



# USET

SOVEREIGNTY PROTECTION FUND

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## **Board of Directors of United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund Elect Officers**

(Sovereign Territory of the Seneca Nation of Indians)— On behalf of the United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET) and the United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF) family, we congratulate the officers elected at the USET SPF Annual Meeting.

The officers include President Kirk Francis, Tribal Chief, Penobscot Indian Nation; Vice-President Robert McGhee, Vice-Chairman, Poarch Band of Creek Indians; Secretary Lynn Malerba, Chief, Mohegan Tribe of Indians of Connecticut; and Treasurer B. Cheryl Smith, Chief, Jena Band of Choctaw Indians.

“As President, I have a deep responsibility to each of your Nations,” said Francis.

“Along with the Executive Committee and staff of USET, I will fight for you!”

USET SPF Annual Meeting 2018 was hosted by the Seneca Nation of Indians. Important issues facing Indian Country were discussed, including the constitutional challenges of Tribal Nation-U.S. relations and related trust/treaty obligations. Additionally, discussion was held on the effort to foster cultural, social and policy change by empowering Native Americans to counter the dominant narratives, discrimination, and invisibility that limit Native opportunity, access to justice, and self-determination.

In regard to these issues, Francis stated: “Many of our USET Nations continue to fight the attacks on their homelands, and on our sovereign rights to protect our communities, families, and especially our children. I am sickened by federal court decisions

suggesting that Tribal Nations are not entitled to a land base and holding the Indian Child Welfare Act unconstitutional. But, I am energized and determined to continue to fight against these attacks on our sovereignty!”

Francis concluded, “Working together, we will find solutions to these problems, and we will make sure that we are heard!”



*L to R: Treasurer Smith, President Francis, Vice President McGhee, Secretary Malerba*

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USET is a 501(c)(3) inter-tribal organization that includes 27 federally recognized Tribal Nations in the eastern and southern United States, from Maine to Florida to Texas. The goal is to promote the continued growth and development of Tribal Nations through programs such as health, clean water, and economic development.

USET SPF is a 501(c)(4) inter-tribal organization that focuses on educating Congress and the Executive Branch regarding issues challenging Indian Country and advocating for the policy and legislative needs of its member Tribal Nations.

*Because there is Strength in Unity*