



National Congress of American Indians | 1516 P St NW, Washington, DC 20005 | (202) 466-7767 | www.ncai.org

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**The National Congress of American Indians
Resolution #LV-24-061**

Title: Opposing the Los Alamos National Laboratory Electrical Power Capacity Upgrade Project Crossing the Caja del Rio

WHEREAS, we, the members of the National Congress of American Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations, rights secured under Indian treaties and agreements with the United States, and all other rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the health, safety and welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

WHEREAS, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) was established in 1944 and is the oldest and largest national organization of American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments; and

WHEREAS, in 2023 NCAI adopted Resolution #NO-23-038, supporting the Pueblo de Cochiti’s effort to reacquire its ancestral and present-day homelands, including the sacred and ecologically rich landscape known as the Caja del Rio; and

WHEREAS, the Caja del Rio is a culturally significant landscape that contains thousands of sacred sites, including petroglyphs, ceremonial kivas, irrigation systems, and ancient housing structures, all of which embody the deep connection between the Pueblo de Cochiti people and the land; and

WHEREAS, the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) Electrical Power Capacity Upgrade (EPCU) Project proposes to construct a new 14-mile, 115-kilovolt power transmission line that would cross the Caja del Rio, causing irreparable harm to cultural sites and sacred landscapes; and

WHEREAS, the EPCU project threatens to permanently damage this sensitive and historic region through the construction of transmission infrastructure, which will lead to increased visual, auditory, and atmospheric impacts, as well as potential desecration of sacred sites; and



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WHEREAS, the project area, managed by a complex multi-jurisdictional framework involving the United States Forest Service (USFS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), has already been subject to mismanagement and desecration from illegal off-road vehicle use, trash dumping, poaching, vandalism of petroglyphs, and other unregulated activities, exacerbating the risk of further degradation through the EPCU project; and

WHEREAS, Pueblo de Cochiti, along with other neighboring Pueblo communities, has not been sufficiently consulted on the proposed EPCU project, no have adequate protections for cultural and historic properties been implemented, violating the principles of government-to-government consultation and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA); and

WHEREAS, NCAI strongly supports the protection of sacred sites and landscapes from harmful developments, as the continued access and cultural preservation of these sites are critical to the spiritual, cultural, and physical well-being of Indigenous peoples and their future generations.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) stands in opposition to the proposed Los Alamos National Laboratory Electrical Power Capacity Upgrade Project crossing the Caja del Rio landscape; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI urges federal agencies, including the United States Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and the National Nuclear Security Administration, to halt any further action on the EPCU project until a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is conducted, considering the cultural, spiritual, and environmental impacts on the Caja del Rio; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI calls upon these federal agencies to fully consult with affected Tribal Nations, particularly Pueblo de Cochiti and neighboring Pueblos, to identify alternate routes for this project that do not cross the Caja del Rio landscape and that ensure the permanent protection of sacred sites within the Caja del Rio, and to explore alternatives that do not threaten these lands; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.



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CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2024 Annual Convention of the National Congress of American Indians, held October 27-November 1, 2024, in Las Vegas, NV with a quorum present.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Macarro", written over a horizontal line.

Mark Macarro, President

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leonard Fineday", written over a horizontal line.

Leonard Fineday, Acting Recording Secretary