

NISQUALLY LAND TRUST
RESOLUTION No. 2018-14

WASHINGTON INITIATIVE 1631, CARBON EMISSIONS FEE MEASURE
BOARD POSITION STATEMENT

WHEREAS, the Nisqually Land Trust is a nationally accredited non-profit organization whose mission is to acquire and manage critical lands to permanently benefit the water, wildlife, and people of the Nisqually River Watershed; and

WHEREAS, the Nisqually Land Trust's conservation priorities are guided primarily by the Nisqually Watershed Stewardship Plan, developed and managed by the Nisqually River Council in response to a 1985 legislative directive, and by the Nisqually Chinook Salmon Recovery Plan and Nisqually Steelhead Recovery Plan, which are coordinated by the Nisqually Indian Tribe; and

WHEREAS, all three plans rate protection of wildlife habitat a highest priority, and the Nisqually Land Trust was formed with the recognition that the Nisqually River Watershed needed a conservancy organization to accomplish many of the goals of these plans; and

WHEREAS, climate change is abruptly and negatively impacting humans, plants and animals living within the Nisqually River Watershed, and as long as climate change goes unchecked, the salmon habitat restoration goals for the Nisqually River are likely to fall short; and

WHEREAS, the ability to sustain healthy salmon runs in the Nisqually River relies on cold and constant flows of water from the Nisqually Glacier, Wilson Glacier, Kautz Glacier, South Tahoma Glacier, Success Glacier, Van Trump Glacier and Muir Snowfield; and

WHEREAS, the Nisqually Glacier has been surveyed yearly since the 1930s, and has retreated on average one meter every ten days from 2003-2015, and recent preliminary data indicates that the glacial retreat rate has increased to 1.6 meters every ten days from 2013-2018; and

WHEREAS, Washington Ballot Initiative 1631, known as the Carbon Fee Measure (the "Initiative"), which is on the November 6, 2018, Washington State ballot, offers all Washington State residents, including climate-exposed Nisqually River Watershed communities, the opportunity to take direct action to reduce carbon emissions by imposing fees on large emitters based on their pollution; and

WHEREAS, fossil fuel consumption and related pollution contribute directly to climate change and the regional effects of global warming, which harm Washington's health, economy, natural resources, environment, and communities, including by way of intensified storms, droughts, sea-level rise, increased flooding, more frequent and severe wildfires, and other adverse impacts to forests, agriculture, wildlife, fisheries, rivers, and the marine environment; and

WHEREAS, investments in clean air, clean energy, clean water, healthy forests, and healthy communities will facilitate the transition away from fossil fuels, reduce pollution, and create an environment that protects our children, families, and neighbors from the adverse impacts of pollution; and

WHEREAS, funding these investments through a fee on large emitters of pollution is based on the amount of pollution they contribute, and a pollution fee offsets and alleviates burdens to which those emitters directly contribute; and

WHEREAS, the passage of the Initiative will make Washington the first state in the Union to adopt a type of policy called a carbon fee and, by example, can influence other states, the federal government and other nations to take similar proactive steps; and

WHEREAS, the Initiative shall use receipts collected from the pollution fee for clean air and clean energy investments, clean water and healthy forest investments and healthy communities investments that will, in turn, benefit Nisqually River communities and Nisqually River habitat protection and restoration; and

WHEREAS, the Nisqually Land Trust Board of Directors considers its mission threatened by climate change and believes that it is our responsibility to take urgent action to address climate change impacts to the Nisqually River Watershed; and

WHEREAS, the Washington Association of Land Trusts (WALT), of which the Nisqually Land Trust is a voting member, will, at its August 23, 2018, meeting, ask its members to vote on whether to advocate for, advocate against, or remain neutral on the Initiative.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors supports Washington Ballot Initiative 1631.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Directors supports WALT advocating in support of Washington Ballot Initiative 1631.

PRESENTED AND APPROVED at the regular meeting of the Board of Directors, held on the 16th day of August, 2018, at which a quorum was present, by a vote of 9 Yes and 1 No.