

Oneida Nation

Post Office Box 365

Phone: (920)869-2214



Oneida, WI 54155

BC Resolution # 10-13-21-E Proclamation of the Rights of Nature

- WHEREAS,** the Oneida Nation is a federally recognized Indian government and a treaty tribe recognized by the laws of the United States of America; and
- WHEREAS,** the Oneida General Tribal Council is the governing body of the Oneida Nation; and
- WHEREAS,** the Oneida Business Committee has been delegated the authority of Article IV, Section 1, of the Oneida Tribal Constitution by the Oneida General Tribal Council; and
- WHEREAS,** the Oneida Business Committee makes this proclamation of the “Rights of Nature” because it is our responsibility to defend and speak for those things that cannot speak for themselves. Everything starts with our Creation Story. In it, our relationship and responsibilities are handed down from the Creator instructing us to be good stewards of creation. When we do, it is said the Creator provides everything we need within a specific balance; and
- WHEREAS,** The Great Law and Thanksgiving Address are our guiding principles that give us instructions as we come together with one mind and to give thanks to the natural world. We must honor, respect, protect, nurture and caretake the very thing that sustain us. As Nature upholds its responsibilities, we must reciprocate our relationship back to her. As a way of life in the importance of our culture and original instructions, we teach our families through Respect, Reciprocity, Relationship and Responsibility with the natural world; and
- WHEREAS,** our original instruction tells us we are born with the responsibilities and must acknowledge and take actions by only harvesting in sustainable ways by only taking what we need and giving thanks for allowing us to gather while replenishing this delicate balance of nature; and
- WHEREAS,** Oneida’s prophecies tell we must fulfill our responsibilities of the “rights of Nature” or we will not exist in the future. Chief Dan George is quoted: “If you talk to the animals, they will talk with you and you will know each other. If you do not talk to them, you will not know them, and what you do not know you will fear. What one fears, one destroys”; and
- WHEREAS,** our past Environmental Policy of 1993 states the preservation and enhancement of our Mother Earth is an obligation of the members of the “Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin”. We give thanks for her wellbeing and all other forms which come from our Mother Earth. We the Oneida people cannot turn our backs on this responsibility of caretakers, the Oneida Nation has, from the beginning of time, co-existed with all living beings. The winged, the four-legged, all plant life, the trees, the stones, the water and the air. It is now time for the Oneida People to be held accountable to our children, their children, and for generations to come by creating a sustainable environment; and

WHEREAS, our Live Sustain Grow Plan of 2008 establishes a framework for land use and protection programs. It addresses the importance of preservation, protection, and wisely manages the resources of the Reservation. We identified the need for improvement in resource management policies and procedures. We continue to solicit community input on resource management decisions. This plan provides for acknowledging cultural needs of current and future tribal members; and

WHEREAS, we will use the best available technology, employ best management practices and modern scientific methods to achieve this mission. The methods and principles used will be documented so they are defensible, easy to replicate and recognizable by the scientific community while acknowledging the brilliance of our ancestors; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Oneida Nation, its leaders, its people and government will use our sovereign freedoms to create and adopt legislative and judicial protection of the rights of nature utilizing good policies, science and culture.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we will work with other Tribes, State and Federal Governments, the United Nations and other Organization that has undertaken the Rights of Nature.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Oneida Business enthusiastically endorses this "Rights of Nature" Proclamation and commits our government and its resources to engage in programs and activities to carry out each of our responsibilities to honor, respect, protect, nurture and caretake the very thing that sustain us.

CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, as Secretary of the Oneida Business Committee, hereby certify that the Oneida Business Committee is composed of 9 members of whom 5 members constitute a quorum; 8 members were present at a meeting duly called, noticed and held on the 13th day of October, 2021; that the forgoing resolution was duly adopted at such meeting by a vote of 7 members for, 0 members against, and 0 members not voting*; and that said resolution has not been rescinded or amended in any way.



Lisa Liggins, Secretary
Oneida Business Committee

*According to the By-Laws, Article I, Section 1, the Chair votes "only in the case of a tie."