Resolution No#: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

RESOLUTION OF THE BODAWAY/GAP CHAPTER

BODAWAY/GAP (NAVAJO NATION), ARIZONA

REQUEST THE NAVAJO NATION PRESIDENT TO STOP THE MASTER AGREEMENT FROM PROCEEDING FORWARD WITH THE CONFLUENCE PARNTERS, LLC, DIRECTING NAVAJO NATION PRESIDENT BEN SHELLY TO CEASE AND TO HALT INAPPROPIATE DEVELOPMENT PLANS CALLED THE GRAND CANYON ESCALADE AND CALLING CONFLUENCE PARTNERS TO CEASE ALL PLANS TO DEVELOP AT THE LITTLE COLORADO RIVER GORGE AND WITHIN THE VICINITY OF LANDS BEING WITHIN THE TERRITORAL BOUNDARY OF BODAWAY/GAP CHAPTER (NAVAJO NATION, AZ) and asking THE NAVAJO NATION PRESIDENT’S OFFICE AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM using EMINENT DOMAIN ON LANDUSERS FOR POTENTIAL LAND WITHDRAWAL TO BENEFIT TOURISTS.

WHEREAS:

1. Whereas Bodaway/Gap Chapter is a certified and a recognized chapter by the Navajo Nation Council, vested with the authority and responsibility to provide and address local needs and concerns within its community and within its territorial jurisdictional boundaries. The area is located above the site where the Colorado River and Little Colorado Rivers meet, known as the Confluence.
2. Bodaway/Gap Chapter is a certified chapter by the Transportation and Community Development Committee of the Navajo Nation Council and is vested with the authority and responsibility to provide and address local matters and concerns within its community; and
3. Whereas the People of the Confluence, grazing permit holders, stakeholders and home site lease owners, listened to business proposals from Papillon Airways, Inc., and Fulcrum Group, aka, Confluence Partners LLC from Scottsdale, AZ. The group found neither development appropriate for the area because both projects would severely alter the landscape and impact land users. And further includes: (a) bids for a development were not sought to provide the community nor the Navajo Nation a choice that would better represent them to the world the beauty of our culture and our ways and be less invasive to the pristine beauty of the land on which we live; (b)when the contents of the MOU were made public through the media, the Confluence Partners had a brand new plan, which included tourist amenities including the Riverwalk, restaurants on the floor of the canyon, luxury hotel(s) on the rim of the canyon, a parking lot, a culture center anchoring a tram; (c) the MOU calls for “other development project development components” projects, components, and program complimentary or relevant to the project”, and the brochure including continuing and expanding beyond the resort causes unsettling concerns of the furthering reaching requested by the Confluence Partners.
4. (d) the giving away of more than 5, 0000 acres of land to a development requiring massive funding, great quantities of water in a time of drought, massive funding for utilities to be brought to the site and one or two paved road(s); (e)The extravagance of the development, the upkeep and cost of liability will require enormous funding to maintain in a struggling economy; (f)The Confluence Partners’ and the Navajo Nation officials’ and staff’s lack of experience to carry out a massive project thus always depending on outside investment funding, professionals and staff to finance, plan, build, and staff the resort. (g) in this development plan, the community and Chapter members realistically will end up in the parking lot selling their rugs, jewelry, and handcrafts while investors are being promised indoor spaces to sell their products; (h)The lack of integrity, misrepresentations, misinformation, and the unethical means exhibited thus far by both parties has caused great distrust for them; (i)the secrecy exhibited by both the Navajo Nation President and his staff and the developers in moving the project on a fast track without due diligence to the Chapter officials and members, Hopi Tribe, Grand Canyon National Park, US Department Of Wildlife, US Historic Preservation Department, and BIA can result in inestimable resources and finances to resolve issues surrounding the proposed building of a tram down into the Grand Canyon.
5. Whereas the stakeholders, in addition, ended talks with the Confluence Partners after questionable background issues surfaced about the company’s owner and political consultant R. Lamar Whitmer. The partners proposed Grand Canyon Escalade, which originally consisted of a tram and an airport.
6. Whereas in the matter of the Grand Canyon Escalade, a majority of land users disliked the project. Few saw potential which faded because two things happened; Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly visited the Confluence and rejected development on June 4, 2011. The project, in addition, later lost all support when questionable background issues surfaced about the company’s owner and political consultant R. Lamar Whitmer.
7. Whereas the Confluence Partners asked the People of the Confluence to sign a feasibility study in spring 2011. The group failed to sign the paper work out of respect for land users, many who later attended and spoke at the March 17, 2012 meeting at the Hogan Restaurant in Tuba City.
8. Whereas the Confluence Partners LLC, of Scottsdale, AZ thereafter started to work with Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly, who approved a feasibility study in February 2012, which revealed an expanded tourist-destination site and featured the Gondola tram and a River Walk and a restaurant on the floor of the canyon. Other development features include a 250 to 300-room luxury resort hotel, restaurant, a parking area, a museum, fast food restaurants, studios, an RV park, commercial retail space, a general store, common use areas and room for future expansion. Under the plan, tourists will travel on 27-mile of road darting west of Hidden Springs, past Twin Hills, Two Red Buttes, Pillow Hill and onto the Confluence.
9. Whereas few of People of the Confluence viewed the upgraded Grand Canyon Escalade while others only saw the plans as recently as June 3, 2012 because a website became available to them June 6, 2012 in a local newspaper. Instead, the Nation’s elected and tribal officials received the plans earlier than the people who would be impacted.
10. Whereas such tactics, which include a hidden memorandum of agreement between the Navajo Nation and the Confluence Partners in February 2012, further deepened the distrust of the Confluence Partners and caused severe stress on local land users such as people who own grazing permits or own legal home site leases.
11. Whereas the locals believe a tourist operation at the Confluence would locate in a sacred location, not only to Navajos, but other neighboring American Indian Tribes. If a resort/tram/airport are developed and tourists arrive, it will diminish an earth-base belief by blocking local people’s access to quiet, private prayer spots on the rim, a violation of their inherent freedom to worship.
12. Whereas many grazing permit holders and home site lease holders continue to practice the classic Navajo religion, which includes the use of medicinal plants found on the rim. This faith was documented by “*Bitsi’iis Nineezi*, The River of Neverending Life,” a study put together by the Navajo Nation Historic Preservation Office in 1995. The report found the pollen offerings to the two rivers “are much like the ones offered to the sacred mountains” such as the San Francisco Peaks.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. Bodaway/Gap Chapter hereby respectfully requests to ban any and all tourism development along the rim of the Grand Canyon that borders the western Navajo Nation. This includes the area where the Little Colorado and Colorado Rivers meet called the Confluence and includes the rim and canyon, which darts east to the Salt Trail and north of the rim to the Navajo Bridge.
2. Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly immediately cease and desist all proposed plans to carry out the Grand Canyon Escalade, a project brought forth by the Confluence Partners, LLC, which consist of R. Lamar Whitmer, Albert Hale, Michael Nelson and Ivan Gamble. The partners proposed to develop the area in the Little Colorado River Gorge, lands being outside the territorial boundary of Bodaway/Gap Chapter, (Navajo Nation), Arizona.
3. Any and all businesses and/or companies are required to notify Gap/Bodaway Chapter of any project plans. It would be the responsibility of chapter leaders and officials to inform all land users. This protocol was not exercised by the Confluence Partners or President Shelly, when they developed the existing plans, which include development on the rim and on the floor of the canyon.
4. Eminent Domain will not be pressed upon land users at the Confluence for a tourist development.
5. Bodaway/Gap residents, through this resolution, have officially spoken against all development on the Grand Canyon Rim of the Navajo Nation. They are the local voices who emphatically state the area should be left as Mother Earth and the Holy People sculpted.

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

We, hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly considered at a duly called meeting at Bodaway/Gap, (Navajo Nation), Arizona, at which a quorum was present and the same was passed by a vote of \_\_\_\_\_ in favor, \_\_\_\_ opposed, and \_\_\_\_ abstained on this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2012.

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Billy Arizona, Jr., Chapter President Duane Tsinigine, Council Delegate

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Marie Williams, Chapter Vice-President

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Gevern J. Begay, Secretary/Treasurer

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Jonathan Haskie, Grazing Representative