CHEROKEE COUNCIL HOUSE
CHEROKEE, NORTH CAROLINA

Date: _____

RESOLUTION NO.: _____ **(2026)**

A resolution supporting the removal of Ela Dam and the restoration of Longperson

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 159 (2022) permitted the Natural Resources Department to begin building a coalition of tribal, state, federal, county, private, and non-profit partners to pursue removal of the Ela Dam through a variety of mechanisms, stakeholders, and funding sources; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 91 (2026) recognized the inherent rights of Longperson, including the "right to maintain free-flowing conditions, including protection from damming, obstruction, or any alteration that impedes the natural flow of water", which further substantiates the need to support Ela Dam removal; and

WHEREAS, by implementing the rights of Longperson through the removal of an obsolete dam that impairs our watershed, we shall enact the ancient Kituwah cultural stewardship principles as affirmed by the Elohi Dinigatiyi (Earth Keepers) in *Gadugi Degvgasesdvi Anigiduwagi Dodalvi* (Working Together to Steward the Kituwah Mountains); and

WHEREAS, although the EBCI was not responsible for the construction of Ela Dam and should not be held liable for its removal costs, the Elohi Dinigatiyi (Earth Keepers) and NAIWA Daughters nonetheless call for and seek active leadership by the EBCI in partner-led efforts to remove Ela Dam, in full alignment with the Kituwah cultural stewardship principles and the Rights of Longperson; and

WHEREAS, the Ela Dam Project LLC, a subsidiary of Mainspring Conservation Trust, acquired the Ela Dam property in 2024 and is managing the asset—and maintaining ownership and liability for the existing dam—until it is removed; and

WHEREAS, progress on regulatory approvals, outreach, and design has advanced to a point where stronger and more coordinated collaborative strategies, grounded in meaningful Tribal input and guidance, are now needed to move forward with Ela Dam removal and restore the Longperson; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Tribal Council of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, in Council assembled at which a quorum is present, reaffirms its commitment to the removal of Ela Dam and directs the EBCI Natural Resources Department, in coordination with the Principal Chief, Tribal Council, Elohi Dinigatiyi (Earth Keepers), and NAIWA Daughters, to actively participate in partner-led efforts through public outreach, advocacy, fundraising, and planning processes that incorporate EBCI values and priorities.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that all resolutions inconsistent with this resolution are hereby rescinded, and that this resolution shall become effective upon ratification by the Principal Chief

Submitted by: the Elohi Dinigatiyi (Earth Keepers) and the NAIWA Daughters