

**ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY
NATIVE VILLAGE OF EKLUTNA**

JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 2024-001

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE AND THE NATIVE VILLAGE OF EKLUTNA EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR EXPLORATION OF PUMPED STORAGE HYDRO (PSH) AS A MEANS OF ATTAINING OUR SHARED POLICY GOALS FOR FULL RESTORATION OF THE EKLUTNA RIVER

WHEREAS, it is the position of the Native Village of Eklutna that full restoration of all twelve miles of the Eklutna River and restored fish passage, including adequate water, to and from Eklutna Lake is the objective of mitigation for the negative ecological and cultural impacts caused by the Eklutna Hydroelectric Power Project; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to AMC 26.30.025.A, it is the policy of the Municipality of Anchorage and the Anchorage Hydropower utility to restore the continuous water flow of the Eklutna River and the fish populations of the River and Eklutna Lake, to the greatest extent possible, subject to all provisions of the 1991 Fish & Wildlife Agreement; and

WHEREAS, when the local Eklutna Hydroelectric Project Owners (Chugach Electric, Matanuska Electric, and Municipality of Anchorage) bought the project from the Federal Government in the 1990s, a 1991 purchase agreement set a requirement for the Project Owners to develop a Fish and Wildlife Program and begin implementation by 30 years after the sale date to “protect, mitigate damages to, and enhance fish and wildlife (including related spawning grounds and habitat)” to adequately and equitably address impacts of hydroelectric development in the Eklutna watershed; and

WHEREAS, between 2022 and April 2024, the Minority Owners (Chugach Electric Association and Matanuska Electric Association) undertook a process to develop a Proposed Fish and Wildlife Plan, but throughout the process, the Minority Owners minimized the voice and concerns of the Native Village of Eklutna, dismissed public comments that leaned heavily in favor of full river restoration, and disregarded important scientific information; and

WHEREAS, the final proposal put forward by the Minority Owners in the 2024 Proposed Fish and Wildlife Program will cost at least \$57M, provide no fish passage into and out of Eklutna Lake, leave one mile of river completely dry below the dam, and will have

questionable effects on the potential for rejuvenation of salmon populations and improved watershed function and protection of drinking water; and

WHEREAS, the majority of comments submitted by stakeholders on the Proposed Fish and Wildlife Plan express doubt about whether an equitable balance between the interests of fish and wildlife restoration, power generation and protection of drinking water would actually be achieved by the alternative advanced by the Minority Owners and the Native Village of Eklutna's attempts to put forward alternatives were rebuked by the Minority Owners; and

WHEREAS, the decisions made with the acceptance of the Fish and Wildlife Program will impact the Eklutna River, the Native Village of Eklutna, and the Municipality's drinking water, power generation and finances for the next thirty years; and

WHEREAS, during the drafting of the Fish and Wildlife Program, the Minority Owners failed to consider viable and potentially more cost-effective alternative proposals to their portal valve option, despite multiple concepts being brought forward during the Plan development, including pumped storage hydropower; and

WHEREAS, one of the potential options to meet the terms of the 1991 Agreement is pumped storage hydropower, a proven energy storage solution used worldwide that provides carbon free power production, storage and grid stabilization; and

WHEREAS, pumped storage hydropower has the potential to maintain or improve existing power production, meet municipal water supply needs and provide full river hydrological function and connection into and out of Eklutna Lake for fish passage; and

WHEREAS, setting up a process to explore pumped storage hydropower has the potential to lead to multiple alternative concepts that could result in full restoration of the Eklutna River, protection of Anchorage's drinking water source, and increased power generation, potentially with lower costs to municipal taxpayers and ratepayers; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Native Village of Eklutna Tribal Council and the Anchorage Assembly urge Governor Dunleavy to establish a final Fish and Wildlife Program that requires the owners to use two years of the three year pre-implementation period to explore alternative infrastructure options, including pumped storage hydropower, that can provide continuous water flow to all twelve miles of the Eklutna River and fish passage into and out of Eklutna Lake, protect the drinking water

supply for Anchorage residents, and ensure a reliable, affordable energy future for Southcentral Alaska.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Municipality of Anchorage this 5th day of September 2024.


Chair

ATTEST:


Municipal Clerk

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Tribal Council of the Native Village of Eklutna this 5th day of September 2024.


President and Chair

ATTEST:


Secretary