

# **PROCLAMATION**

## **QUALLA ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES INITIATIVE**

**APRIL 24<sup>TH</sup> 2006**

**WHEREAS**, the Cherokee people have a long history of being stewards of the land; and

**WHEREAS**, air, water, and land pollution continue to increase in Western North Carolina and throughout the Southeast; and

**WHEREAS**, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park was recently ranked 54<sup>th</sup> out of 55 National Parks by National Geographic Traveler Magazine due to its poor environmental quality and invasive impacts on its natural beauty; and

**WHEREAS**, our community continues to suffer from high rates of cancer, emphysema, asthma, and other environmentally impacted diseases; and

**WHEREAS**, we must lead the region in environmental management and set a high standard for quality of life for our Cherokee people.

**IT IS HEREBY PROCLAIMED** by the Principal Chief of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians that this Administration shall be devoted to promoting a healthy, sustainable natural environment within the Qualla Boundary and throughout the region. To accomplish these goals, this Administration supports:

1. The development, implementation, and enforcement of a tribal Integrated Resource Management Plan (IRMP) that includes a wildlife management plan. This IRMP will coordinate all tribal programs to observe a high standard of resource management and environmental protection. This plan will insure that all natural resources remain at sustainable levels for generations to come.
2. Working collaboratively with other governments and agencies in our region, our state, and our nation to assure the most efficient methods for environmental management while maintaining our sovereign rights to establish and support tribal policies. We will engage in new projects that allow the Qualla Boundary to lead the nation in establishing sanctuaries for our natural resources. We will request and accept leadership positions throughout the state and federal government.
3. Insuring that our hunters and harvesters have adequate, attainable and sustainable sources of food and medicinal species. This administration supports compliance with hunting and gathering regulations and stricter enforcement and fines for poaching and over-harvesting.
4. Implementing programs designed to propagate all natural resources to healthy and sustainable levels as determined by Tribal Fish and Game, Tribal Environmental Department, and the Revitalization for Traditional Cherokee Artisans programs.
5. Continuing to enhance and revitalize greenways and tribally reserved land spaces for community enjoyment and permanent resource sanctuaries.
6. Requiring all tribal programs and entities to integrate environmental values into their decision making processes by considering the environmental impacts of their proposed actions and reasonable alternatives to those actions. All projects that may impact our lands, water, or air must be evaluated by our Tribal Planning Office, in cooperation with the Tribal Environmental Office and Fish and Game, to meet all IRMP regulations as well as demonstrate minor impact on our natural resources as determined by these programs.
7. Marketing the Qualla Boundary as an environmental sanctuary that seeks tourists interested in the preservation and appreciation of our unique natural resources and

environmental beauty. No tourism initiative shall compromise the sanctuary of our natural environment for industrial growth.

8. Initiating the use of alternate energy vehicles for all tribal programs, in conjunction with the Cherokee Boys Club. This administration supports aggressive attempts to implement alternative energy resources for our tribal programs and tribal entities. These include reducing energy consumption through lighting and heat/cooling changes.
9. Cleaning up our commercial areas to promote a more aesthetically pleasing and healthier environment for our community.
10. Enhancing sidewalk and bike lane systems in the town of Cherokee to allow for increased pedestrian traffic to lessen the amount of vehicle pollutants.
11. Monitoring air, water, and species levels and qualities.
12. Creating and preserving food plots for native animals.
13. Establishing laws allowing only limited or no development on selected lands that contain valuable natural or cultural resources, such as the Kituwah site.

The Executive Office of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians acknowledges this crucial point in our environmental preservation history. This leadership proposes the aforementioned legislative and programmatic approaches to preserving, enhancing, and sustaining our natural resources. We ask for the full extent of tribal government and community support on these issues and proposed initiatives. It is the ultimate goal of this administration to have an environment free of pollutants, toxic elements, harmful species, and unsightly conditions.



EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS

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**Michell Hicks, Principal Chief**