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Office of the Principal Chief

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## **Executive Order on Implementing Priority Sustainability Measures to Conserve Natural Resources and Mitigate Impact on the Environment**

**Short Title:** Executive Order on Measures to Conserve Natural Resources

**2025-02-CTH**

1. **AUTHORITY:** The Constitution and Laws of the Cherokee Nation
2. **POLICY:** It remains the interest of this Administration to advance environmental stewardship across the Cherokee Nation Reservation by investing in and supporting our culturally vibrant, sustainable, and resilient communities through programs and initiatives designed to mitigate impacts on our shared environment. A key aspect to sustainability and resiliency is conscientious food waste management. Therefore, in order to advance environmental stewardship and support impactful conservation efforts across Cherokee Nation and its entities, the following is hereby ordered:
  - a. “Cherokee Nation Entity”: The Housing Authority of Cherokee Nation and any entity that is wholly owned by Cherokee Nation, to the extent such operations are sited within the Cherokee Nation reservation or contiguous counties thereto.
  - b. “Foodware container”: bowls, plates, trays, cups, or other containers that are designed for one-time use with food or beverages, including takeout containers
  - c. “Polystyrene foam foodware container”: all previously defined foodware containers made from polystyrene plastic foam
    - i. Excluding:
      1. Coolers or foodware containers that are intended for multiple uses such as coolers or ice chests or other similar containers that are surrounded by a durable shell
3. **DEFINITIONS:**

2. Items utilized in foodservice for an alternative reason to serving or containing prepared food

**4. CONTINUATION OF THE CLEAN ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL TASK FORCE:**

- a. The Clean Energy and Environmental Task Force established in Executive Order 2024-03-CT shall continue to meet quarterly until further notice to ensure the implementation of the Cherokee Nation Strategic Energy Plan.
- b. The Task Force will be responsible for continued annual reports, to be submitted to the Principal Chief by March 1<sup>st</sup>, analyzing progress toward the goals stated within the Strategic Energy Plan and providing project recommendations in alignment with the Plan.

**5. PAPER and PRINTING RESOURCES REDUCTION INITIATIVE:**

**a. CHEROKEE NATION, the HOUSING AUTHORITY OF CHEROKEE NATION, and CHEROKEE NATION BUSINESSES**

- i. **By June 30, 2025:** Cherokee Nation Executive Directors, the Housing Authority of Cherokee Nation, and Cherokee Nation Businesses shall prepare respective reports to the Secretary of Natural Resources identifying opportunities for paper and printing resource reduction within their respective day-to-day operations, including a plan for implementation of process changes to reduce paper usage and printing resources. The report should include, at minimum:
  1. Consideration of reduction measures such as: elimination of individual/desktop printers in favor of a centralized network, large-capacity printers; utilization of e-signatures for day-to-day business; and utilization of recycling services for ink cartridges
  2. Plan for implementing identified reduction measures by FY2026.
- ii. The Secretary of Natural Resources shall review prepared reports and provide recommendations or approval of implementation plans. Cherokee Nation, by the Secretary of Natural Resources and Chief of Staff, shall develop support plans for the reduction of paper and printing resources across operational functions as needed.
- iii. **No later than October 1, 2025:** all departments within Cherokee Nation, the Housing Authority of Cherokee Nation, and Cherokee Nation Businesses shall implement their approved paper and printing resource reduction plans as approved by the Secretary of Natural Resources.

**6. ELIMINATION OF POLYSTYRENE FOAM FOODWARE CONTAINERS ACROSS CHEROKEE NATION ENTITIES**

- a. **No Later Than October 1, 2025:** The purchase of single-use, polystyrene foam foodware containers by Cherokee Nation, the Housing Authority of Cherokee Nation, and Cherokee Nation Businesses is hereby prohibited.
- b. **No Restraint on Private Conduct:** Nothing herein operates to restrain individual Cherokee Nation employees or citizens from freely choosing to purchase consumables of their choice using personal funds.

**7. ESTABLISHING THE FOOD WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE**

- a. **Composition:** The Task Force shall consist of six members chosen by the Office of the Principal Chief, or their designees as approved by the Principal Chief, operating under the direction of the Secretary of Natural Resources:
  - i. **Member 1 Chair:** Secretary of Natural Resources Christina Justice
  - ii. **Member 2:** Environmental Protection Commission Chairperson
  - iii. **Member 3:** Chief of Staff Corey Bunch
  - iv. **Member 4:** Secretary of State Shella Bowlin
  - v. **Member 5:** Executive Director of Health Services Stephen Jones, or his approved designee.
  - vi. **Member 6:** Chief Executive Officer of CNB Chuck Garrett, or his approved designee.
  - vii. **Member 7: Optional additional member by unanimous approval of members 1-6.**
- b. **Scope of Review and Goals:**
  - i. The Food Waste Management Task Force will review current practices related to foodservice across operations to identify strategies for reducing and managing food waste generated by Cherokee Nation and its entities thereby promoting food security within the reservation and mitigating carbon emissions associated with food waste. Activities should include:
    - 1. Assess the current situation, reviewing current food waste sources and management practices and determining baselines where possible
    - 2. Identifying strategic priorities related to addressing food waste management practices that can substantially support reduced carbon emissions and/or food security within the reservation
    - 3. Identifying projects and initiatives that can advance the tribe in the realm of food waste management in alignment with identified priorities

4. Identifying laws, policies, or processes within Cherokee Nation and its entities that may impact food waste management and make recommendations for change as needed
- ii. *Transparency and Public Disclosure*: Although the Task Force is not a public body within the meaning of Cherokee Nation law and its meetings are not conducted under the Freedom of Information Act, in the interest of transparency, a report of findings shall be made available to the public. This body is an internal executive branch work group designed primarily to inform the Principal Chief and Council on relevant subject matter.

c. **Deliverables:**

- i. The Task Force shall issue a report to the Principal Chief by **March 1, 2026** detailing the findings of the review and proposing strategies for improved management of food waste



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Cherokee Nation