



# USET

SOVEREIGNTY PROTECTION FUND

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## USET SPF Resolution No. 2020 SPF:019

### **URGING THE PRESERVATION OF RASSAWEK, THE HISTORIC CAPITAL CITY OF THE MONACAN INDIAN NATION**


- WHEREAS,** United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF) is an intertribal organization comprised of thirty (30) federally recognized Tribal Nations; and
- WHEREAS,** the actions taken by the USET SPF Board of Directors officially represent the intentions of each member Tribal Nation, as the Board of Directors comprises delegates from the member Tribal Nations' leadership; and
- WHEREAS,** the USET SPF Board of Directors unequivocally supports the protection of Native Peoples' sacred places, sacred objects, and ancestors, and is unconditionally opposed to their desecration or dispossession and to any adverse impact, damage, endangerment, injury or threat to them, and
- WHEREAS,** the James River Water Intake and Pump Station project proposed by the James River Water Authority (JRWA) as authorized by the Boards of Supervisors of Louisa County and Fluvanna County in Virginia is a project subject to review under the requirements of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA); and
- WHEREAS,** the JRWA project is proposed at Point of Fork, Virginia, recorded on the John Smith Map of 1612 as the Monacan Indian Nation historic capital of Rassawek; and
- WHEREAS,** during the 1880s the Smithsonian Institution documented extensive burials and remains of many building complexes at Rassawek; and
- WHEREAS,** during the 1980s salvage archaeology on the Columbia gas line found human remains and artifacts at Rassawek; and
- WHEREAS,** survey and testing for the JRWA project has identified multiple National Register eligible sites the JRWA project will adversely affect; and
- WHEREAS,** the Council on Virginia Archaeologists has described these archaeological deposits as "sites of immense significance" due to their "exceptional level of preservation, high potential for the presence of burials, and the fact that they are included in the earliest European documentation of the region"; and
- WHEREAS,** the Army Corps of Engineers is the federal agency with jurisdiction and the Monacan Indian Nation is a consulting party and has expressed timely and profound concerns about the project permitting process, cultural resources review, and the lack of consultation regarding alternative project locations; and
- WHEREAS,** other federally recognized Tribal Nations consulting on this project have also expressed concerns regarding the burial permit process and lack of consideration of alternatives; and

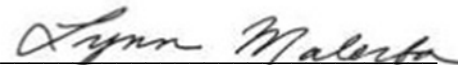
*Because there is strength in Unity*

- WHEREAS,** the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation signed on as a consulting party due to “procedural problems and issues of concern to Indian tribes,” and will be a required signatory on the proposed Memorandum of Agreement concluding consultation on the project; and
- WHEREAS,** the Virginia Department of Historic Resources will also be a required signatory on the proposed Memorandum of Agreement and has expressed numerous concerns about the project; and
- WHEREAS,** the Council of Virginia Archaeologists, Preservation Virginia, the Virginia Canals & Navigation Society, and numerous landowners are also consulting parties and have expressed significant concerns about the adverse historical and cultural impacts; and
- WHEREAS,** no consulting parties have expressed support for the siting of the JRWA project on Rassawek; and
- WHEREAS,** a whistleblower has come forward detailing numerous concerns about the qualifications, methods, and ethics of JRWA’s archaeological consultant in their work on Rassawek; and
- WHEREAS,** in accordance with its trust and treaty responsibilities and obligations, the must United States consult in good faith with Tribal Nations in a manner compliant with NEPA and the NHPA; and
- WHEREAS,** in December 2010, the United States recognized the rights of its First Peoples through its support of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), whose provisions and principles support and promote the purposes of this resolution; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED** USET SPF calls upon the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to decline to sign any agreement documents concluding consultation on this project; and be it further
- RESOLVED** USET SPF calls upon the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to decline to sign any agreement documents concluding consultation on this project and to deny any requests for permits to disturb human burials; and be it finally
- RESOLVED** USET SPF calls upon the Army Corps of Engineers to find that the proposed project is not in the public interest.

#### CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed by the USET SPF Executive Committee, at which a quorum was present, on June 5, 2020.

  
Chief Kirk E. Francis, Sr., President  
United South and Eastern Tribes  
Sovereignty Protection Fund

  
Chief Lynn Malerba, Secretary  
United South and Eastern Tribes  
Sovereignty Protection Fund