
WHEREAS, in 1917, several hundred young men were recruited from Japan to harvest and mill timber for the Snoqualmie Falls Lumber Company which was located at the foothills of the Cascade Mountains in Western Washington; and

WHEREAS, the Japanese immigrants worked alongside the United States Army’s Spruce Division stationed at Snoqualmie to harvest timber deemed essential to the war (World War I) effort; and

WHEREAS, the Japanese workers also helped to build and maintain the nearly 100 miles of rail lines of the SFLCo; and

WHEREAS, from 1917, the Japanese worked continuously for the lumber company and made up more than half of the workforce for 25 years; and

WHEREAS, the Snoqualmie mill was the first in the industry to implement replanting of forests and sustainable yields, which was likely influenced by the practice developed in Japan 200 years before; and

WHEREAS, the Japanese and their American-born children lived in segregated bunkhouses; and

WHEREAS, documents in the company’s archives (now Weyerhaeuser) show that mill managers lobbied the government against the forced removal of their Japanese workers; and

WHEREAS, in May 1942, the workers and families were forced to leave under Executive Order 9066 and reportedly dumped everything related to Japan into outhouse pits because they could only bring what they could carry; and
WHEREAS, the bunkhouses were burned to the ground the day after the Japanese were forced to leave; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, the SFLCo Power Plant was listed by the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation as an Endangered Site; and

WHEREAS, the SFLCo Power Plant was designated in 2005 as a King County Landmark under the Historic Preservation Program of the Department of Natural Resources; and

WHEREAS, the land where the bunkhouses were situated has not been developed for 75 years; and

WHEREAS, on May 3, 2017, an application was submitted to the City of Snoqualmie to approve a Planned Commercial Industrial Plan and Development Agreement for the former SFLCo site; and

WHEREAS, the City of Snoqualmie has identified a list of key issues and elements of the environment that must be examined, including, but not limited to historic and cultural resources; and

WHEREAS, the grave sites of Japanese workers may exist on the property; and

WHEREAS, efforts to preserve the site by local community members, historians, preservationists and the Snoqualmie Tribe are currently underway.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the National Council of the Japanese American Citizens League that JACL acknowledges the potential significance of the Snoqualmie Falls Lumber Company site as it relates to the Japanese workers in forestry, railway history, and the history of Japanese incarceration; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that JACL supports further inquiry and consideration by the City of Snoqualmie Community Development Department as to portions of the site that should remain undeveloped and maintained for open space; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that JACL supports consideration and acknowledgement that the former mill site and surrounding area is a significant archeological site; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that JACL supports public education and interpretation of the site as it relates to the history and contributions of the Japanese to the lumber and railroad industries in the Pacific Northwest region and requests further archeological research in this regard should the development plans go forward; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that JACL fully supports efforts to place the SFLCo mill site on the National Register of Historic Places; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that JACL demands assurance that all Washington State and Federal regulations regarding culturally significant and historic areas have been reviewed and properly complied with in relation to the SFLCo mill site;

AND FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that JACL staff transmit a copy of this resolution to the members of the Snoqualmie City Council, City of Snoqualmie Community Development Department, Washington Trust for Historic Preservation, King County Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Program, and the Japanese Cultural & Community Center of Washington.

Sponsored by: Puyallup Valley Chapter          Dated: June 26, 2017
(JACL entity)                (Month/Day/Year)

Approved by: Eileen Yamada Lamphere, Chapter President

Signed:                      /s/                      

Fiscal Impact Statement attached

Name: Sharon Uyeda
(Please Print)

District: NCWNP
Chapter: San Jose

Signed: /s/                      

Name: David Kawamoto
(Please Print)

District: PSW
Chapter: San Diego

Signed: /s/                      

Name: Dale Ikeda
(Please Print)

District: CCDC
Chapter: Clovis

Signed: /s/                      

2017 Emergency Resolution
For National Council Review