



**THE MORNING STAR INSTITUTE**  
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News Statement

For Immediate Release

## **JUNE 20-26 SET FOR 2013 NATIONAL SACRED PLACES PRAYER DAYS**

Washington, DC (6/16/13)—Observances and ceremonies will be held across the land from June 20 through June 26 to mark the 2013 National Days of Prayer to Protect Native American Sacred Places. The observance in Washington, D.C. will be held on Thursday, June 20, at 8:30 a.m., on the United States Capitol Grounds, West Front Grassy Area (see details under Washington, D.C. in the alphabetical listing by state on the following pages).

Descriptions of certain sacred places and threats they face, as well as times and places for public commemorations are listed in these pages. Some of the gatherings highlighted in this release are educational forums, not religious ceremonies, and are open to the general public. Others are ceremonial and may be conducted in private. In addition to those listed below, there will be observances and prayers offered at other sacred places that are under threat and at those not endangered at this time.

“Native and non-Native people gather at this Solstice time for ceremonies and events to honor sacred places, but everyone can honor these precious lands and waters all the time by simply respecting them and not allowing them to be harmed,” said Suzan Shown Harjo (Cheyenne & Hodulgee Muscogee). She is President of The Morning Star Institute, which organizes the National Sacred Places Prayer Days. “Observances are necessary,” she said, “because Native Peoples are engaged in myriad struggles with developers that endanger or destroy Native sacred places.”

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1988 that there is no constitutional or statutory cause of action to defend Native sacred places. “Native Peoples are the only people or group in the U.S. who do not have a door to the courthouse to protect sacred places or site-specific ceremonies,” said Ms. Harjo. “That must change as a simple matter of fairness and equity. Sadly, the Obama Administration has backed developers that are desecrating sacred places and has done little to protect sacred places. The very least it can do is ask Congress to enact a statutory right of action.”

The National Congress of American Indians, the largest national Indian organization, has called for a statutory cause of action and a strengthened Executive Order on Indian Sacred Sites, and has instructed federal agencies how they can use existing laws and policies to protect Native sacred places. The U.N. Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples has called on the U.S. to consult with and return sacred places to Native Peoples.

During his 2008 presidential campaign, then-Senator Obama addressed this issue in his Native American policy platform for religious freedom, cultural rights and sacred places protection: “Native American sacred places and site-specific ceremonies are under threat from development, pollution, and vandalism. Barack Obama supports legal protections for sacred places and cultural traditions, including Native ancestors’ burial grounds and churches.”

The growing disparity between the campaign's promises and the administration's actions has dismayed many Native Peoples. The Forest Service, Justice Department and other agencies have vigorously attacked Native sacred places and Native Peoples are asking them to stop.

At the end of 2012, five federal entities – Defense, Interior, Agriculture, Energy and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation – signed a five-year Memorandum of Understanding “to improve the protection of and tribal access to Indian sacred sites through improved interdepartmental coordination and collaboration.” The MOU does nothing of substance to protect sacred places, but provides for recommendations and a report by the end of 2017, the first year of the next Administration.

“The White House should direct the MOU agencies and others to review and report on the manner in which they acquired jurisdiction regarding Native American sacred places and whether such jurisdiction was taken with or without Native Peoples’ free, prior and informed consent,” said Ms. Harjo. “If the White House won’t do it, the agencies should assign the task to themselves. And someone needs to inform the State Department, which opines that consultation is consent, that consent means consent.”

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Article 11, Section 2, states that countries “*shall provide redress through effective mechanisms, which may include restitution, developed in conjunction with indigenous peoples, with respect to their cultural, intellectual, religious and spiritual property taken without their free, prior and informed consent or in violation of their laws, traditions and customs.*”

The 2013 observances are the eleventh of the National Prayer Days to Protect Native American Sacred Places. The first National Prayer Day was conducted on June 20, 2003, on the U.S. Capitol Grounds and nationwide to emphasize the need for Congress to enact a cause of action to protect Native sacred places. That need still exists.

Prayers will be offered for the following sacred places, among others:

**Antelope Hills. Apache Leap. Badger Two Medicine. Badlands. Bear Butte. Bear Lake. Bear Medicine Lodge. Black Hills. Black Mesa. Blue Lake. Boboquivari Mountain. Bunchgrass Mountain. Cave Rock. Chief Cliff. Coastal Chumash Sacred Lands in the Gaviota Coast. Cocopah Burial and Ceremonial Grounds. Coldwater Springs. Colorado River. Columbia River. Deer Medicine Rocks. Dzil Ncha Si An (Mount Graham). Eagle Rock. Everglades.**

**Fajada Butte. Ganondagan. Great Mound (Mound Bottom). Gulf of Mexico. Haleakala Crater. Hatchet Mountain. Hickory Ground. Holy Mountain. Hualapai Nation landforms in Truxton and Crozier Canyons. Indian Pass. Kaho’olawe. Kasha-Katuwe. Katuktu. Kituwah. Klamath River. Kumeyaay Bands Burial and Ceremonial Grounds. Lake Superior. Luiseno Ancestral Origin Landscape. Mauna Kea. Maze. Medicine Bluff. Medicine Hole. Medicine Lake Highlands. Medicine Wheels. Migi zii wa sin (Eagle Rock). Mokuhinia. Moku’ula. Mount Shasta. Mount Taylor. Mount Tenabo. Nine Mile Canyon.**

**Ocmulgee Old Fields and National Monument. Onondaga Lake. Palo Duro Canyon. Petroglyphs National Monument. Pipestone National Monument. Puget Sound. Puvungna. Pyramid Lake Stone Mother. Quechan Burial and Ceremonial Grounds. Rainbow Bridge. Rattlesnake Island. Rio Grande River. San Francisco Peaks. Serpent Mound. Snoqualmie Falls. South Mountain. Sweetgrass Hills. Sutter Buttes. Tse Whit Zen Village. Tsi-litch Semiahmah Village. Tus Us.**

**Valley of Chiefs. Valmont Butte. Wakarusa Wetlands. Walking Woman Place. Woodruff Butte. Wolf River. Yucca Mountain. Zuni Salt Lake. Sacred places of all removed Native Nations. All Massacre Sites. All Waters and Wetlands.**

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**Alabama: Wetumpka -- Hickory Ground Ceremonial and Burial Grounds  
Saturday, June 22, at 6:00 a.m., Okmulgee, Oklahoma**

(See listing on following pages, under Okmulgee, Oklahoma, Muscogee (Creek) Nation Festival, for other events to call attention to Hickory Ground and other sacred places.)

**The Hickory Ground Tribal Town and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation in Oklahoma are in urgent need of prayer to protect the Hickory Ground and surrounding sacred areas along the Coosa River in Wetumpka, Alabama.**

**Hickory Ground is a sacred ceremonial, historical and burial ground. Hickory Ground was the last capital of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation before forced removal along the trail of tears to Indian Territory (now, Oklahoma).**

Historic ceremonial grounds, burial grounds and individual tribal graves are located at Hickory Ground. Approximately 57 sets of human remains were excavated from Hickory Ground by the Poarch Band of Creek Indians -- a

group lacking strong cultural or historical ties to the area -- in order to develop a casino resort on the sacred land.

Due to its historical significance and the undisturbed human remains located there, Hickory Ground was listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is protected by the National Historic Preservation Act. The Native American human remains and cultural property are also subject to protection under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

On **December 12, 2012**, the Hickory Ground Tribal Town and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation filed a **federal lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Alabama to protect the sacred Hickory Ground.**

In **February of 2013**, citizens of Hickory Ground Tribal Town and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation were arrested while trying to access the ceremonial ground to pray for their excavated ancestors.

Continued **prayer is needed:**

- 1) for the Poarch Band of Creek Indians **to stop their excavation of Muscogee ancestors and construction on the sacred Hickory Ground.**
- 2) to support Hickory Ground Tribal Town and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation in their efforts **to protect the ceremonial and burial grounds of their ancestors.**
- 3) **to support the Muscogee men who were arrested attempting to access the ceremonial ground for prayer and are being criminally prosecuted for practicing their religion.**

Contact: Wayland Gray, Hickory Ground Tribal Town Council Member, at [waylandgray@yahoo.com](mailto:waylandgray@yahoo.com) or (918) 729-2955, or Attorney Brendan Ludwick, at 888-929-9602.

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### ***Arizona: Mount Graham, Dzil Ncha Si An***

**Mount Graham is sacred to the Western Apache people and is known to the San Carlos Apache as Dzil Ncha Si An. It is a holy landscape where Gaan or Mountain Spirits reside and ancestral Apache rest. It is a place of ceremonies and medicine plants, and home to the endangered Mount Graham red squirrel. The Pinaleno Mountains or Mount Graham is a unique ecological treasure. It is the tallest mountain in southern Arizona and encompasses six different life zones from the valley floor to its peak at 10,720 ft. Called a "Sky Island" ecosystem, the old growth forests on Mount Graham's summit are the Arizona equivalent of rainforests. The abundant springs and high altitude meadows have offered sustenance and a source of healing to Apache people who live in the desert. The cool moist characteristics of the Mountain have nurtured 18 different plants and animals found nowhere else in the world.**

In the 1980s, the University of Arizona and its partners at the time, including the Vatican and the Smithsonian Institution, chose Mount Graham as the site to construct an observatory with seven large telescopes known as the Columbus Project. Beginning in 1988, the Arizona congressional delegation succeeded in gaining exemptions for the project from endangered species, environmental, historical preservation and other laws. **In 1989, the University of Arizona was granted a 20-year special use permit by the Coronado National Forest and the U.S. Forest Service, and appropriation riders kept the project flush with public benefits without having to abide by federal laws or regulations, including federal Indian laws intended to protect religious freedom, burial grounds and cultural properties.** Vatican spokesmen stated that Mount Graham was not a religious or sacred place. University employees and lobbyists attempted to undermine the reputations of Apache religious leaders and practitioners, and retained at least one San Carlos tribal official to testify that the Mountain was not sacred or significant to the Apache peoples.

**For decades, Apache Peoples, scientists, conservationists and university students have resisted the University of Arizona's decision to build the telescopes on the Mountain's summit.** Even though frequent cloud cover makes telescope viewing marginal and Mount Graham was ranked 38th in a study of astronomical sites in the U.S., the Arizona congressional delegation and the University have persisted with the project. **Today, the construction of telescopes and resulting federal closure of the Mountain's top are desecrating the Mountain and its irreplaceable relationship with Apache Peoples.**

The struggle continues to protect the natural and cultural heritage of Mount Graham from the precedent-setting destruction still being caused by the University in building its observatory on Mount Graham. The efforts of cultural protection and environmental organizations and affected Tribes to protect the sacredness of Mount Graham continue unabated.

**The University of Arizona is now operating its observatory without a valid special use permit. Its 20-year federal permit expired on April 19, 2009. The University has asked the Coronado National Forest for a new permit, but, as of June of 2012, a decision on whether to grant the permit has not yet been made.** The Forest Service has determined that it needs to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to gather information as to the pros and cons of granting a new permit. The University has objected strenuously to a new EIS. From what little information the Mount Graham Coalition and the San Carlos Apache Tribe have learned, the Forest Service's and the University's lawyers are "in discussions" to determine the final form of the permit renewal process.

**There are a number of reasons for the Forest Service to deny a new permit. The lapsed permit had a number of terms and conditions that were violated by the University. Many of these conditions should have led to the revocation of the permit but did not. All of these violations need to be studied to determine whether the University can follow the rules of a new permit.**

The conditions of Mount Graham have changed substantially since the permit was granted and the observatory is even less compatible with the religious and ecological importance of Mount Graham. **Since the permit was granted, the "shape" of Mount Graham has been deemed eligible for placement on the national list of historic places. In addition, the Forest Service now acknowledges that Mount Graham is a Traditional Cultural Property to Western Apache people and has taken steps to consult (although it has a long way to go) with traditional Apache about the sacred nature of the Mountain and how to protect it.** The University may go to Congress for yet another exemption to religious freedom and environmental laws and to force the Forest Service to issue a new permit. Supporters of Mount Graham would be the last to hear of any lobbying along these lines and must be ever vigilant to stop this from happening.

**For these and many other reasons, it is important for supporters of Apache peoples and Mount Graham to urge the Forest Service to deny the University a new permit and require that the existing telescopes on Mount Graham be removed.**

**After 20 years of construction, the large telescope project is still not complete and very serious questions remain about its importance, utility and function from an astronomical perspective. What is NOT in question is the continued offense to the Western Apache Peoples. Equally clear is the perilous status of the native Mount Graham red squirrel. The most recent survey conducted by biologists estimated that only about 214 of this unique species, found now where else on earth, remain. It has been identified by biologists as one of the mammals most likely to go extinct in the United States in the foreseeable future.**

Several fires devastated the top of Mount Graham in past years. They were fought to protect the telescopes more than the ecosystem and, as a result, much damage was done to the Mountain that could have been avoided. The Forest Service has decided to thin the forest and otherwise manipulate the ecosystem to try to protect what remains and to restore what has been damaged.

**Prayers and diligence are needed now more than ever for Mount Graham. The ecosystem is under serious threat from climate change and other patterns of destruction; there is an opportunity for the Forest Service to deny a new permit for the telescopes and require they be removed; and there is a chance to protect the existing ecosystem and restore some of what has been lost. And, the sacredness of Mount Graham continues to be challenged and, while the Mountain is able to protect itself, supporters can help to protect it.**

For more information, contact the **Mount Graham Coalition, Roger Featherstone, President**, at [greenfire@featherstone.ws](mailto:greenfire@featherstone.ws), or **Dinah Bear, Secretary**, at [Bear6@verizon.net](mailto: Bear6@verizon.net)

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### **Arizona: San Francisco Peaks**

**The San Francisco Peaks are sacred to Apache, Hopi, Hualapai, Navajo, Yavapai and other Native Nations. The San Francisco Peaks are home to many sacred beings, medicine places and origin sites.** Myriad ceremonies are conducted there for healing, well-being, balance, commemoration, passages and the world's water and life cycles.

The San Francisco Peaks are on federal land within the Coconino National Forest. Indeed, the **U.S. Forest Service has indicated that the San Francisco Peaks are sacred and holy to over thirteen Tribes in the southwestern United States.**

Notwithstanding the foregoing, **the Forest Service and the privately owned Snowbowl ski resort, which is located on the San Francisco Peaks, plan to expand the ski area and to use recycled sewage to make artificial snow. The expansion and sewage-to-snow plans could have a disastrous impact on the Native religions and people and on the water and health of the entire region.** The creeping recreational development

has concerned Native spiritual leaders and tribal officials for decades, but current plans far exceed the past activity at the resort.

Snowbowl's plans to clear-cut 74 acres of rare alpine habitat that is home to threatened species, make new ski runs and lifts, add more parking lots and build a 14.8 mile buried pipeline to transport up to 180 million gallons (per season) of wastewater to make artificial snow on 205 acres. **Despite ongoing protests and hunger strikes, Snowbowl has begun construction of its wastewater pipeline for snowmaking, with approval of and protection by the Forest Service and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.**

**Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission Chairperson Duane H. Yazzie** testified before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs' 2011 hearing on the U.S. implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: "Integrating the Declaration into existing law will focus substantively on the value of sacred sites instead of placing an undue burden on procedure. Also, the Declaration will emphasize international policy instead of relying on domestic policy alone. **Legislatively addressing Indian law jurisprudence will repair the dispossession of Native American rights to sacred sites."**

**The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples recommended in 2011 that the "United States Government engage in a comprehensive review of its relevant policies and actions to ensure that they are in compliance with international standards in relation to the San Francisco Peaks and other Native American sacred sites, and that it take appropriate remedial actions....the Government should reinstate or continue consultations with the tribes whose religious practices are affected by the ski operations on the San Francisco Peaks and endeavor to reach agreement with them on the development of the ski area.**

**"The Government should give serious consideration to suspending the permit for the modifications of Snowbowl until such agreement can be achieved or until, in the absence of such an agreement, a written determination is made by a competent government authority that the final decision about the ski area modifications is in accordance with the United States' international human rights obligations.**

**"The Special Rapporteur wishes to stress the need to ensure that actions or decisions by Government agencies are in accordance with, not just domestic law, but also international standards that protect the right of Native American to practice and maintain their religious traditions. The Special Rapporteur is aware of existing government programs and policies to consult with indigenous peoples and take account their religious traditions in government decision-making with respect to sacred sites. The Special Rapporteur urges the Government to build on these programs and policies to conform to international standards and by doing so to establish a good practice and become a world leader that it can in protecting the rights of indigenous peoples."**

**Native Nations and environmental organizations have attempted to protect the San Francisco Peaks in court. The District Court ruled for the development in 2006. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals overturned the lower court's decision in 2007 and ruled for the Hopi Tribe, Navajo Nation and others. A three-judge panel of the Ninth Circuit ruled that the Forest Service violated the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and the National Environmental Policy Act in allowing the Snowbowl Resort to expand over 100 acres of rare alpine ecosystem, part of the area that is sacred to Native Peoples.**

The federal government challenged that decision and petitioned the Ninth Circuit for rehearing en banc. Such petitions are rarely granted, but the Court granted this one. The case was argued in front of the 11-judge en banc panel of the Ninth Circuit in Pasadena in December 2007. **The Ninth Circuit issued the decision of the en banc panel on August 8, 2008, ruling in favor of development. The Native Nations submitted a writ of certiorari for the U.S. Supreme Court. On June 8, 2009, the Supreme Court declined to review the decision.**

**The Tribes attempted to reach some sort of administrative accommodation with the new Administration, but such efforts have not borne fruit. The Save the Peaks Coalition subsequently filed suit against the federal government on the NEPA issue that the Forest Service failed to adequately consider the ingestion of reclaimed sewer water.** These were the same law and facts that the prior three judge panel considered in finding that the Forest Service had failed to comply with NEPA. The prior ruling was, however, rendered non-precedential by the en banc court in the Navajo case. Notwithstanding the Ninth Circuit's prior reasoning, Judge Mary Murguia of the U.S. District Court ruled against the Save the Peaks Coalition on all counts. Shortly thereafter, her appointment by Obama to the Ninth Circuit was confirmed. The Save the Peaks Coalition appealed the ruling.

**An openly hostile three-judge panel of the Ninth Circuit not only ruled against the Coalition, but stated that the Save the Peaks Coalition and their attorney had abused the judicial process - with no basis of support for their accusations. The panel initially granted sanctions against the Coalition's attorney, but later withdrew that order when it appeared that the Ninth Circuit would reconsider the sanction issue en banc. According to Howard Shanker, attorney for a number of the tribes and the Coalition, "This process calls the efficacy of the legal system into question. Here we had two separate three-judge panels of the Ninth Circuit hear the exact same facts as applied under the exact same law and issue completely contrary rulings. If justice is ever to**

be achieved, Indian Country needs to be more involved in the political process surrounding the appointment of federal judges.”

In the interim, **Snowbowl is pursuing the prosecution of peaceful protestors and seeking "retribution" from them.** Some members of the Flagstaff community have begun a hunger strike. **As a legal and practical matter, however, Snowbowl is now free to desecrate the Holy San Francisco Peaks with impunity.**

For additional information, **contact: Howard M. Shanker, The Shanker Law Firm, PLC, in Tempe and Flagstaff, Arizona, at (480) 838-9300 or [howard@shankerlaw.net](mailto:howard@shankerlaw.net)**

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**California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas within 100 miles of the U.S. Mexico Border: Authority to waive all laws for construction of border barriers, forward operating bases, surveillance towers and other infrastructure.**

The **650 miles of current border fencing at the U.S.-Mexican border**, as well as associated roads, lighting and surveillance equipment, **were constructed under authority granted to the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security in the 2005 REAL ID Act.** Under that law, Secretary Chertoff **waived 37 laws for these massive projects**, including the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, the Archaeological Resources Protection Act, the Antiquities Act, the Historic Sites, Buildings and Antiquities Act, the Historic Sites, Buildings, and Antiquities Act, as well as fundamental laws providing for notice and comment opportunities like the Administrative Procedure Act and the National Environmental Policy Act.

**The type of harm that can occur as a result of these waivers has already been experienced by the Tohono O'odham Nation.** After issuance of a waiver in 2007, **a Boeing Company subcontractor widened a 15 mile stretch of the El Camino del Diablo Road, a famous route on the National Historic Register, without first performing an archaeological clearance and without informing the federal land management agency.** Two known Hohokam archaeological sites were damaged from the blading. In October, 2007, **fragments of human remains were observed in the tire tracks of heavy construction equipment in an area between Naco and Douglas, Arizona.** Again, **no advance inspections or clearances were required.**

Now, the proposed Senate bill for comprehensive immigration reform, **S. 744, contains an expansion of the waiver authority that would allow the Secretary of Homeland Security to waive all laws for border security within 100 miles of the U.S.-Mexico border.** While Secretary Napolitano has testified that she does not need the provision, Congress seems determined to undermine tribal rights as well as the rights of all citizens. Presently, a forward operating base and 16 surveillance towers are being constructed on the Tohono O'odham reservation. **The proposed expansion of the waiver would cover all of this infrastructure and more infrastructure to come on the Nation's reservation as well as tribal lands and sacred places in all four border states.**

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***California: Medicine Lake Highlands and Hatchet and Bunchgrass Mountains***

**Medicine Lake Highlands is a critically important tribal region located northeast of Mount Shasta in the mountains of northern California. The Pit River, Modoc, Shasta, Karuk, Wintu and other Tribes revere the area for its natural healing powers and for its connections to their Tribes' longstanding histories.** For example, the Pit River Tribe believes that the Creator and his son bathed in Medicine Lake after they created the earth, and the Creator imparted his spirit to the waters. Because of the Lake's sacredness, Tribes from the coast of California to the Rocky Mountains use the surrounding area as a training ground for medicine people. **The Highlands is also sought after by geothermal energy companies that have applied for development permits from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), which manage the area.**

Since the 1990s, the Pit River Tribe, Stanford Environmental Law Clinic and other supporters of the protection of the sacred Medicine Lake Highlands in northeastern California have been challenging the **BLM and USFS failure to undertake adequate environmental review and tribal consultation for industrial-scale energy development in the Highlands.** On November 6, 2006, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that **the BLM and USFS original extension of Calpine Corporation's geothermal leases in the Highlands violated both the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).** The agencies should have prepared an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) before renewing the leases and should have included a "no action" alternative. Because the agencies violated NEPA and NHPA, both the five-year lease extensions and the subsequent 40-year extensions were undone. The Court also said that BLM and USFS violated their fiduciary duty to the Pit River Tribe by failing to complete an EIS before extending the Calpine leases.

When the case was sent back to the trial court to implement the Ninth Circuit's decision, the trial judge ruled that, notwithstanding the invalidation of the lease extensions, the 1988 leases were still intact. In response, Stanford Environmental Law Clinic (SELC) filed an appeal challenging the lower court's interpretation, which went directly against the original Ninth Circuit ruling. **At the new hearing on March 10, 2010, the SELC attorneys maintained that the leases, originally issued in 1988 for a duration of five years, and renewed once, expired by their own terms when the 1998 renewals for 40 years were declared null and void by the Ninth Circuit judges.**

**In August 2010, the Ninth Circuit Court Order indicated that while the Fourmile Hill lease extensions and the project decision remain unacceptable, the underlying leases themselves, granted to Calpine in 1988, continue to be in force. The Federal Agencies (Forest Service and BLM) will need to do a new Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) involving more environmental review and consultations with the Tribe in order to evaluate whether or not these leases should be extended.**

**The court ruled that the agencies retain full discretion regarding the Fourmile Hill lease extensions. Therefore, all parties, the Pit River Tribe, BLM, United States Department of Justice and Cal Pine Energy Corporation continue negotiations on how a new EIS will look.**

**The culturally-important Hatchet and Bunchgrass Mountains and the surrounding lands in Traditional Pit River Indian Territory are in jeopardy of being destroyed, due to a plan to build 49 monolithic windmill energy turbines and related roads and ancillary, interconnections, operations and maintenance facilities in the heart of this region.** Hatchet Ridge Wind Company, an affiliate of RES America Developments and Renewable Resources, is initiating its windmill construction project. The project would significantly and negatively alter over 100 acres of this natural region and include up to 49 turbines on steel towers with a height of up to 503 feet. Ancillary facilities would include a substation, an overhead transmission circuit, a switching/interconnection facility and a control room/operations and maintenance building. Access roads would be built, including 6.5 miles of 20-foot-wide permanent roads, and one mile of additional roads.

**The project would have severe negative impact on sacred and cultural places, as well as on the winged and four-legged beings. Native people could no longer access particular ceremonial plants on Hatchet Mountain as part of their cultural practices and they do not support the project.** The visual impact of the towers on the ridge destroys the integrity of the setting of this sacred area. Birds traditionally important to the local tribal culture, such as eagles, ospreys, ducks and geese, cross the ridge and would be shredded by the blades. Migration routes of deer across the ridge could be disrupted. Sound quality issues would also affect the serenity and isolation of the ridge, disrupting human experiences in the area.

**Bunchgrass Mountain is just north of the area impacted by the project.** An ancient trail runs along the top of the ridge top, connecting the Pit River to Goose Valley and sites downriver; in addition to regular travel, this trail is used to reach remote areas during vision quests and such quests continue among some young men. **Clearly, the proposed windmill project will have severe negative impacts on the natural world, as well as the well-being and cultural rights of Native peoples. Although these turbines have been built and are up and running, we are firm that this project is in violation of federal law and the Advocates for the Protection of Sacred Sites and their allies have protested against the project, will continue to do so and will not sit idly by and allow the destruction of important sacred and cultural regions to take place.**

For more information on the efforts to protect the sacred Medicine Lake Highlands and Hatchet and Bunchgrass Mountains from the building of massive energy power facilities, contact the **Advocates for the Protection of Sacred Sites: Radley Davis**, Pit River Nation, 530-917-6064; **Mark LeBeau**, Pit River Nation, 916-801-4422; and **James Hayward, Sr.**, Redding Rancheria, 530-410-2875

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***California: Needles – Ft. Mojave Indian Tribe, at the Topock Maze area  
Saturday, June 22, 2013, at 6:00 a.m.***

The **Ft. Mojave Indian Tribe** remains in urgent need of prayer to protect the **Maze** and surrounding sacred areas along the Lower Colorado River. The Maze is both a physical manifestation and a spiritual pathway for the afterlife. It has always been, and will always be, an integral and significant part of the Mojave way of life, beliefs, traditions, culture and religion. The Mojave will observe the Prayer Day at the Topock Maze site.

**Pacific Gas & Electric**, by its ownership and operation of the **Topock Natural Gas Compressor Station** near **Needles, California**, over the last 50 years, has polluted the groundwater under and around the Maze with hexavalent chromium, a toxic chemical that can cause numerous human and ecological health problems. The station was placed in this sensitive location long before tribes had input into the management of their sacred areas.

The Tribe has been fighting for nearly ten years on several fronts.

**First, to see that the Interim Measures to protect the River, the Groundwater and Soil Remedy design and other actions at the sacred area are done through consultation with affected tribes and in as culturally-appropriate a manner as possible.** The Tribe has had to file two lawsuits (2005 and 2011), now both settled, to enforce its rights and protect the area during the remediation. Through the settlements, the Tribe has been able to return part of the sacred area to tribal ownership, receive independent technical support, and build tribal project staffing capacity, among other provisions.

**Second, the Tribe has fought to see that the lead agencies accord the area the respect and recognition it so richly deserves.** In 2007, portions of the project site were designated as a Riparian and Cultural Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and the Topock-Needles Special Cultural Resource Management Area (SCRMA) was designated, under the BLM Resource Management Plan. In 2011, the **Department of Toxic Substance Control** made a finding that **the Topock Cultural Area is an historic resource** under state law and the **BLM determined that a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) or property of traditional religious and cultural significance** within a 1,600 acre Area of Potential Effect **is eligible for listing on the National Register** under Criterion A, as part of what tribes have identified as a larger area of tribal traditional and cultural importance.

**Still - past, current and proposed remedial actions - taken together, create continuing cumulative adverse impacts to the Mojave people, its sacred landscape and tribal religious beliefs, which cannot be fully mitigated. Construction of the groundwater remedy is scheduled to begin in Spring 2014; development of a Soil Remedy design is also anticipated in this time period.**

**Continued prayer is needed for:**

- 1) DOI and DTSC to exercise their independent judgment and perform meaningful analysis of, and implement meaningful mitigation for, impacts to resources of tribal concern during groundwater and soil remedy design,**
- 2) Additional sacred land in this area to be repatriated to the Tribe,**
- 3) Groundwater remedy construction to be as minimally invasive as possible,**
- 4) BLM to improve its management of the area and secure funding to complete necessary land management plans, such as the ACEC Management Plan, and**
- 5) Forgiveness for any continuing desecration that may occur until the offending facilities, including the interim measure treatment plant, are finally removed and until other required restoration of the landscape occurs.**

This issue is national in scope: the **Maze** has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1978 and is formally recognized as nationally significant. Moreover, the failure of state and federal agencies to fully consider direct, indirect and cumulative impacts to Native Sacred Places during pollution remediation activities remains a national problem requiring Congressional Oversight. **Pray that this oversight occurs at the highest levels.**

**It should not be this hard for tribes to obtain recognition and protection for their irreplaceable sacred places. We will continue to pray for change!**

Contact: **Nora McDowell-Antone**, Tribal Topock Project Manager, at (928) 768-4475, [NoraMcDowell-Antone@fortmojave.com](mailto:NoraMcDowell-Antone@fortmojave.com), or **Courtney Ann Coyle**, Tribal Attorney, at (858) 454-8687, [CourtCoyle@aol.com](mailto:CourtCoyle@aol.com)

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***Colorado: Boulder - Native American Rights Fund, Friday, June 21, 2013, at 7:00 a.m.***

**Please join us for a sunrise ceremony that will be held at 7:00 a.m., Friday, June 21, on the front lawn of the Native American Rights Fund at 1506 Broadway, Boulder, Colorado.** The program and prayer service will last about one hour, followed by a potluck breakfast. Community members have been invited to speak, as well as other NARF staff. Speakers will be followed by a moment of silence to show concern for the sacred places that are being damaged and destroyed today.

In the United States, Native Americans are more closely tied to the land than any other group, yet **the increasing exploitation of natural resources and population expansion has caused previously undisturbed tribal sacred places to become vulnerable to destruction.** As part of its mission, the Native American Rights Fund has long advocated for sacred site protection, religious freedom efforts and cultural rights. Recently, NARF's Board of Directors has asked us to expand our efforts to protect lands that are sacred and precious to Native Americans.

Please show your solidarity for the protection of sacred places by joining us for the June 21st program. We ask you to bring food and/or beverages to share at the completion of the program.

Please join us! If you have any questions, please contact Rose Cuny at 303-447-8760.

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***Kansas: Lawrence -- Wakarusa Wetlands Sunrise Ceremony at the Haskell Medicine Wheel  
Friday, June 21, 2013***

The Haskell Wetlands Preservation Organization will hold our annual Sunrise Ceremony on Friday, June 21st, to pray for the protection of all threatened Native American sacred places. **We ask your support for the historically significant Wakarusa Wetlands that are within months of being turned into a massive truckway.** Kansas Department of Transportation claims **work could begin as early as this summer.**

**The alumni and students at Haskell Indian Nations University have led the opposition to paving these wetlands for well over 20 years. Our resistance continues!**

Back when Haskell was the flagship of the entire off-reservation federal boarding school system, **these wetlands provided the primary refuge for students who resisted cultural genocide.** Parents who came to retrieve their stolen children, or even came to beg a short visit, camped at the south end of the wetlands on the banks of the Wakarusa River, where child inmates often crept from the dorms to meet them at night.

These wetlands were not part of the original 240 acres the Lawrence community was required to provide at the time Haskell was founded in 1884. Washington, apparently using Indian Trust funds, bought three parcels of wetlands in 1887, 1891 and 1902 to drain them. **By 1920 they eliminated this critical refuge,** expanding the Haskell Farm where child laborers worked to grow food for the institution. During the 1950s termination era, the **BIA simply gave these wetlands away,** along with two thirds of the school's land base, to placate locals disappointed that Haskell Institute had survived efforts to shutter its doors!

**There are children buried in the wetlands.** Runaways who drowned attempting to cross the unpredictable Wakarusa. Young ones who succumbed to exposure while hiding in the tall reeds. Others are remembered and honored there though many disappearances were never resolved. Others had their military caps or locks of hair used in spirit release ceremonies in the wetlands, though their physical remains were interred in the Haskell Cemetery, where more than 100 Native students were laid to rest.

This outdoor classroom has become a crucial part of Haskell's restoration of traditional ways of learning and honoring our ancestors. The **Wetlands Preservation Organization invites the entire community to gather at the Medicine Wheel,** where WPO has erected a pole that marks the Summer Solstice. **There will be prayers, healing songs and testimonials to the enduring struggle to keep this quiet sanctuary for students and others to honor those who have done so much to protect this sacred place.**

For further information, contact WPO President Cleta LaBrie [cletalabrie@gmail.com](mailto:cletalabrie@gmail.com) 1-916-2121146 or Michael Caron [mcaron@sunflower.com](mailto:mcaron@sunflower.com) 1-785-842-6293. Please friend Wetlands Preservation Organization on Facebook.

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***Maryland: Accokeek – Piscataway Connections to the Land  
Saturday, June 22, 2:00 p.m.***

**For over eleven millennia, the Piscataway people have called the land upon which Piscataway Park sits home. They continue to do so today.** This past year, in partnership with **the Piscataway, the Accokeek Foundation** launched an oral history project called **“Piscataway Connections to the Land.”**

**“Piscataway Connections to the Land”** is one part of an ambitious effort to create a national model for interpreting a given landscape through an Indigenous lens. **How do tribal people understand the land, water, animals, and plants at Piscataway Park? Why is this place still sacred and so critical to Piscataway identity?** In what ways can all people come in closer communion to the land through living, shared knowledge?

**Join the Accokeek Foundation for a lively panel discussion with members of the Piscataway as we consider these questions on Saturday, June 22 at 2:00 p.m.** With a special introduction honoring Piscataway Park as a sacred place by Suzan Shown Harjo (Cheyenne & Hodulgee Muscogee), president of The Morning Star Institute, the panelists include Mervin Savoy (Piscataway Conoy Confederacy tribal chair), Rico Newman (Piscataway Conoy), Dr.

Virginia Busby (Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs), and will be moderated by Dr. Michelle Stefano of the Maryland Traditions Program of the Maryland State Council on the Arts.

The panel is part of an all day event, *Celebrating the Potomac*, dedicating the newly reconstructed boat dock, expanding public access to the Potomac for recreation and further making connections to the land. This program is free and open to all.

Visit [www.accokeekfoundation.org](http://www.accokeekfoundation.org) or call 301-283-2113 for more information.

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***Nevada: Reno – National Congress of American Indians, Mid-Year Session  
Wednesday, June 26, Sunrise Ceremony***

The National Congress of American Indians will sponsor a Sunrise Ceremony on Wednesday morning, June 26. The NCAI is conducting its 2013 Mid-Year Session in Reno, Nevada, June 24-26.

The NCAI Sunrise Ceremony will be held as a part of the observances and ceremonies during the National Days of Prayer to Protect Native American Sacred Places, from June 20 through June 26.

The public is invited to attend NCAI's respectful observance to honor sacred places, sacred beings and sacred waters, and all those who care for them and protect them from harm. Participants are asked to arrive no later than 7:00 a.m.

For information about NCAI's Sunrise Ceremony, contact NCAI Deputy Director Robert Holden, 202.466.7767, email: [rholden@ncai.org](mailto:rholden@ncai.org)

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***New York: Ganondagan State Historic Site, at the Great White Pine Tree of Peace  
Friday, June 21, at 11:45 a.m.***

At Ganondagan State Historic Site in New York, there will be a Gahnonyoh (Thanksgiving), starting just before Noon, on Friday, June 21, to mark the National Days of Prayer to Protect Native Sacred Places. "We invite spiritual leaders and the general public to join us on that day as we offer words of Thanksgiving or Gahnonyoh in Seneca," says G. Peter Jemison (Seneca), who is the Caretaker of Ganondagan.

"We will gather before noon near the Great White Pine at the head of the Trail of Peace to offer words of Thanksgiving to the Creator," says Jemison. "The event is open to the general public and all are welcome, but no photography, please."

Ganondagan is the site of the seventeenth century town, once the capitol of the Seneca Nation, which was destroyed by the French in 1687. Today, it is the only historic site in New York dedicated to a Native American theme. Ganondagan is sacred to the Seneca People because nearby are the remains of Jikonhsaseh the Mother of Nations, who was the first person to accept the message of Peace brought by the Peacemaker, who united the Haudenosaunee or Five Nations: Seneca Nation, Cayuga Nation, Onondaga Nation, Oneida Nation and Mohawk Nation.

Contact: G. Peter Jemison at (585) 924-5848 or by e-mail at <mailto:pjemison@rochester.rr.com>

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***New York: New York City – Ceremony for Sacred Places  
Friday, June 21, at Noon  
Hudson River at Bethune & West Streets***

A Prayer of Remembrance for Sacred Places will take place on Thursday, June 21, at 1:00 p.m. The group will gather along the Hudson River in New York City near Bethune Street (between Bethune and West Streets).

The event is sponsored by the American Indian Community House and the Spiderwoman Theater.

Contact: Kevin Tarrant, AICH Deputy Director, at 212-598-0100 or [ktarrant@aich.org](mailto:ktarrant@aich.org), or Muriel Borst-Tarrant at [mborst1@msn.com](mailto:mborst1@msn.com) or 551-208-3536.

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**Ohio: Newark - Newark Earthworks, Great Circle entryway, Friday, June 21, 5:45 a.m.**  
**Chillicothe - Hopewell Culture National Historical Park, Mound City**  
**Friday, June 21 8:30 p.m.**  
**Oregonia - Fort Ancient Earthworks, Saturday, June 23, 5:45 a.m.**

In Ohio, there will be gatherings at the three of the major remaining earthworks sites to honor the brilliant achievements of the Indigenous Peoples who lived in the Ohio Valley 2,000 years ago and built enormous earthen architecture. Gatherings will occur in Newark, near Chillicothe and near Oregonia to acknowledge the original landscape, what has been lost and all that continues into the future. **The public is invited to observe the National Day of Prayer to Protect Sacred Places at these places.**

**Two thousand years ago, Indigenous Peoples of the Hopewell culture built more than 600 groups of earthworks, each group consisting of several large earthen geometric shapes with specific purposes. The earthworks were built by design, near creeks and rivers.** Many of the earthworks are enormous with walls varying from 3 to 30 feet tall and connected by walled earthen passageways; the design guided the Peoples through the earthworks along walkways. Large circles with entryways facing the east, squares with rounded corners and entryways, octagons with eight entryways, huge rectangular flat-topped or oval mounds, tall conical mounds and ceremonial walkways mark the Ohio Valley as a sacred landscape. The earthworks complexes most likely had several uses, as ceremonial centers, for games such as stickball, and as places of gathering.

In addition to using geometric forms to convey meaning and purpose, the builders used a standard unit of measure and other mathematical consistencies in the spacing of the earthworks. Distances between earthworks at Newark can be measured in multiples of 1,054 feet, the diameter of several of the large circles.

The **Newark Earthworks consisted of four earthworks built over a four square mile area.** Two remain preserved. The People built large geometric shapes with smooth earthen walls six feet high in the shape of a circle encompassing 20 acres and an octagon with an area of 50 acres connected by a walkway. Rectangular barrier mounds obscured the view into the octagon from the outside.

**The Octagon Earthworks is an astronomical calendar observing the 18.6-year lunar cycle, marking the lunar standstills moonrises.** The nearby Great Circle is 1,200 feet in diameter. The Ellipse was a walled cemetery with many burial mounds and contained a number of earthen circles open to the east before it was excavated to clear the land for canals, railroads and heavy industry. The Wright Square stood between the Great Circle and the Ellipse cemetery, but has been destroyed completely.

Of the four major remaining earthen enclosures of the Newark Earthworks, all but one have become state parks/monuments, although all are acknowledged to be sacred sites. However, the Octagon Earthworks are leased to a private country club and open to the public only four days per year, although visitors may walk the site during the winter months and on days when golf can't be played. The Ellipse cemetery is privately owned or for sale and zoned as an industrial park. A community grassroots effort is in progress to preserve part of the Ellipse cemetery as a park.

**Serpent Mound is one of two effigy mounds in Ohio, and one of the largest anywhere in the world.** Nearly a quarter of a mile long, the undulating coils made of three foot tall earthen walls curve from a spiral tail to a head pointing across the Brush Creek valley at the point on the southwestern horizon. Recent scholarly work points to a construction of this unique mound at about 1070 CE, later than many of the more geometric enclosures around Ohio. The landscape is also marked by geological interest. A "crypto-explosion" crater cradles the arc of the valley where Serpent Mound lays on a bluff; the result of a meteorite that folded the crust of the earth when it struck 250 million years ago. This bluff of sandstone also has interest, as a visitor may walk down to creek side and look back up at the point where the snake mound ends, and see a snake headed prow of stone jutting out over the water below.

**Hopewell Culture National Historical Park is made up of five sites in and around the city of Chillicothe where once existed the largest concentration of earthworks complexes anywhere in the world.** Enormous geometric earthen enclosures were placed twelve miles along the Scioto River. An alignment along three of these reconstructed mounds, pointing towards a southwestern corner gateway of Mound City, is a dramatic view, and casts the entire complex into vivid contrast.

**Mound City is the name for the central enclosure, a rounded-cornered square that was one of the ancient cemeteries alongside the Scioto River.** Almost entirely destroyed during World War I by the construction of training camps and industry to support the war effort, it was rebuilt from the original foundations and above surviving parts of mounds during the 1930s and in another major effort during the 1960s and 1970s. Most of what is known about the Hopewell culture has been derived from the excavations of enormous rectangular burial mounds from 1890 through the 1950s. Information relating to summer solstice events can be found at <http://www.nps.gov/hocu/planyourvisit/special-events.htm>

**Fort Ancient is a vast, irregular earthen enclosure where three miles of wall was built atop a pair of plateaus next to the Little Miami River valley.** Fort Ancient is the archaeological label used for a later cultural phase in Ohio, but much of the site was built 2,000 years ago around the same time as earthworks in Newark and Chillicothe. Early European occupants called its features “forts” but later studies show that combat and conflict were absent from this sacred site. Reflecting pools of water were built into the site to create a sense of place – world above, world below. Halfway through the enclosure the site has a narrow passage flanked by two mounds. Following this path leads to a bluff with a view overlooking a valley and a creek.

More recent surveys reveal four stone mounds constructed 512 feet apart that form a nearly perfect square in the northern section were built alongside the traces of a circle and track astronomical alignments that mark the first day of summer, the first day of winter, and a lunar event every 9.6 years. Fires were likely built on top of stone mounds 2,000 years ago. From one of those stone mounds, on mornings near the summer solstice, a particular entryway to the northeast pours a path of light across the leveled plaza, until it paints the surface of the mound.

**Many of the major earthworks in Ohio are under consideration for designation as World Heritage Sites by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO),** and a proposal is being prepared. A resolution supporting the nomination has been passed by the National Congress of American Indians <http://www.ncai.org/resources/resolutions/support-the-nomination-of-ohio-earthworks-to-become-world-heritage-sites>.

Additional information about the Earthworks can be found at:

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5243/><<http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5243/>>.

For more information about visiting Earthworks see: [www.AncientOhioTrail.org](http://www.AncientOhioTrail.org)<<http://www.ancientohiotrail.org/>

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**Oklahoma: Okmulgee – Save Hickory Ground  
Stop the Keystone XL Pipeline  
Protect Sacred Water  
Saturday, June 22, at the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Festival**

**(See earlier listing, under Alabama: Wetumpka, for information about Hickory Ground.)**

**In observance of the 2013 National Days of Prayer to Protect Sacred Places and the 2013 World Peace & Prayer Days, a collaborative effort among interests will converge in Okmulgee Oklahoma, on Saturday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, in conjunction with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Festival.**

**A Sunrise Ceremony will take place at 6:00 a.m.** Organizers hope to raise awareness to Save Hickory Ground, Stop the KXL Pipeline and Protect Sacred Water with this event.

First participants are asked to **join in the Festival Parade that kicks off at 10:00 a.m. in downtown Okmulgee.** Organizers are providing a flat bed and pickup, and are asking anyone who wants to **bring a decorated vehicle or wants to walk in solidarity to meet at the assigned line up location by 9:30 a.m.** Participants are asked to wear traditional clothing, carry flags, banners, signs, sing, drum or decorate their own vehicle to help raise awareness about the need to save sacred places and keep water sacred.

**Beginning at 1:00 p.m. following the parade is a Musical/Educational Event at Pocket Park in Okmulgee, 1/2 Block west of the Council House – featuring musicians Ben Yahola, Julian B., Spirit Cry and Jim Stewart, along with speakers on behalf of Save Hickory Ground, Stop the KXL Pipeline and Protect Sacred Water.**

“Native Rock at Pocket Park” is scheduled to go through 4:00 p.m. and is slated to be a fun educational event that showcases Mvskoke and Chahta talent, with Ben Yahola and Julian B from the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and members of Spirit Cry from the Choctaw Nation.

**Guests will hear speakers from Hickory Ground, Idle No More and those who are fighting to Stop the Keystone XL Pipeline between musical sets.**

**Ben Yahola is a longtime activist in the Native American Community.** He is well known nationally and internationally for his stance on saving Mother Earth, Food Sovereignty and Sacred Places. Ben Yahola has a deep love of the land and its connection to First Nations people and their history. And in a time when he says that his people are facing major health crises such as near epidemic numbers of diabetes, and obesity, Yahola sees the land as a way of restoring their health and well-being.

The legacy of the Muscogee Nation echoes forth from their tribal son, **Julian B, this international artist hopes to enlighten the masses through education and heart-driven music.** In 1994 his first full-fledged album Once Upon a Genocide was released and has been referred to by many as the only classic Hip-Hop album by a native artist. Since then Julian b. has been gaining respect from music pioneers by sharing the stage with the likes of Public

Enemy, The Sugar Hill Gang, The Last Poets, WAR, REDBONE, Grand Master Flash, Melle Mel, Ani DiFranco and Jello Biafra.

**Spirit Cry is a contemporary Native American band**, the music will take you back thru the distance of time of our Ancestors, to the present time of the Modern day Warriors, echoing the Cry of the Stewards of this Land to Stand up and protect Mother Earth....and if you listen close you can hear .....The Spirit Cry! Band Members include: lead vocals, keyboard and guitar-Anthony Williamson lead and backup vocals- Stephanie Wilkenson, Flute-Shawn Williamson, percussion instruments- Derek Williamson, Joe Williamson, and Eric Williamson.

**Jim Stewart (Cherokee lineage, but not enrolled) is a Viet Nam Veteran folk singer.** Jim travels the country with his guitar and sings Woody Guthrie songs from California to N.Y. City, singing in bus and train stations and on the Washington Mall.

**For more information concerning this event, contact Brenda Golden at (405) 471-7610 or Fannie Bates at (405) 642-3527.**

**Statement on Keystone XL Pipeline:**

In May of this year, **Chief Arvol Looking Horse conducted a ceremony for sacred places that could be affected by the Keystone XL Pipeline and issued the following statement:** "My Grandmother shared with me a powerful time when the people came together for prayers during the Dust Bowl in the 1930's. She accepted a C'anupa to bring out the White Buffalo Calf Pipe Bundle to end the drought and bring healing to Mother Earth. Even the non-Native farmers heard of this prayer time and offered a cow to feed for the ceremony. The prayer was answered!

"Recently I accepted tobacco from a Grandmother – **Anpao Wic'ah'pi Was'te Winyan** of the Ihanktowan Oyate. She had a dream of bringing People together at the bundle to pray for a healing of the biggest cancer that is spreading upon Mother Earth, caused from the Tar Sand efforts with XL pipeline that is threatening to come through our territory and our Sacred Sites....

"**We need to stop the desecration that is hurting Mother Earth** and the communities. These recent spills of oil are affecting the blood of Mother Earth; Mni wic'oni (water of life).

"**Chief Bernard Ominiayak of the Lubicon Lake First Nation of Canada is also asking for prayers and to let the World know of his People's stand against the Development that is happening against his People.** They sit on 70% of oil; those that are after this oil are threatening their lives. His concern at this moment is of non-members, without their consent, signing away their rights and negotiating with Corporations that will forever affect their way of life - to live off the land - handing them a death sentence.

"**At this moment there are too many of their people dying from cancer. When they hunt, they are finding maggot-infested moose. When they fish, they are finding two headed fish. The people are dying from trying to survive in a traditional way in their territory.** The UN has submitted a statement in support of Lubicon Lake Nation's stand to live in Sovereignty and live in their tradition.

"We have many concerns at this time. Along with the First Nations whose territory is within the Tar Sands desecration, with their lives being threatened and also the high death rates of cancer, along with the sickness of the land and animals. In a Sacred Hoop of Life, where there is no ending and no beginning! Hec'el oinipikte (that we shall live)."

**For more information about this statement or on threats to sacred places posed by the Keystone XL Pipeline, contact: [www.lubiconlakenation.ca](http://www.lubiconlakenation.ca) <<http://www.lubiconlakenation.ca>> or Paula Horne-Mullen, [Wolakota.org](http://www.wolakota.org) <<http://www.wolakota.org>> <http://wppd2012.com/>**

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**Tennessee: Muscogee (Creek) Citizens Gathering, The Great Mound of Mound Bottom,  
Thursday, June 20, 10:00 a.m.  
Sellars Farm State Archaeological Area, Lebanon, Wilson County  
Saturday, June 22, 9:30 a.m.**

**A Muscogee (Creek) Citizens Gathering will take place on Thursday, June 20, at 10:00 a.m., at The Great Mound, Mound Bottom archaeological site, in observance of the National Sacred Places Prayer Days.** "This gathering will be ceremonial to honor and lift up the Mound," said Melba Checote-Eads (Muscogee), who is organizing the gathering. "We will observe a day of prayer, singing, gifting and feasting at Mound Bottom, as is Muscogee tradition. Water will be furnished by Muscogee Citizens."

**Ms. Checote-Eads asks people to reserve a space by calling her at 615-765-5854, to bring a bag lunch and beverage, to wear hiking boots and to meet in the picnic area: "We will meet at the picnic area near the Harpeth River beside the Mound. We will walk one mile to the Mound and transportation will be provided for those unable to make the walk."** The group will tour the Mound at 10:00 a.m. with Ranger Gary Patterson.

**Mound Bottom is located in Cheatham County along the horseshoe bend of the Harpeth River. Mound Bottom is approximately one mile north of the point where U.S. Route 70 crosses the Harpeth River, on the outskirts of Kingston Springs, Tennessee.** The site is managed by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation as part of Harpeth River State Park. **The Great Mound of Mound Bottom dates to the Mississippian era (900 AD-1300).** Mound Bottom is about 100 acres and is nearly surrounded by the Harpeth River.

The flat-topped embankment that dominates the view from Mace Bluff is the largest of at least 14 Mounds that remain. The Great Mound stands 25 feet tall and 47 square feet in area; the remains of an earthen ramp leading from the plaza to the top of this Mound can still be seen. The entire complex, which is believed to have included hundreds of houses, was surrounded by an earthen wall topped with a palisade of upright logs. **Mound Bottom likely began as a ceremonial meeting place around 950 AD and grew to become a fortified city with a population numbering in the thousands.** Mound Bottom was part of a vast trade network that extended to Native Peoples in the Great Lakes area, Gulf Coast region and the Appalachian Mountains.

**There also will be a gathering at the Sellars Farm on Saturday, June 22, at 9:30 p.m.** The Sellars Farm State Archaeological Area is located in Wilson County: **off Hwy-70 left at Poplar Rd., in Lebanon, Tennessee.** The group will tour the Mound area and walk the path around the Mound, which is near Spring Creek, a tributary of the Cumberland River. **Participants are asked to bring a bag lunch.**

Ms. Checote-Eads describes the Mound site as covered with trees, grasses and wild flowers. It was a large village and trade area during the Mississippian Period. In 1939, a farmer dug up four statues, which were made between 600 and 800 years ago. Two of the statues are in the McClung Museum at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville and have been featured on a U.S. postage stamp.

For additional information, contact: **Melba Checote Eads** at [melbaceads@dtccom.net](mailto:melbaceads@dtccom.net) or **615 765-5854.**

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***Washington, DC: United States Capitol, West Front Grassy Area  
Thursday, June 20, at 8:30 a.m.***

The observance in Washington, DC, will take place at the **U.S. Capitol on the West Front Grassy Area on Thursday, June 20, at 8:30 a.m.** The public is invited to attend this respectful observance to honor sacred places, sacred beings and sacred waters, and all those who care for them and protect them from harm. The observance will take the form of a talking circle.

**All are welcome to offer good words, songs or a moment of silence for all sacred places, beings and waters, especially for those that are being threatened, desecrated or damaged at this time.**

This observance is organized by **The Morning Star Institute**, a national Native rights organization founded in 1984 and dedicated to Native Peoples' cultural and traditional rights, including religious freedom and sacred places protection.

Contact: **The Morning Star Institute** at (202) 547-5531, **Suzan Shown Harjo** at [suzan\\_harjo@yahoo.com](mailto:suzan_harjo@yahoo.com) or **Mary Phillips** at [trumpetnative@aol.com](mailto:trumpetnative@aol.com) or 510-205-4501.

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***Washington: Snoqualmie Falls -- At the Cedar Tree  
Friday, June 21, 11:00 a.m.***

**Water is universally a Sacred Being; part of sacred ceremonies in global faiths and religions.**

**Snoqualmie Falls** in Washington State is a place recognized as Sacred for thousands of years. For the Snoqualmie and other Tribes of the Puget Sound region, this is **the Transformer's Gift to the People.**

Over two million people come from all over the world to visit **Snoqualmie Falls** annually. It is a majestic 268-foot waterfall listed on the Register of Historic Places as a Traditional Cultural Property. The water at the Falls creates a healing connection by its transformation to legendary mists that connect worlds, carries prayers,

**and delivers blessings.** For the Snoqualmie Tribe, the natural setting that surrounds the spiritual sanctuary of Snoqualmie Falls is an integral part of the cultural and spiritual experience.

**Threats and Desecration:**

- The City of Snoqualmie is presently pursuing plans for **a traffic roundabout on the road** (State Route 202) at the Falls. **It opens the door for further planned development in the present remaining forest around the Falls.**

- The popular destination resort and spa, The Salish Lodge (owned by the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe) is exploring **an expansion (a convention center and a housing development) on property at the Falls,** providing the City of Snoqualmie approximately \$2 million for the planned traffic roundabout. The roundabout is a precursor to the Salish Expansion project and foreseeable further developments around the Falls.

- Puget Sound Energy, a public utility, owns and operates **the hydroelectric facility that impacts and desecrates Snoqualmie Falls by diversion of a significant portion of the water from the river by a hydroelectric facility before it can complete its journey in the Sacred Cycle** by reaching the pool below. (Puget Sound Energy owns and operates a public park located at Snoqualmie Falls. A popular hiking trail down to the viewing area near the base of the Falls will reopen to visitors in 2013.)

**On Friday, June 21st, at 11:00 a.m., there will be a gathering, rain or shine, at Snoqualmie Falls.**

**“We put out a warm welcome to anyone who would like to respectfully join together as we pray, each in our own way, for the protection of Sacred Places across the globe. Join us and others that answer this urgent call -- add your voice, your Spirit with others.**

**“When one is uplifted, we all are uplifted.** We give thanks for the teachings of the Sacred. We give thanks that we are still here. We give thanks for the breath of the Spirit. We pray for one another.

“In the Spirit of Snoqualmie Falls.” --Lois Sweet Dorman.

**Contact: Lois Sweet Dorman, Snoqualmie, at [lsdorman@snoqualmietribe.us](mailto:lsdorman@snoqualmietribe.us)**

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***World Peace and Prayer Day/Honoring Sacred Sites – Live Oak Campground,  
Santa Ynez, California,  
Thursday-Sunday, June 20-23***

The **World Peace and Prayer Day** takes place this year on **June 20 to 23, with the blessing of the Santa Ynez Chumash Elders and guidance of Chief Arvol Looking Horse**, the 19th Generation Keeper of the Sacred White Buffalo Pipe Bundle. The WPPD is hosted by the community of Santa Ynez and Ojai Valley, and Indigenous Chumash representatives of the region, including Ojai’s own Living Treasure, storyteller, advisor, wisdom-keeper and **Chairperson for the Barbareno/Ventureno Band of Mission Indians, Julie Tumamait-Stenslie.**

This year’s theme is **Unity through prayer: We have come to a crossroads in our evolution on this planet, when it is vital, despite our differences, to unify our minds and hearts for the well being of all.** For this reason the WPPD has traveled around the world to actively bring people together – drawing attention to the relevance of sacred places in this 21st century.

**The Sacred Fire will be lit at the Live Oak Campground on the morning of June 20 and honored over four days,** with a special ceremonial emphasis, following traditional Lakota Sioux ways, on Summer Solstice, June 21. As the Sacred Fire burns, there will be a time when everyone is invited to offer tobacco and prayers. The celebrations will continue on June 22 with Earth and animal awareness activities, talking circles, storytelling, speakers and feasts. All activities are offered at no cost to all. This includes camping at the [Live Oak Campground](#) on the evenings of June 20, 21 and 22. Shared meals will be provided on Friday and Saturday. Please bring food to cook and share!

**Sacred places will be honored on June 23.** Acknowledged by all Nations around the world as places holding unique geographical, spiritual, historical and often mythological significance, these places of worship--intended to unite people in peace--can all too easily become a source of power struggle, greed and environmental abuse. Chief Looking Horse will visit some sacred places of the area, performing ceremony to cleanse the lands.

**Chief Looking Horse** issued the following statement for this year’s WPPD: “Mitakuyape (All My Relations). Since the birth of the white buffalo calf, Miracle, in 1994, we have witnessed many changes upon Mother Earth. We have

followed spirit and the prophecies of these times, sharing a solution of joining 'All Nations, All Faiths, One Prayer' with the World for 18 years.

"In our **Prophecies of the White Buffalo Calf Woman**, she **foretold of the white animals being born that would be a sign upon Mother Earth**. We are supposed to be the voice of their warning. **Mother Earth would speak through them**, to prepare and to unite with our energy of prayer, no matter what the people's beliefs are in the Creator. **We are now in that critical era of time; where all faiths will be challenged to realize that Mother Earth is our source of life, and not just a resource!** Recently, I made a call to our "Buffalo People" and other Nations of beliefs to come together with the White Buffalo Calf Bundle to **bring a healing and protection back to Mother Earth; she is sick and has a fever**. We also prayed to **relieve the suffering of the animals from the drought** that was in our territory. Since the ceremony, the **Wakiyas (Thunder beings) have blessed us with plenty of rain**. Our prayers were received and the animals will live.

"**As we journey back to our Sacred Sites to unite on June 21st, we again are reminded of the Earth Changes and Global disasters we are facing**. Again, I share the message; **we are at the Crossroads, either we face a lot of chaos, disasters and tears from our relatives' eyes, or we can unite spiritually as a Global Community**. Together, our prayers will be received. **I humbly ask you to pray with us on this day, because right now we cannot see 7 generations to come We can no longer sit back and depend on others to save our children, we all have that responsibility. The outcome is your hands!** In A Sacred Hoop of Life, Where There Is No Ending and No Beginning! Hec'el oinipikte (that we shall live)."

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