

## APPENDIX E

### Bemidji Statement on Seventh Generation Guardianship

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14th Protecting Mother Earth Conference, Jul. 6-9, 2006, available at [http://www.ienearth.org/statement\\_declare.html](http://www.ienearth.org/statement_declare.html)

“The first mandate . . . is to ensure that our decision-making is guided by consideration of the welfare and well being of the seventh generation to come.’

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Indigenous Peoples have learned over thousands of years to live in harmony with the land and the waters. It is our intent to survive and thrive on this planet for this and many generations to come. This survival depends on a living web of relationships in our communities and lands, among humans, and others. The many Indigenous Peoples and cultures from throughout the world are threatened by the disruption of these relationships.

The exploitation and industrialization of the land and water have altered the relationships that have sustained our Indigenous communities. These changes have accelerated in recent years. We are now experiencing the consequences of these actions with increased cancer and asthma rates, suicides, and reproductive disorders in humans, as well as increased hardships of hunting and of whaling. Places that we hold to be sacred have been repeatedly disturbed and destroyed. In animals and in nature we see changing migratory patterns, diseased fish, climate change, extinction of species, and much more.

Government agencies and others in charge of protecting the relationships between our people, the land, air, and water have repeatedly broken treaties and promises. In doing so, they have failed in their duty to uphold the tribal and the public trust. The many changes in these relationships have been well documented, but science remains inadequate for fully understanding their origins and essence. This scientific uncertainty has been misused to carry out economic, cultural, and political exploitation of the land and resources. Failure to recognize the complexity of these relationships will further impair the future health of our people and function of the environment.

We value our culture, knowledge, and skills. They are valuable and irreplaceable assets to all of humanity, and help to safeguard the world. The health and well being of our grandchildren are worth more than all the wealth that can be taken from these lands.

By returning to the collective empowerment and decision making that is part of our history, we are able to envision a future that will restore and protect the inheritance of this, and future generations. Therefore, we will designate Guardians for the Seventh Generation.”

Appendix E from [Models for Protecting the Environment for Future Generations](#)