

Gwich'in Niintsyaa 2022  
*Resolution to Protect the Relationship between Gwich'in and Łùk Choo*

WHEREAS:

For thousands of years, we the Gwich'in have, and continue to, steward and live alongside the Chinook, fall chum, and coho salmon of the Porcupine and Yukon Rivers which remain essential to the physical, cultural, and spiritual survival, dignity, and well-being of our People; and

WHEREAS:

The Gwich'in have the inherent right to self-determination and provisions in law within our respective agreements to continue our own way of life and responsibilities to strengthen and maintain our relationship with salmon; and

WHEREAS:

Article 29 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which reads: "Indigenous peoples have the right to conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources"; and

WHEREAS:

The Gwich'in Nation recognize Ni'iinlii (Circle of Life) and Łùk Choo as a keystone species for a healthy ecosystem feeding all forms of life like bears, trees, insects, and eagles; and

WHEREAS:

Salmon is a provider of physical, mental, spiritual and emotional health and well-being for the Gwich'in; and

WHEREAS:

The health, abundance, and productivity of Łùk Choo are at emergency levels having steadily declined over the past 20 years, and this fishery collapse jeopardizes the relationship between Gwich'in and salmon, and ability of present and future generations to continue our way of life; and

WHEREAS:

The current models of salmon management do not support the political, social, cultural, and economic development of the Gwich'in in our pursuit of self-determination and are unable to address the changing realities of Łùk Choo related to climate change, increased stressors at various life-stages, imposed international borders, and for-profit commercial fisheries; and

WHEREAS:

Through the passing down of knowledge from generation to generation the Gwich'in continue to respect, strengthen and carry forward the voice of Łùk Choo while honoring Ni'iinlii.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

The Gwich'in Nation will undertake all steps necessary to manage and steward Łùk Choo throughout our homelands under the authority of Ni'iinlii and the sacred obligation of our respective Gwich'in governments in Alaska and Canada to uphold its truth; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**

The Gwich'in Nation restore Łùk Choo and their ecosystems of the Porcupine and Yukon Rivers through Gwich'in-led stewardship based upon Gwich'in knowledge, research and studies while utilizing local, national and international forums and partnerships.

Passed unanimously this 21<sup>st</sup> day of July, 2022 in Old Crow, Yukon.