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Statement on the Death of David Brower
November 6, 2000

I was saddened to learn today of the death of David Brower, one of the earliest and most ardent defenders of the extraordinary natural heritage that enriches and unites all Americans. Over more than half a century, from Cape Cod to the Grand Canyon to the Alaska wilderness, he fought passionately to preserve our Nation's greatest natural treasures. His fiery activism helped build and energize the modern environmental movement, rallying countless people to the defense of our precious planet. Like the towering redwoods of his native California, David Brower's conservation legacy will stand tall and proud for generations to come.

Hillary and I extend our deepest condolences to his wife, Anne, his family, and his many friends and supporters throughout the world.

Statement on Signing the Executive Order on Consultation and Coordination With Indian Tribal Governments
November 6, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign a revised Executive order on consultation with Indian tribal governments. This Executive order, itself based on consultation, will renew my administration's commitment to tribal sovereignty and our government-to-government relationship.

The first Americans hold a unique place in our history. Long before others came to our shores, the first Americans had established self-governing societies. Among their societies, democracy flourished long before the founding of our Nation. Our Nation entered into treaties with Indian nations, which acknowledged their right to self-government and protected their lands. The Constitution affirms the United States' government-to-government relationship with Indian tribes both in the Commerce Clause, which establishes that "the Congress shall have the Power To . . . regulate commerce . . . with the Indian Tribes," and in the Supremacy Clause, which ratifies the Indian treaties that the United States entered into prior to 1787.

Indian nations and tribes ceded lands, water, and mineral rights in exchange for peace, security, health care, and education. The Federal Government did not always live up to its end of the bargain. That was wrong, and I have worked hard to change that by recognizing the importance of tribal sovereignty and government-to-government relations. When I became the first President since James Monroe to invite the leaders of every tribe to the White House in April 1994, I vowed to honor and respect tribal sovereignty. At that historic meeting, I issued a memorandum directing all Federal agencies to consult with Indian tribes before making decisions on matters affecting American Indian and Alaska Native peoples.

Today, there is nothing more important in Federal-tribal relations than fostering true government-to-government relations to empower American Indians and Alaska Natives to improve their own lives, the lives of their children, and the generations to come. We must continue to engage in a partnership, so that the first Americans can reach their full potential. So, in our Nation's relations with Indian tribes, our first principle must be to respect the right of American Indians and Alaska Natives to self-determination. We must respect Native Americans' rights to choose for themselves their own way of life on their own lands according to their time honored cultures and traditions. We must also acknowledge that American Indians and Alaska Natives must have access to new technology and commerce to promote economic opportunity in their homelands.

Today I reaffirm our commitment to tribal sovereignty, self-determination, and self-government by issuing this revised Executive order on consultation and coordination with Indian tribal governments. This Executive order builds on prior actions and strengthens our government-