

Municipal Clerk's Office
Amended and Approved
Date: **September 27, 2022**

Submitted by: Assembly Vice-Chair
Constant, Assembly Members
Cross, Dunbar and
Quinn-Davidson
Prepared by: Legislative Services
For reading: September 13, 2022

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
AR No. 2022–262, As Amended

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

WHEREAS, the Native Village of Eklutna is the oldest and largest Dena'ina settlement in the Municipality of Anchorage; and

WHEREAS, the Native Village of Eklutna is a Federally recognized Tribe with all of the attached responsibilities, powers, and obligations of a Sovereign, also being recognized by the State of Alaska and the Municipality of Anchorage, and having a government to government relationship with both the Federal government and the government of the Municipality of Anchorage; and

WHEREAS, the Eklutna River historically was a major subsistence and cultural resource for the Native Village of Eklutna; and

WHEREAS, the Eklutna River watershed has been in a badly degraded condition since 1929 due to hydropower dams and water diversions; and

WHEREAS, a principal impact from hydropower development in the Eklutna watershed is the loss of the Eklutna River's salmon runs; and

WHEREAS, the Eklutna River still supports five species of salmon, including Cook Inlet king salmon and sockeye salmon, though in greatly diminished numbers from historical levels; and

WHEREAS, Eklutna Incorporated, the village corporation for Eklutna, is the largest landowner in the Municipality of Anchorage and owns most of the land along the Eklutna River and around Eklutna Lake; and

WHEREAS, the Native Village of Eklutna and Eklutna Inc. have made substantial contributions to the development of the Municipality of Anchorage providing land for school sites, highways, railroads, powerlines and rights-of-way; and

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

WHEREAS, sediments accumulated behind the Lower Eklutna River Dam remain in the river channel due to low water flow conditions; and

1
2 **WHEREAS**, little to no water flows out of Eklutna Lake into the Eklutna River
3 because of water diversions for the Eklutna Power Project; and
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5 **WHEREAS**, restored instream flow is necessary to flush the accumulated sediments
6 downstream and allow for the recovery of salmon habitat; and
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8 **WHEREAS**, stabilized lake levels and fish passage for upstream and downstream
9 migrating salmon to and from Eklutna Lake would restore important spawning and
10 rearing habitat for salmon; and
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12 **WHEREAS**, the Municipality of Anchorage retains a majority interest (52%) in the
13 Eklutna Power Project; and
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15 **WHEREAS**, the Municipality of Anchorage, ~~[along with]~~ Chugach Electric
16 Association (CEA), and Matanuska Electric Association (MEA), are parties to the
17 1991 Agreement with the State of Alaska and federal agencies to study [legally
18 obligated to mitigate for] the impacts of the Eklutna Power Project to fish and
19 wildlife, examine and develop proposals for the protection, mitigation, and
20 enhancement of fish and wildlife affected by such hydroelectric development
21 (the “1991 Agreement”), and prepare a Fish and Wildlife Program for the
22 Governor; and
23

24 **WHEREAS**, the restoration of instream flow to the Eklutna River and restored fish
25 passage to and from Eklutna Lake are the most desirable forms of mitigation for
26 impacts caused by the Eklutna Power Project; and
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28 **WHEREAS**, an experimental three-week period of flushing flows in September 2021
29 allowed for some sediment transport and re-establishment of the river channel,
30 allowing for more meaningful study results and better mitigation design; and
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32 **WHEREAS**, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fisheries
33 Service, Trout Unlimited, the Native Village of Eklutna, Eklutna Inc. and The
34 Conservation Fund requested another period of restored instream flow in 2022; and
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36 **WHEREAS**, the request for restored instream flow in 2022 was denied by the
37 Eklutna Power Purchasers; and
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39 **WHEREAS**, the Anchorage Assembly supported restoration of the Eklutna River
40 with the passage of AR 2017-324 titled “A Resolution in Support of Efforts to Restore
41 the Eklutna River”; and
42

43 **WHEREAS**, the Watershed and Natural Resources Advisory Commission of the
44 Municipality of Anchorage supported restoration of the Eklutna River with the
45 passage of Resolution WNRC 2019-03 titled “A Resolution Regarding Restoration
46 of the Eklutna River”; and
47

48 **WHEREAS**, the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) supported restoration of the
49 Eklutna River with passage of Resolution 20-17 “to restore traditional rivers and

streams for fish and wildlife habitat...in particular, the efforts of tribes like the Native Village of Eklutna”; and

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

THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY RESOLVES:

Section 1. The Assembly recognizes that restoration of the Eklutna River, including allowing salmon passage the length of the Eklutna River, to and from Eklutna Lake, and into headwater tributaries, will benefit the Native Village of Eklutna and residents of the Municipality of Anchorage and is a priority of the Municipality **in a manner consistent with the requirements of the 1991 Agreement.**

Section 2. The Assembly [~~Municipality of Anchorage~~] commits to the restoration of the Eklutna watershed, including providing instream flow and fish passage the length of the Eklutna River and into Eklutna Lake and requests that, Chugach Electric Association, and Matanuska Electric Association commit as well.

Section 3. The Assembly ~~commits~~**directs the Municipality of Anchorage** 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 27th day of September, 2022.



Chair

ATTEST:



Municipal Clerk