

**ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
AR NO. 2022-262(S)**

1 **A RESOLUTION OF THE ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY IN SUPPORT**
2 **OF EFFORTS TO RESTORE THE EKLUTNA RIVER.**
3

4 **WHEREAS**, the Native Village of Eklutna is the oldest and largest Dena'ina
5 settlement in the Municipality of Anchorage; and
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7 **WHEREAS**, the Native Village of Eklutna is a Federally recognized Tribe with all of
8 the attached responsibilities, powers, and obligations of a Sovereign, also being
9 recognized by the State of Alaska and the Municipality of Anchorage, and having a
10 government to government relationship with both the Federal government and the
11 government of the Municipality of Anchorage; and
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13 **WHEREAS**, the Eklutna River historically was a major subsistence and cultural
14 resource for the Native Village of Eklutna; and
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16 **WHEREAS**, the Eklutna River watershed has been in a badly degraded condition
17 since 1929 due to hydropower dams, gravel mining, road construction, other
18 development, and water diversions; and
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20 **WHEREAS**, a principal impact from hydropower development in the Eklutna
21 watershed is the loss of water in the Eklutna River[**'S SALMON RUNS**]; and
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23 **WHEREAS**, the Eklutna River still supports five species of salmon, including Cook
24 Inlet king salmon and sockeye salmon[, **THOUGH IN GREATLY DIMINISHED**
25 **NUMBERS FROM HISTORICAL LEVELS**]; and
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27 **WHEREAS**, Eklutna Incorporated, the village corporation for Eklutna, is the largest
28 landowner in the Municipality of Anchorage and owns most of the land along the
29 Eklutna River and around Eklutna Lake; and
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31 **WHEREAS**, the Native Village of Eklutna and Eklutna Inc. have made substantial
32 contributions to the development of the Municipality of Anchorage providing land for
33 school sites, highways, railroads, powerlines and rights-of-way; and
34

35 **WHEREAS**, The Native Village of Eklutna, Eklutna Inc., and The Conservation Fund
36 collaborated on a \$7.5 million project to dismantle the Lower Eklutna River dam;
37 and
38

39 **[WHEREAS, SEDIMENTS ACCUMULATED BEHIND THE LOWER EKLUTNA**
40 **RIVER DAM REMAIN IN THE RIVER CHANNEL DUE TO LOW WATER FLOW**
41 **CONDITIONS; AND]**
42

1 **WHEREAS**, little to no water flows out of Eklutna Lake into the Eklutna River
2 because of water diversions for the Eklutna Power Project; and

3
4 **WHEREAS**, restored instream **[FLOW IS NECESSARY TO FLUSH THE**
5 **ACCUMULATED SEDIMENTS DOWNSTREAM AND]** could allow for the recovery
6 of salmon habitat; and

7
8 **[WHEREAS, STABILIZED LAKE LEVELS AND FISH PASSAGE FOR**
9 **UPSTREAM AND DOWNSTREAM MIGRATING SALMON TO AND FROM**
10 **EKLUTNA LAKE WOULD RESTORE IMPORTANT SPAWNING AND REARING**
11 **HABITAT FOR SALMON; AND]**

12
13 **WHEREAS**, the Municipality of Anchorage retains an ownership
14 **[MAJORITY]** interest **[(52%)]** in the Eklutna Power Project; and

15
16 **WHEREAS**, the Municipality of Anchorage, Chugach Electric Association (CEA),
17 and Matanuska Electric Association (MEA) (collectively, the Project Owners)
18 are parties to the 1991 Agreement with the State of Alaska and federal
19 agencies to study the impacts of the Eklutna Project on fish and wildlife,
20 examine and develop proposals for the protection, mitigation, and
21 enhancement of fish and wildlife affected by such hydroelectric development
22 (the “1991 Agreement”), and prepare a Fish and Wildlife Program for the
23 Governor of Alaska’s approval (the “Consultation and Study Process”)],
24 **ALONG WITH CHUGACH ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION (CEA), AND MATANUSKA**
25 **ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION (MEA), ARE LEGALLY OBLIGATED TO MITIGATE**
26 **FOR THE IMPACTS OF THE EKLUTNA POWER PROJECT TO FISH AND**
27 **WILDLIFE];** and

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29 **WHEREAS**, the Project Owners initiated the Consultation and Study Process
30 more than two years early and have spent the last two years conducting
31 studies of the hydrology, geomorphologies, local archaeology, biology, and
32 fisheries of the Eklutna River as required under the 1991 Agreement and will
33 be developing a proposed program for the protection, mitigation, and
34 enhancement measures during the next two years with engagement with the
35 Native Village of Eklutna and the public; [THE MUNICIPALITY OF
36 ANCHORAGE, ALONG WITH CHUGACH ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION AND
37 MATANUSKA ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION (COLLECTIVELY, “THE EKLUTNA
38 POWER PURCHASERS”), HAVE BEGUN THE REQUIRED MITIGATION
39 PROCESS, INCLUDING STUDIES OF HYDROLOGY AND FISHERIES OF THE
40 EKLUTNA RIVER;] and

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42 **[WHEREAS, THE RESTORATION OF INSTREAM FLOW TO THE EKLUTNA**
43 **RIVER AND RESTORED FISH PASSAGE TO AND FROM EKLUTNA LAKE ARE**
44 **THE MOST DESIRABLE FORMS OF MITIGATION FOR IMPACTS CAUSED BY**
45 **THE EKLUTNA POWER PROJECT; AND]**

46 **WHEREAS**, a**[N EXPERIMENTAL]** three-week period of **[FLUSHING]** study flows
47 in September 2021 **[ALLOWED FOR SOME SEDIMENT TRANSPORT AND RE-**
48 **ESTABLISHMENT OF THE RIVER CHANNEL,]** allowed **[ALLOWING]** for more
49 meaningful study results and better mitigation design; and

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2 **WHEREAS**, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fisheries
3 Service, Trout Unlimited, the Native Village of Eklutna, Eklutna Inc. and The
4 Conservation Fund requested another period of [RESTORED] instream flow in
5 2022; and

6
7 **WHEREAS**, the request for additional [RESTORED] instream flow in 2022 was
8 determined to be scientifically unnecessary for the study process [DENIED
9 BY THE EKLUTNA POWER PURCHASERS]; and

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11 **WHEREAS**, the Anchorage Assembly supported restoration of the Eklutna River
12 with the passage of AR 2017-324 titled “A Resolution in Support of Efforts to Restore
13 the Eklutna River”; and

14
15 **WHEREAS**, the Watershed and Natural Resources Advisory Commission of the
16 Municipality of Anchorage supported restoration of the Eklutna River with the
17 passage of Resolution WNRC 2019-03 titled “A Resolution Regarding Restoration
18 of the Eklutna River”; and

19
20 **WHEREAS**, the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) supported restoration of the
21 Eklutna River with passage of Resolution 20-17 “to restore traditional rivers and
22 streams for fish and wildlife habitat...in particular, the efforts of tribes like the Native
23 Village of Eklutna”; and

24
25 **WHEREAS**, the Traditional Tribal Council of the Native Village of Eklutna supported
26 restoration of Eklutna River and Eklutna Lake with the passage of Resolution 2022-
27 04 for “1) continuous flow in the river below the lake sufficient to support thriving
28 salmon populations, with intermittent higher, habitat maintenance and re-creation
29 flows, 2) salmon passage between Eklutna River and Lake, and 3) moderation of
30 Eklutna Lake level variability, at levels sufficient to facilitate sockeye spawning”;
31 now, therefore

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33 THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY RESOLVES:

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35 **Section 1.** The Assembly recognizes that restoration of water to the Eklutna
36 River[, **INCLUDING ALLOWING SALMON PASSAGE THE LENGTH OF THE**
37 **EKLUTNA RIVER, TO AND FROM EKLUTNA LAKE, AND INTO HEADWATER**
38 **TRIBUTARIES,**] will benefit the Native Village of Eklutna and residents of the
39 Municipality of Anchorage and is a priority of the Municipality in a manner
40 consistent with the requirements of the 1991 Agreement.

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42 **Section 2.** The Assembly and the Municipality of Anchorage commits to the
43 protection, mitigation, and enhancement [RESTORATION] of the Eklutna
44 watershed[, **INCLUDING PROVIDING INSTREAM FLOW AND FISH PASSAGE**
45 **THE LENGTH OF THE EKLUTNA RIVER AND INTO EKLUTNA LAKE]** and, if the
46 process set forth in the 1991 Agreement bears out the release of water from
47 Eklutna Lake and the addition of salmon habitat into the Eklutna River as part
48 of the Fish and Wildlife Program, commits to support such and requests that,
49 Chugach Electric Association, and Matanuska Electric Association commit as well.

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Section 3. The Assembly [DIRECTS THE MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE] encourages the Project Owners, State and Federal Agencies to work with the Native Village of Eklutna in implementation of the Consultation and Study Process and restore water to the Eklutna River in a manner consistent with the requirements of the 1991 Agreement. [TO WORK COLLABORATIVELY WITH THE NATIVE VILLAGE OF EKLUTNA, EKLUTNA INC., THE EKLUTNA POWER PURCHASERS, AND STATE AND FEDERAL RESOURCE AGENCIES TO RESTORE THE EKLUTNA RIVER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.]

Section 4. This resolution shall be effective upon passage and approval.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this _____ day of _____, 2022.

ATTEST:

Chair

Municipal Clerk