

STANDING RESOLUTION 09

2015 OREGON-IDAHO ANNUAL CONFERENCE

1 **TITLE: PROMISES BROKEN**

2 **SPONSORING GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL: Committee on Native American Ministries in**
3 **partnership with Wilshire United Methodist Native American Fellowship**

4 **SPOKESPERSON: Loretta Milton**

5 **SPOKESPERSON'S ADDRESS: 4431 NE Ainsworth, Portland, OR 97218**

6 **SPOKESPERSON'S E-MAIL: ljmilton@yahoo.com**

7 **SPOKESPERSON'S TELEPHONE: 503 287-3992**

8 **This is a New Standing Resolution**

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10 **LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY RECOMMENDATION: YES 24, NO 0, ABSTAIN 0**

12 Be it resolved that the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference stand in support of tribal fishing families living and
13 working near The Dalles and John Day Dams. Since the mid 20th century Native Peoples have experienced
14 devastating displacement due to dam building on the Columbia River. The losses inflicted on tribal groups
15 (most notable the famed Celilo Falls fishing site flooded by the massive Dalles Dam construction) are
16 astonishing and can never be fully rectified. Fishing communities, men, women, children, grandchildren
17 continue to uphold ancient sustainable fishing practices in harmony with their cultural beliefs and with
18 maintaining a vibrant eco-system. Sadly, an ongoing disregard of treaties and promises made to compensate
19 people for the loss of their land and homes continues and is evident by the substandard living conditions for
20 these fishing communities. The U.S. government along with the Army Corp of Engineers has repeatedly
21 underfunded and pushed aside this promised housing compensation. We believe that we as a country are
22 collectively responsible for the injustices perpetrated upon First Nations Peoples. Therefore, institutions such
23 as the United Methodist Church, can be a resource for addressing broken promises.

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26 Author, Roberta Ulrich, has written extensively on this subject in her book, *Empty Nets*, as well as in a
27 recent editorial to *The Oregonian* newspaper of Nov. 16, 2014. She stated, "Congress should introduce
28 legislation providing authorization and money allowing the Corp to finish righting this decades-old wrong."

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30 We ask that members of the Annual Conference petition our representatives and senators of the U.S. Congress
31 toward this end. We believe that this can be a step forward toward the "Act of Repentance Toward Indigenous
32 Peoples" put in place by the Church and continuing now and in the future.

34 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

35 **What will this action accomplish?**

36 Let our elected representatives know that upholding treaty rights and promises made with Native
37 Peoples is a moral and ethical issue that people of faith uphold.

38 **Why is it important?**

39 Social justice was paramount for Jesus in his ministry. He was a tribal man himself working amid the fishing
40 culture of his homeland. John Wesley carried forth this emphasis for justice.

41 **How will it be carried out? By whom?**

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- 1 A letter has been drafted and reviewed by the Committee On Native American Ministries and the Wilshire
- 2 United Methodist Native American Fellowship. We will refer this letter to the Conference Secretary for
- 3 the purpose of petitioning our U.S. representatives and senators.
- 4 **How much will it cost? Where will the money come from?**
- 5 The cost will be mainly for staff time, paper and copying.