

**ELEVENTH LEGISLATURE
OF THE
CHEYENNE AND ARAPAHO TRIBES
SPECIAL SESSION
MAY 28, 2026
CONCHO, OK**

RESOLUTION: A Resolution to Approve and Support the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes' Engagement with the Nature Conservancy and its Efforts to Establish a Tribal Entity and Co-Management Agreement with New Mexico.

RESOLUTION NO: 11L-SS-2026-0528-001
DATE INTRODUCED: May 22, 2026
SPONSOR: Kendricks Sleeper, District A2
CO-SPONSOR: Rector Candy, District A4

SUBJECT: A Resolution to Approve and Support the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes' Engagement with the Nature Conservancy and its Efforts to Establish a Tribal Entity and Co-Management Agreement with New Mexico.

WHEREAS: The Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes are federally recognized Indian Tribes, organized under a constitution approved by the Secretary of the Interior on April 4, 2006, and

WHEREAS: The Legislature has the Constitutional obligation and public responsibility to the Tribes to oversee the Tribes' operations in order to establish and promote justice, establish guidance and direction for the government and advance the general welfare of the Tribes; and

WHEREAS: Article VII, Section 4(d) of the Constitution requires that the Legislature or Tribal Council give prior authorization for the signing of contracts by the Governor; and

WHEREAS: The Nature Conservancy (TNC), a District of Columbia non-profit corporation, has acquired an approximately 50,000-acre property in northeastern New Mexico, which is part of the ancestral homelands of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes; and

WHEREAS: TNC is working to coordinate a phased transfer of approximately 32,000 acres of the Property to the State of New Mexico using U.S. Forest Service Forest Legacy Funding. The State's Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department-Forestry Division intends to own this State Parcel in fee, subject to a Co-Management Agreement between the State and a yet-to-be-created Tribal Entity, which will be comprised of multiple federally-recognized Tribal Nations; and

WHEREAS: In a future stage of this project, TNC intends to transfer the remaining

approximately 18,000 acres directly to the Tribal Entity (Tribal Parcel), once the entity is legally established and in a financial and operational position to accept management of the Tribal Parcel. The Tribal Parcel will be transferred to the Tribal Entity in fee, subject to a perpetual conservation easement or other similar restriction held by a qualified holder; and

WHEREAS: This endeavor requires the creation of a Tribal Entity with key characteristics, including but not limited to equal representation for all interested tribes in the coalition, the possibility for additional tribes to join the Tribal Entity after its initial formation, the capacity to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the State to co-manage the State Parcel, the ability to hold the Tribal Parcel land in fee, the ability to manage contracts, grants, staff and programs to carry out management activities on both the State Parcel and Tribal Parcel, and the protection of the sovereignty of each participating tribe; and

WHEREAS: The Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes intend to work collaboratively with TNC and other Tribal Nations to establish a Tribal Entity and Co-Management Agreement that are responsive to Tribal needs and input and that will enable successful co-management and Tribal land ownership; and

WHEREAS: Participation in these conversations do not commit the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes to join the future Tribal Entity at this time, and

WHEREAS: The Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes understand that the Tribal Entity will enter a Co-Management Agreement with the State of New Mexico and that because of timing constraints related to federal funding, aspects of the Co-Management Agreement may need to be negotiated before the Tribal Entity is fully formed; and

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes express its support for TNC's efforts to create a tribally-led co-management and land ownership model for the Property and expresses its willingness to participate in these important conversations about the creation of the Tribal Entity and Co-Management Agreement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes designate Governor Wassana or his designee to engage in conversations, meetings, and in-person events to provide input on behalf of the Tribes. Until the Tribal Entity is formed, Governor Wassana or his designee has the authority to indicate the Tribes' preference regarding the Tribal Entity and the Co-Management Agreement in workshops and intertribal meetings; provided, however, that such participation shall not authorize the Governor, his designee, or any other official to bind, commit, or obligate the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes to join the Tribal Entity or enter into any final agreement without further legislative approval; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Eleventh Legislature approves and supports the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes' Engagement with the Nature Conservancy and its efforts to establish a Tribal Entity with other tribes and Co-Management Agreement with New Mexico and further requires that any final agreement, entity formation document, co-management agreement,

or other binding document committing the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes shall be presented to the Legislature for review and approval prior to execution by the Governor.



Kendricks Sleeper
Speaker of the Eleventh Legislature
Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes



ATTEST:

I, Jodi White Buffalo, Legislative Clerk, hereby certify that the foregoing is a True and Accurate Copy of the Original Resolution No. 11L-SS-2026-0528-001 which was acted upon by the Legislature of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes in a Special Session of the Eleventh Legislature, by a roll call vote on the 28th day of May 2026.

VOTE RECORD:

DISTRICT	LEGISLATOR	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
A1	Pamela Sutton	✓			
A2	Kendricks Sleeper	✓			
A3	Travis Ruiz	✓			
A4	Rector Candy	✓			
C1	Bruce Whiteman, Jr.	✓			
C2	Milan Roman Nose, Jr.	✓			
C3	Thomas Trout	✓			
C4	Mariah Youngbull	✓			
TOTAL		8			
Passes (X) Fails () Tabled () Allowed to Die () No Action ()					

Pursuant to Article VI, Section 5, subsection (a) of the Tribes Constitution reads in part: "Tie votes in the Legislature shall be decided by the Governor."

	YES	NO	ABSENT
Governor	Reggie Wassana		

Jodi White Buffalo
 Jodi White Buffalo, Legislative Clerk

Eleventh Legislature, Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes



ATTEST:


Pursuant to Article VI, Section 7, subsection (a)(iv) of the Tribes Constitution reads in part: "All Bills passed by the Legislature shall be presented to the Governor for signature or veto. All laws shall take effect thirty days after signature by the Governor or veto override by the Legislature unless any Member of the Tribes submits to the Coordinator of the Office of Tribal Council a petition signed by at least one hundred fifty Members of the Tribal Council seeking to repeal the law or resolution at the next Tribal Council meeting. If the Tribal Council fails to repeal such law or resolution at the next Tribal Council where the matter has been properly placed on the agenda for the Tribal Council meeting, such law or resolution shall become effective immediately."

Pursuant to Article VII, Section 4, subsection (g) of the Tribes Constitution reads: "The Governor shall have the power to sign any enactment passed by the Legislature into law or to veto any enactment passed by the Legislature within ten days of passage with a written explanation of any objections; and if the Governor takes no action within ten days, then the enactment shall become law in accordance with this Constitution."

{ } APPROVED

{ } VETOED: Attachment ____; Governor's written explanation of any objections.

On the 28th day of May, 2026.



Reggie Wassana, Governor
Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes

TRANSMITTAL OF DOCUMENTS:
From the Legislative Branch to the Office of Records Management

ATTEST:

Pursuant to Article VI, Section 7, subsection (a)(v), of the Tribes Constitution reads, "The Office of Records Management shall compile all Laws and Resolutions into a comprehensive Code in an orderly manner that shall be published annually."

Office of Records Management Staff, hereby certify that the foregoing is a True and Accurate Original Resolution No. 11L-SS-2026-0528-001.

Space below is reserved for Stamp:

Received (Date) Office of Record Management



Signature: Cheryl Blind

Print Name: Cheryl Blind

Title: Director

Date: 6/09/26

Office of Records Management
Department of Administration, Executive Branch
Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes

