

**WHITE EARTH RESERVATION BUSINESS COMMITTEE
WHITE EARTH BAND OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS**

Resolution No. 057-24-004

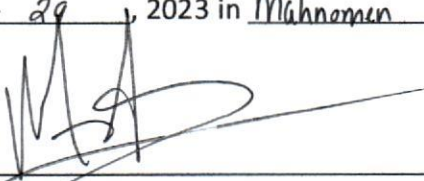
- WHEREAS,** the White Earth Reservation was established by treaty with the United States as a permanent home for the White Earth Band of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe in 1867 and is 699,520 acres in size, and
- WHEREAS,** a primary purpose of the White Earth Reservation is to allow Tribal members to continue exercising their traditional hunting, fishing and gathering activities in perpetuity, and
- WHEREAS,** in the aftermath of federal allotment policies, the Band itself now owns less than 10% of its Reservation land and Tribal Members ability to exercise hunting, fishing and gathering rights have been severely circumscribed on non-tribal lands, and
- WHEREAS,** the federal government owns 105,256 acres of land on and immediately adjacent to the White Earth Reservation, all of which is critical to the exercise of the Tribal Member's federal hunting, fishing and gathering property rights, and
- WHEREAS,** Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge is the largest federal landholding comprising 42,724 acres of land and water resources on and immediately adjacent to the White Earth Reservation, and
- WHEREAS,** Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge contains significant wild rice waters, leeching ponds, minnowing streams, and lands critical for trapping and hunting subsistence species including but not limited to beaver, mink, fisher, muskrat, otter, pine martin, and bobcats, and
- WHEREAS,** the White Earth Department of Natural Resources has a longstanding and highly-competent team of wild rice, water, fisheries and conservation professionals, uniquely suited to manage resources and protect Tribal Member's hunting, fishing and gathering rights within the Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge, and
- WHEREAS,** the November 15, 2021, Joint Secretarial Order 3403 ("Joint Secretarial Order on Fulfilling the Trust Responsibility to Indian Tribes in the Stewardship of Federal Lands and Waters") prioritizes the restoration of Tribal homelands to Tribal ownership as well as the co-stewardship of federal lands to protect treaty rights and Tribal interests, and

WHEREAS, despite the Biden Administration's push for co-stewardship, there has not been a meaningful increase in the pace, number or funding of co-stewardship agreements between the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and Tribes, and

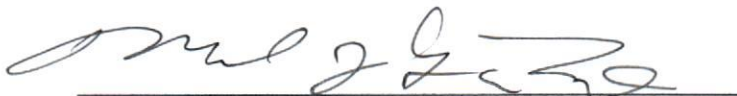
WHEREAS, the White Earth Band has begun co-stewardship and related funding negotiations with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Region 3 and intends to have a meaningful co-stewardship agreement, including appropriate cultural, leadership and natural resource management roles for qualified tribal members, in place in 2024, now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the White Earth Reservation Business Committee hereby requests that President Biden, Secretary Haaland and Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs Newland commit to firmly supporting the White Earth Band's meaningful co-management of the Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge, including appropriate funding, beginning in fiscal year 2025.

We do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by a vote of 4 for, 0 against, 0 silent, a quorum being present at a special meeting of the White Earth Reservation Business Committee held on November 29, 2023 in Mahnomen, Minnesota.



Michael A. Fairbanks, Chairman



Michael LaRoque, Secretary/Treasurer