

31st Anniversary International Indian Treaty Council Conference
hosted by the Confederacy of Treaty 6 First Nations,
at Ermineskin Cree Nation, Alberta Canada

August 3 – 7, 2005

Resolution Calling for a Halt to The Genographic Project

WHEREAS, the Genographic Project is a five-year, \$40 million project of the National Geographic Society, IBM Corporation, and Waitt Family Foundation launched on April 13, 2005 to collect, analyze and store 100,000 DNA samples of Indigenous Peoples worldwide “to study human origins and migrations”; and

GREATLY CONCERNED that the Genographic Project also intends to analyze “ancient DNA” derived from the bodies of our deceased ancestors; and

NOTING the Genographic Project also seeks to collect oral histories of Indigenous Peoples to be compiled in the Genographic Database, which will be proprietary to National Geographic Society; and

FURTHER NOTING the Genographic Project plans to conduct research at 10 international research centers, which may impact up to 1,000 Indigenous Nations worldwide; and

CONCERNED that the Genographic Project has failed to initiate a process of formal consultations with the respective governments of the potentially affected Indigenous Nations; and

NOTING that the University of Pennsylvania Social and Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board has approved the Genographic Project’s North America Protocol, giving the Genographic Project the authority to proceed in North America; and

AFFIRMING that it is unethical to proceed with human population genetic research on Indigenous Peoples because the risks to these Peoples far outweighs any potential benefits; and

RECOGNIZING that Indigenous Peoples have extensive traditional knowledge and oral histories about our own origins, which are central to our spiritual and cultural identity and are valid on their own right and do not need western scientific validation; and

TAKING NOTE that the Genographic Project admits that some of the findings that result from their research may contradict an oral, written or other tradition held by Indigenous Peoples about their own origins; and

NOTING that findings of genetic research are always speculative but nevertheless may be misused by governments to undermine Indigenous Peoples’ rights as the original inhabitants of our territories; and

AFFIRMING that Indigenous Peoples have the right and obligation to protect and perpetuate our own historical and cultural knowledge; and

AFFIRMING that Indigenous Peoples have the right to protect the remains our ancestors from destructive analysis; and

AFFIRMING that Indigenous Peoples have the right to protect our genetic material and oral histories from appropriation or analysis by western scientists; and

AFFIRMING that consistent with the right of self-determination and free prior informed consent, Indigenous Nations have the right to refuse to participate in the Genographic Project.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT;

THE INTERNATIONAL INDIAN TREATY COUNCIL and its affiliates call upon the National Geographic Society to halt the Genographic Project and all its activities and aims; and

THE INTERNATIONAL INDIAN TREATY COUNCIL encourages Indigenous Peoples to prohibit activities related to the Genographic Project to be conducted within their territories, including any collection of blood, other biological samples and oral histories; and

THE INTERNATIONAL INDIAN TREATY COUNCIL calls upon our friends and allies to boycott the products and services of the National Geographic Society, the IBM Corporation, and Gateway Computer until the Genographic Project is halted.

Adopted by Consensus August 7, 2005