial hunting grounds; and

13. **WHEREAS**, portions of the **Shawnee Tribe** once lived in the Cumberland Basin of Tennessee before twice being expelled by an alliance of the Cherokees and Chickasaws; and after the formation of the Chickamauga Confederacy, the Shawnees were allowed to establish towns among their newfound allies, and left a memento of their name in the modern town of Sewanee; and

14. **WHEREAS** beginning in 1952, several members of the Choctaw Tribe began to move into Lauderdale and Shelby Counties in West Tennessee in search of employment, and established communities there; where, in 1992 *through the efforts of Choctaw community leaders in Lauderdale County and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians*, the Federal Government purchased 172 acres near Henning to establish housing for them; and they still retain their language and practice many of their customs; and

15. **WHEREAS**, there are many pre-historic Indian sites in Tennessee, such as Pinson Mounds, Old Stone Fort, and many lesser-known archaeological sites whose precise links to modern or historical tribes First Nations has yet to be definitively established;

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED, that the above mentioned First Nations Peoples known as the Catawba, Cherokee, Chiaha, Chickamauga, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Kaskinampo, Koasati, Mosopelia, Muscogee (Creek), Natchez, Quapaw, Shawnee, Tuskegee, And Yuchi, be acknowledged as the Historical Tribes First Nations of Tennessee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any other tribe nation(s) ~~that archaeological or historical research can link~~ for which sufficient professional research and evidence is presented to the Tennessee Commission of Indian Affairs to demonstrate a link to Tennessee, will likewise be acknowledged as an Historical Tribe First Nation of Tennessee ~~when sufficient evidence is presented~~.

Change log:

10-30-2008 – Feedback from M.L. – Changes to title, whereas statements 4-8, 11-13, and both “resolution” statements:

Needs consistency in terminology (preferred “First Nations People,” “First Nations,” and “nation” to “tribe”); drop use of word tribe after mention of each nation; clarified statement about Choctaw land purchase to reflect the efforts of the local Choctaw leaders and MS Band of Choctaw in securing the purchase of land by the fed. gov. ; Didn’t like last statement at all, but preferred that it be clear the research be done by professionals and that it be submitted to the Commission which he considers the appropriate agency to accept and address it.