



KAWERAK, INC.

Tungwenuk Family Qupak Design, used with permission

KAWERAK, INC. RESOLUTION 2026-14

REPRESENTING

Brevig Mission
Sitaisaq
Council
Akauchak
Diomedea
Injalik
Elim
Neviarcuarluk
Gambell
Sivuqaq
Golovin
Chinik
King Island
Ugiuvak
Koyuk
Kuuyuk
Mary's Igloo
Iglaruk
Nome Eskimo
Sitnasuami Inuit
Savoonga
Sivungaq
Shaktolik
Saktulik
Shishmaref
Kigiqtaq
Solomon
Anuutaq
St. Michael
Tacik
Stebbins
Tapraq
Teller
Tupqaqruk
Unalakleet
Unalaqliq
Wales
Kinjigin
White Mountain
Natchigvik

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING A MORATORIUM ON SEABED MINING TO PROTECT ALASKA NATIVE SUBSISTENCE, TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY, AND OCEAN RESOURCES

WHEREAS: Kawerak, Inc. is the Alaska Native non-profit regional Tribal consortium for the 20 federally recognized Tribes of the Bering Strait region of Alaska, and our mission is to advance the capacity of our Peoples and Tribes for the benefit of the region; and

WHEREAS: Alaska Native peoples have lived in relationship with and stewarded Alaska's oceans, coastal waters, marine ecosystems, and subsistence resources since time immemorial, and these relationships remain foundational to our cultures, food security, economies, health, and ways of life; and

WHEREAS: The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) initiated a leasing process for seabed minerals on the Alaska Outer Continental Shelf on January 29, 2026, for regions covering more than 113 million acres in the Gulf of Alaska, Aleutian Islands, Goodnews Bay, Norton Sound, and the Arctic; and

WHEREAS: Multiple Alaska Native Corporations, Tribes, and Tribal consortiums submitted letters of concern or opposition, including over 90,000 public comments, to the BOEM's Request for Information and Interest in early 2026—with a potential lease sale for seabed mineral extraction to occur as soon as 2027; and

WHEREAS: Commercial seabed mining on the Outer Continental Shelf has never occurred globally or in United States federal waters; no federal leases have ever been issued, and the Marine Mineral Administration is proposing to sell leases that last a minimum of 20 years—the length of a human generation; and

WHEREAS: Seabed mining is subject to a fragmented, unpredictable, and changing federal regulatory regime, and seabed mining is an unproven and experimental industry that could cause sediment plumes, underwater noise and pollution, destruction or alteration of benthic habitat, and impacts throughout marine food webs, including to Essential Fish Habitat and culturally and economically important species; and serious harm to human health; and

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Advancing the capacity of our people and tribes for the benefit of the region.

WHEREAS: Alaska Native communities and marine ecosystems are already experiencing cumulative pressures from climate change, declining salmon returns, vessel traffic and industrial activity, pollution, changing ocean conditions, and other environmental stressors; and

WHEREAS: Robust environmental and sociocultural baseline information does not exist for many deep sea and seabed areas being considered for seabed mineral leasing, and meaningful evaluation must include cumulative effects, Indigenous Knowledge, subsistence and cultural relationships, reasonable alternatives including a no-lease alternative, and the technical and financial assurances for mitigation, response, restoration, and remediation; and

WHEREAS: The federal government has Trust Responsibilities and obligations to federally recognized Tribes and must engage in meaningful government-to-government consultation before decisions that may adversely affect Tribal resources, cultures, subsistence rights, and ways of life; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Kawerak Board of Directors support a moratorium on the exploration, leasing, and extraction of seabed mineral resources in Alaska federal waters and on the Alaska Outer Continental Shelf until environmental, subsistence, cultural, socioeconomic, and cumulative impacts are evaluated and understood and affected Alaska Native Tribes have been fully and meaningfully consulted; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Kawerak Board of Directors calls upon the Department of the Interior to suspend further consideration of seabed mineral lease sales and refrain from proceeding to a Proposed Leasing Notice during this moratorium; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any future consideration of seabed mineral development must include meaningful government-to-government Tribal consultation; robust environmental, subsistence, socioeconomic, and cultural baseline studies; meaningful and respectful incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge and protection of Tribal data sovereignty; and a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement evaluating direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts and reasonable alternatives, including a no-lease alternative; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Kawerak Board of Directors calls upon the federal government to take a precautionary approach to seabed mineral development and uphold Tribal sovereignty, federal trust responsibilities and obligations, subsistence rights, Indigenous Knowledge, and Alaska Native peoples' enduring relationships with the ocean; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Kawerak Board of Directors request that the Alaska Legislature, State of Alaska, Alaska's Congressional Delegation, and relevant federal agencies support these policies and advocate for a moratorium on seabed mineral exploration, leasing, and extraction where

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such activities could threaten Alaska Native peoples, subsistence resources, fisheries, communities, and marine ecosystems.

CERTIFICATION

We the undersigned Kirsten Timbers, Co-Chair, and Katya Gray, Board Secretary of the Kawerak, Inc. Board of Directors, hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by unanimous vote of the Kawerak Inc. Board of Directors during a duly called meeting on October 1, 2026.



Kirsten Timbers, Kawerak Inc. Co-Chair



Katya Gray, Kawerak Inc. Board Secretary

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