



CENTRAL COUNCIL
Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
Edward K. Thomas Building
9097 Glacier Highway • Juneau, Alaska 99801

CENTRAL COUNCIL OF TLINGIT AND HAIDA INDIAN TRIBES OF ALASKA
Eighty-Third Annual Tribal Assembly
April 18-20, 2018
Juneau, Alaska

Resolution TA 18-13

Title: Support to Expand the Market Sale for Sea Otter and to Amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act

By: Organized Village of Kasaan

WHEREAS, the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Tlingit & Haida) is a federally recognized tribe with more than 30,000 tribal citizens; and

WHEREAS, between 1965 and 1969, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game experimented with the reintroduction of approximately 400 sea otters in six different locations in Southeast Alaska's coastal waterways; and

WHEREAS, sea otters have a reproduction rate of at least 13% per year; and

WHEREAS, there is estimated to be approximately 40,000 sea otters across Southeast Alaska today devastating both commercial, sport and subsistence harvests of shellfish; and

WHEREAS, sea otters are only permitted by the Marine Mammal Protection Act to be harvested by Coastal Alaska Natives of at least ¼ blood quantum; and

WHEREAS, the Marine Mammal Protection Act only permits Alaska Natives of at least ¼ blood quantum to possess, sew and make traditional handicrafts of tanned, unmodified sea otter pelts; and

WHEREAS, since time immemorial, Haidas and Tlingits have traditional trade routes from Southeast Alaska down the West Coast of the Continental United States and this trade included sea otter pelts; and

WHEREAS, Canada does not allow the importing of sea otter fur in any form or fashion into its borders; and

WHEREAS, if the Marine Mammal Protection Act permitted the sale of tanned, unmodified hides to any Native American, including those tribal citizens in the continental United States, this would create a demand for tanned, unmodified sea otter hides for traditional and customary uses; and

WHEREAS, if Canada allowed the import of significantly altered sea otter handicrafts and allowed its indigenous people to possess tanned, unmodified sea otter pelts, this would open up markets of allowable sales and the result would be a dramatic increase in the amount of sea otters harvested in Southeast waters;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska also urges Congress to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act to allow the sale of tanned, unmodified sea otter pelts to any tribally enrolled Native American; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska requests the US Government to work with Canada to allow import of handicrafts made from significantly altered sea otter hides, and to allow the sale of tanned, unmodified sea otter pelts to Canada's indigenous people who can provide proof of Tribal lineage.

ADOPTED this 20th day of April 2018, by the Eighty-Third Tribal Assembly of Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska.

CERTIFY



President Richard J. Peterson

ATTEST



Tribal Secretary Ralph Wolfe