



THE MORNING STAR INSTITUTE
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News Statement

For Immediate Release

JUNE 17-21 SET FOR 2011 NATIONAL SACRED PLACES PRAYER DAYS

Washington, DC (6/15/11)—Observances and ceremonies will be held across the country from June 17 through June 21 to mark the 2011 National Days of Prayer to Protect Native American Sacred Places. The observance in Washington, D.C. will be held on Tuesday, June 21 at 7:30 a.m. on the United States Capitol Grounds, West Front Grassy Area (see details under the Washington, D.C. listing in the alphabetical list on the following pages).

Descriptions of certain sacred places and threats they face, as well as times and places for public commemorations are listed below. 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 nationwide gather at this time for Solstice ceremonies and to honor sacred places,” said Suzan Shown Harjo (Cheyenne & Hodulgee Muscogee). She is President of The Morning Star Institute, which organizes the National Sacred Places Prayer Days. “Ceremonies are being conducted as Native American peoples engage in legal struggles with federal agencies that side with developers that endanger or destroy Native sacred places,” said Ms. Harjo. “Once again, we call on Congress to build a door to the courts for Native nations to protect our traditional churches. Many sacred places are being damaged because Native nations do not have equal access under the First Amendment to defend them.”

All other peoples in the United States can use the First Amendment to protect their churches, but the Supreme Court closed that door to Native Americans in 1988. The Court, in the 23 years from 1988 to 2011, has declined to allow federal religious freedom statutes to be used to protect Native American sacred places or the exercise of Native American religious freedom at sacred places.

“Today, Native Americans are the only peoples in the United States who do not have a constitutional or statutory right of action to protect sacred places or our exercise of religious freedom there,” said Ms. Harjo. “That simply must change as a matter of fairness and equity. Native nations have been cobbling together protections based on defenses intended for other purposes. Some may permit a place at the table when development is being contemplated, but Native peoples are not taken seriously because the agencies and developers know that the Supreme Court does not appear inclined to hear lawsuits which lack a tailor-made right of action.”

Increasing numbers of Native American tribal and religious leaders have called for a right of action to defend Native sacred places in court. In President Barack Obama’s December 2010 meeting with 12 tribal leaders, the first statement -- by the representative of the largest Native nation, Navajo Nation -- was for protection of sacred places nationally and for the Administration to stop desecrating the San Francisco Peaks. The U.S. Forest Service is permitting a private ski business to contaminate the sacred mountains in northern Arizona with snow made from recycled sewage water, at the same time as it is “consulting” on Native views of sacred places.

The Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Justice Department and other federal agencies are actively endangering sacred places and fighting Native peoples who are trying to protect sacred places in judicial and administrative processes. The National Congress of American Indians also has called for Congress to enact a statute that would provide a cause of action and for the President to update and strengthen the existing Executive Order on Indian Sacred Sites.

During his presidential campaign in 2008, then-Senator Obama addressed this issue as part of 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."

Many tribal peoples endorsed and voted for Candidate Obama because of his positions on Native sacred places, languages and domestic violence, which were the three policy positions that distinguished him from other candidates. The President's signing of the Tribal Law & Order Act was widely applauded. However, many have noted the lack of White House action on heritage languages and the growing disparity between what the Candidate supported and what the President's Administration has done on sacred places.

"The President has been asked directly to call on Congress to create a right of action so we can defend our holy places, to improve the Executive Order for Indian Sacred Sites and to stop the Forest Service and other agencies from continuing their decades-long assault against Native sacred places," said Ms. Harjo. "I'm still optimistic that the President will do these things, but not everyone is as hopeful as I am. Nonetheless, we pray that this will be the last year we are denied justice by the Executive, Legislative and Judicial Branches.

"Native peoples are encouraged that the President endorsed the United Nations' *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, and look forward to its application to U.S. law and practice."

The *Declaration* includes the following statements regarding sacred places:

"*Article 11, 1:* Indigenous peoples have the right to practise and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artifacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature.

"*Article 11, 2:* States 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."

"*Article 12, 1:* Indigenous peoples have the right to manifest, practise, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites; the right to the use and control of their ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of their human remains."

"*Article 25:* Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard."

The 2011 observances are the ninth 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.

In addition to those listed separately below, prayers will be offered for the following sacred places, among others:

Antelope Hills. Apache Leap. Badger Two Medicine. Badlands. Bear Butte. Bear Medicine Lodge. Black Hills. Black Mesa. Boboquivari Mountain. Cape Wind. Cave Rock. Chief Cliff. Coastal Chumash sacred lands in the Gaviota Coast. Coldwater Springs. Colorado River. Columbia River. Eagle Rock.

Everglades. Fajada Butte. Gulf of Mexico. Haleakala Crater. Hickory Ground. Hualapai Nation landforms in Truxton and Crozier Canyons. Indian Pass. Kaho'olawe. Katuktu. Kituwah. Klamath River. Lake Superior. Mauna Kea. Medicine Bluff. Medicine Hole. Medicine Wheels. Mokuhinia. Moku'ula. Mount Shasta. Mount Taylor. Mount Tenabo. Nine Mile Canyon.

Ocmulgee Old Fields and National Monument. Palo Duro Canyon. Petroglyphs National Monument. Pipestone National Monument. Puget Sound. Puvungna. Rainbow Bridge. Rattlesnake Island. Rio Grande River. Sweetgrass Hills. Sutter Buttes. Tse Whit Zen Village. Tsi-litch Semiahmah Village. Valley of Chiefs. Walking Woman Place. Woodruff Butte. Wolf River. Yucca Mountain. Zuni Salt Lake. Sacred places of all removed Native Nations. All Waters and Wetlands.

**Alaska: Anchorage – Native American Rights Fund, Alaska Office
Noon, Tuesday, June 21**

This year, the **Alaska observance of National Days of Prayer to Protect Native Sacred Places will be hosted by the Native American Rights Fund in Anchorage.** The public is invited and welcome to attend this gathering.

The observance will take place at **Noon on Tuesday, June 21st.**

The **NARF Alaska Office is located at 801 B Street, Suite 401, Anchorage.**

The **Native American Rights Fund is a non-profit organization that provides legal representation and technical assistance to Native tribes, organizations and individuals nationwide** - a constituency that often lacks access to the justice system. NARF focuses on applying existing laws and treaties to guarantee that national and state governments live up to their legal obligations. NARF is headquartered in Boulder, Colorado, with offices in Washington, D.C. and Anchorage. (See Colorado listing below for NARF's observance in Boulder.)

Please contact **Natalie Landreth, NARF Staff Attorney, at (907) 276-0680 or Landreth@NARF.org for location details.**

Arizona: Mount Graham, Dzil Nchaa Si An

Mount Graham is sacred to the Western Apache people and is known to the San Carlos Apache as Dzil Nchaa Si An. It is a holy landscape where Gaahn or Mountain Spirits reside and ancestral Apache rest. It is a place of ceremonies and medicine plants, and home to the endangered 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 their 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 the 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 their 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 2010, 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 people. 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. The current fires burning in eastern and southern Arizona reinforce the danger that further actions will be taken protect structures over wildlife and spiritual values.

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, or **Dinah Bear, Secretary,** at [Bear6@verizon.net](mailto: Bear6@verizon.net)

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.

“We’ve got to stop the construction,” said Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly at a May 28 press conference convened by plaintiffs and supporters at the base of the San Francisco Peaks. According to *Indigenous Action Media*, the “Snowbowl’s development plans include clear-cutting 74 acres of rare alpine habitat that is home to threatened species, making new runs and lifts, adding more parking lots and building a 14.8 mile buried pipeline to transport up to 180 million gallons (per season) of wastewater to make artificial snow on 205 acres.” **Snowbowl began construction of its wastewater pipeline for snowmaking in May, with the approval of the Forest Service and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.**

IAM also quoted Pres. Shelly as affirming his commitment to protect the Peaks and urging for greater protection of all sacred sites, "We need to make a law... we need larger organizations to protect these mountains." His statements were echoed by Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission Chairperson Duane H. Yazzie in his testimony before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs' June 9 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.**"

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. Oral arguments on the case were scheduled for June 14, 2010, but the Court unilaterally issued a new order in May 2010, requiring briefing on the issue of *res judicata*. Notwithstanding that the only other court to address the merits of this issue found against the Forest Service, the District Court ruled against the Save the Peaks Coalition, and its motion for an injunction pending appeal was denied. The Coalition's appeal continues, with oral arguments expected in August or September.

For additional information, contact: **Howard M. Shanker, The Shanker Law Firm, PLC, in Tempe and Flagstaff, Arizona, at (480) 838-9433 or howard@shankerlaw.net**

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 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 challenged the **BLM and USFS failure to undertake adequate environmental review and tribal consultation for industrial-scale energy development in the Highlands. In 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 in 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 USFS and BLM will need to do a new 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, U.S. 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.

**California: Needles – Ft. Mojave Indian Tribe, at the Topock Maze area
Monday, June 20, 2011, 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. PG&E, BLM and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control proceeded with Interim Measures to contain and investigate the contamination, which included the construction of a new Treatment Plant within the Maze area and the drilling of about 150 wells in California and Arizona, on either side of the Colorado River. **These, taken together, create continuing cumulative adverse impacts to the Mojave people, its sacred landscape and tribal religious beliefs.**

In 2005, **Ft. Mojave** filed a lawsuit seeking the removal of the plant, total restoration of the sacred area, an environmental baseline of prior to the plant's construction and any other actions that could serve to remedy the desecration. Settlement negotiations concluded in November 2006 aimed to achieve each of these goals and secure other remedies including repatriation of portions of the sacred area to tribal ownership, sensitivity training for PG&E employees and contractors, a written public apology and reimbursement of past and future Tribal costs.

Earlier this year during selection of the Final Remedy, the DTSC 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 traditional and cultural importance.**

Yet, **DTSC and BLM failed to consult with the Tribe on the final mitigation measures**, assuming they knew what was best for all the Tribal Governments along the Lower Colorado River and how the sacred area could be best protected. The DTSC failure to complete a legally adequate environment document, and failure to live up to certain terms in its settlement agreement with the Tribe, is the subject of a **second lawsuit brought by the Tribe** under state environmental laws. In its approval of the Final Remedy, BLM has continued to put off dealing with mitigation for the continued impacts of up to 170 new wells and related infrastructure into the Tribe's sacred area, **putting the sustainability of the Tribe's cultural and spiritual practices of the Tribe at further risk for decades to come.**

Prayer is needed: 1) for DTSC and PG&E to come to the table and deal honorably and fairly with the Tribe's concerns, 2) for BLM and DOI to follow through on its promises to require meaningful mitigation for tribal cultural concerns from PG&E during remedy design and to improve its management of the area, 3) for additional sacred land in this area to be repatriated to the Tribe and 4) to ask for 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 officially 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 and that President Obama will lead this effort at a National level once and for all Nations. We must awaken the Giant!**

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

California: Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians, Luiseño Ancestral Origin Landscape in Peril

Pechanga is in need of urgent prayer to assist it in protecting the **Luiseño Ancestral Origin Landscape** from the **Granite Construction Company's** proposed **Liberty Quarry**. The proposed quarry would be located on a sacred mountain within the Luiseño People's sacred place of origin. Parts of this Origin Landscape have already been listed **on the National Register of Historic Places since 1973** as the Murrieta Creek Archaeological Area (*exva Temeku*) and are also listed in the state's **Sacred Lands File Inventory**.

Granite wants to blast out the mountain, home to the **Kammalam** (ancestors in the form of rocks), so that it can produce aggregate. The quarry could operate for 75 years, and even after reclamation, would remain a permanent scar within the sacred landscape. It would also be located at the **headwaters of the Santa Margarita River**, the last remaining free flowing river to reach the Pacific Ocean in southern California, and be adjacent to the **Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve**, which also includes part of the Origin Landscape.

The quarry would kill the mountain and forever disturb the sanctity of this incredibly beautiful and scenic area, located next to the reservation and at the doorstep of the City of Temecula.

In addition, the quarry would also pose **environmental hazards to the Pechanga Community**: air and water quality, visual and noise impacts, fire and emergency response, as well as sever a key wildlife linkage to and from the reservation. **The Tribe was not consulted by the County of Riverside on these impacts during environmental review.**

Pechanga respectfully requests prayer that:

- 1) Through the public hearings, including one on June 22, 2011, County Officials and others, will see the dire impacts that would be caused by this quarry to the Pechanga Community, other Luiseño Peoples and the region;**
- 2) Tribal efforts to have this Origin Landscape formally recognized and protected will be successful; and**
- 3) The County, as Lead Agency, will see the mistakes it has made in failing to properly consult with the Tribe and deny the quarry in its entirety, or at minimum, direct that the County's fatally flawed environmental document be recirculated for public review and consultation.**

For more information on the efforts to protect the Luiseño Ancestral Origin Landscape from the Liberty Quarry, contact **Paul Macarro**, Pechanga Cultural Coordinator at: pmacarro@pechanga-nsn.gov or (951) 770.8102 or **Jacob Mejia** at: jmejia@pechanga.com or (951) 770.2595.

California: Redlands – California-Pacific Committee on Native American Ministries of The United Methodist Church at the University of Redlands, Saturday, June 18, at 7:15 a.m.

The California-Pacific Committee on Native American Ministries (CONAM) of The United Methodist Church will have prayer for sacred places on the Quad at the University of Redlands in Redlands, California. The public is welcome to join on Saturday, June 18, at 7:15 a.m.

Contact: **Suanne Ware-Diaz** at soozware@yahoo.com or (571) 236-7274 for more information.

California: Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians' Burial & Ceremonial Grounds

For over one year, the Viejas Band has been waging a legal and political battle to save a tribal burial ground and ceremonial site from destruction by a local agency, the Padre Dam Municipal Water District, seeking to develop a reservoir and pumping station on the site.

Over this last year, we made much progress with your help: the Native American Heritage Commission designated the entire property a sanctified burial ground and ceremonial site, the California Attorney General filed its own lawsuit against the district, the Superior Court granted an injunction to stop all construction work at the property and additional assessment of the property from a tribal point of view is ongoing. Viejas is deeply grateful for the support it has received from the local community, Governor of California, Native American Heritage Commission and the Courts, which have sided with the Band on many different levels.

It is important to note, however, this attack on a significant, historic and culturally important sanctified site is not over: the litigation is still pending, there is no agreed upon path yet to find an alternative site or alternative remedy, the property remains unrestored and many thousands of cubic yards of soils from the site that contain human remains and grave goods and ceremonial items sit a mile away from the site under massive tarps, in limbo.

The Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians respectfully requests prayer: for an appropriate alternative location for the project to be identified and secured by the district, for the soils previously taken off site by the District to be returned to the property in as gentle a manner as possible, for the site to be restored and protected in perpetuity and for the litigation to be settled agreeably.

Meanwhile, the Viejas Band also has been forced to defend itself and its ancestors from further attacks and potential destruction of tribal cultural resources by a number of major renewable energy and other utility projects in the local mountains and deserts that would forever alter the Cultural Landscape of the Kumeyaay Nation. These include: the Sunrise Powerlink Project, Tule Wind Project, Ocotillo Wind Express Project, Eco Station Project, Imperial Solar Project, El Monte Valley Project of the Helix Water District and others.

Viejas respectfully requests prayer for the wisdom and strength -- physically, intellectually, politically and spiritually -- to fend off these ongoing attacks on the history and culture of our tribal community and our ancestors.

For more information, please contact: **Robert Scheid, Viejas Public Relations Director**, at (619) 659-2316 or by email at: rscheid@viejas-nsn.gov

Colorado: Boulder - Native American Rights Fund, Friday, June 17, at 7:00 a.m.

The National Day of Prayer to Protect Native American Sacred Places is being observed at the Native American Rights Fund on Friday, June 17, 2011, at 7:00 a.m. The public is welcome to a sunrise ceremony that will be held on NARF's front lawn. The program is expected to last for one hour with a prayer ceremony. 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.

The Native American Rights Fund is headquartered at 1506 Broadway in Boulder, Colorado. NARF extends an open invitation to its program and requests that participants bring a chair or a blanket to the front lawn and to bring food and/or beverages to share at the completion of the program. As part of its mission, NARF advocates for sacred site protection, religious freedom efforts and cultural rights. NARF attorneys and staff participate in local and national gatherings and discussions about how to protect lands that are sacred and precious to Native Americans. NARF utilizes its resources to protect First Amendment rights of Native American religious leaders, prisoners and members of the Native American Church, and to assert tribal rights to cultural property and human remains, in compliance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

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

**Kansas: Lawrence - Wakarusa Wetlands, Haskell Medicine Wheel – Open to the Public
Tuesday, June 21, at Noon**

Haskell Wetland Preservation Organization (WPO) and Save the Wakarusa Wetlands will observe National Prayer Day at Noon on Tuesday, June 21, beside the Wakarusa Wetlands at the Haskell Medicine Wheel, south of Lawrence, Kansas. Haskell WPO is a Native student organization. **Save the Wakarusa Wetlands, Inc.**, is an association of Lawrence-based supporters, including Haskell Indian Nations University, University of Kansas, Washburn University and Baker University alumni, students and supporters.

The ceremony will be held at the medicine wheel, where participants will mark the exact position of the Summer Solstice at 12:16 p.m. local time. Haskell students and friends will later erect stone landmarks, adding permanently to this important healing site.

The event is open to all who wish to add their prayers to save this sacred place from the highway builders. Participants will ask for the protection of the Wakarusa Wetlands (aka, Haskell-Baker Wetlands), threatened by an eight-to-ten lane highway project approved by the Army Corps of Engineers, but delayed by a federal law suit filed by WPO and a consortium of supporter groups, including Jayhawk Audubon, Kansas University Environs, Save the Wakarusa Wetlands, Kansas Sierra Club and KU EcoJustice.

On June 3, 2011, Republican Governor Sam Brownback announced \$192 million in Kansas taxpayer funds was being allocated for completion of the South Lawrence Trafficway. This comes shortly after his executive order ending all state financial aid to Kansas Arts, severely slashing the state education budget, shuttering the only home for severely mentally disabled Kansans and cutting social services for needy Kansans. This injustice to Native Americans is especially ironic in the context of these cuts.

While in Congress, then-Senator Brownback sponsored a U.S. apology to Native Americans for past egregious actions, but it specifically prohibited Native peoples from taking any legal action that would provide redress or remedy for any of the actions, causing many Native people to call it a “hollow apology.”

About 600 acres of the Wakarusa Wetlands were located directly south of the dorms at Haskell Institute, the nation's largest and most tribally diverse federal off-reservation boarding school. This last major remnant of the wetlands was **a crucial refuge** where Native students from all across the country survived government efforts to exterminate their cultures. There, in the **Wakarusa Wetlands** refuge, young Indians from Maine to California sang forbidden songs, performed dances that were federally punishable with jail time and refused to let authorities “kill the Indian” in them.

Parents and other tribal leaders camped, sometimes for weeks or months, beside these wetlands on the north bank of the Wakarusa. They were awaiting permission from school officials to retrieve or at least visit their children. **These elders used the Wakarusa Wetlands as an outdoor classroom to pass on final lessons about healing and other traditional knowledge.**

The wetlands quickly became **the most essential place where Haskell students could get news about family and friends.** The wetlands was where they heard about what was happening back home in the crucial era of enrollment, allotments and the selling off of their homelands. The wetlands also provided the least censored way to send messages home whenever someone speaking a related language arrived in camp, as against learning enough English to send a letter that had to pass censorship by both school authorities and the federal agents interpreting the contents to students' parents. **This place is soaked in Indian history, layered with the stories of our elders and the last resting place of some who came to Haskell in its darkest days.**

This sacred wetland, a place between land and water, is the largest intact trace of the original Wakarusa Bottoms, an 18,000-acre prairie wetland environment. It existed for thousands of years before whites drained it. This place supplied Native peoples of the region with valuable medicinal plants, important ceremonial items, waterfowl, furbearers and other relatives central to their way of life.

Elders have said the Creator caused the course of the Wakarusa River to go directly east toward the rising sun, in sharp contrast to the other rivers in the region, as a sign of abundant gifts to be found there.

Despite massive efforts to drain the wetlands in the early twentieth century -- and Haskell's loss of all but a few acres of this property during the Eisenhower termination era -- the Wakarusa Wetlands, like Haskell Indian Nations University itself, has survived and flourished. The entire historic Haskell campus, including the Wetlands, is being considered for designation as a National Historic Heritage area, but should have been declared a Traditional Cultural Property long ago!

Contact: **Dr. Dan Wildcat, Haskell Wetlands Preservation Organization (WPO), Haskell Indian Nations University**, at dwildcat@sunflower.com, and **Michael Caron** at (785) 842-6293 or by email at mcaron@sunflower.com with **Save the Wakarusa Wetlands** www.savethewetlands.org

Michigan: Upper Peninsula -- Migi zii wa sin, Eagle Rock

Migi zii wa sin, Eagle Rock, is a Native American sacred place located in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Eagle Rock is currently fenced off by Rio Tinto, a multinational mining corporation based in London.

Eagle Rock is slated to be blasted, in order to serve as the mining company's mine portal into an underground sulfide mine, primarily consisting of nickel and copper, but also gold and other precious metals.

During a recent appeals hearing in Lansing last week, the company testified that the soonest it would start blasting is September 14. **This mine site is located about 10 miles from Lake Superior and is only the first of many prospective mining projects in the Upper Great Lakes region that threaten our fresh groundwater, springs, rivers and lakes.**

Eagle Rock is sacred to the Anishinaabe people, who ask everyone to keep sacred Eagle Rock and our sacred waters in their prayers during these National Sacred Places Prayer Days.

Learn more at: <http://www.savethewildup.org/>

**Minnesota: Minneapolis/St. Paul – World Peace and Prayer Day, Tuesday, June 21
Bdote/The Center, Fort Snelling State Park, June 18-21**

Arvol Looking Horse, 19th Generation Keeper of the Sacred White Buffalo Calf Pipe and organizer of the World Peace and Prayer Day, **will conduct a public ceremony on Tuesday, June 21, at Bdote/The Center, Fort Snelling State Park, where other activities will take place from June 18 to June 21.**

In his **message for 2011**, Arvol Looking Horse wrote: **"All Nations, All Faiths, One Prayer is respecting each others' traditions, culture and religions.** There is one Creator and one Mother earth that we all share. We have gone all over the world once a year to pray with other faith communities and Indigenous Nations at their Sacred Sites. We have traveled to the United Nations to talk about the environment and prophecies. As First Nations **we have committed ourselves to maintaining our sacred way of Life where there is no ending and no beginning!** Mitakuye Oyasin (all my relations)."

Among the activities will be a **Concert on June 18 and 19, with Musicians Michael Bucher, Mitch Walking Elk, Louis Alemayehu, Los Nativos, Chase Manhattan, Will Hale and DJ Cavem.**

The public is invited to all the activities. People are asked to bring their own dish, bowl, cup and utensils.

For more information about the World Peace and Prayer Day, contact: **Paula Horne-Mullen** at paula@wolakota.org
Local Contact: Stephanie Smith 952-888-4311 or hopefulpeacemaker@gmail.com

**Nevada: Pyramid Lake -- Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe of Nevada
Gathering at Stone Mother/Pyramid Area – Open to Public
Tuesday, June 21, at 10:00 a.m.**

Our Pyramid, our Stone Mother (White Shell Woman to the Dine' Peoples), our Pinnacles, our Marble Bluff, our Winnemucca Lake and our Pyramid Lake itself are significant beings and places to the Paiute People of the northwestern Great Basin plateau region.

The waters of Pyramid Lake hold traditional and spiritual significance. Many tribal visitors and some non-Native visitors experience healing and comfort when bathing in its waters, both in the lake and in the geothermal hot springs at and around the lake. **The water is believed to be life and water flowing to the lake is its lifeblood.**

For over a century, tensions over water rights and water use has caused decades of litigation and court decisions against the Tribe that reduced water flows to Pyramid Lake. In fact, the neglect of proper authorities extended to refusals to hear the claims for fisheries and ecological habits and authorized diversions from the Truckee River. **The diversions were so great that Pyramid Lake dropped 80 feet in elevation and Winnemucca Lake (a natural wetlands) completely dried up.** This alone had a **devastating effect on the life in and surrounding Pyramid Lake.**

Our ancestors used the surrounding environment as a home place to survive. The petroglyphs and rock art indicate the historical pattern of our existence. **The region surrounding Pyramid Lake and the northwestern reaches of the Great Basin is home to many sacred sites.**

The looting and vandalism of sacred places throughout the region has gone unchecked for many decades. Much damage has been done and we must do what is necessary to protect our sacred areas.

The Tribe is deeply concerned about the human interaction and activity of visitors. **Recent vandalism that was committed near our Stone Mother and the Pyramid on the east shore of Pyramid Lake prompted the public closure of the location.**

Fortunately, clean up of the offensive spray paint was successful. Because some visitors are immature and may be of a criminal mindset, the Tribe is focused on developing visitor respect and appreciation for our tribal lands, waters and sacred places.

The human responsibility is that we all must conduct the necessary measures to protect our precious resources and treasures. **Our prayer and your prayer on this Day of Prayer for Sacred Places signify the importance and effort to ensure future generations the same enjoyment and blessings in our traditional practices at these sites.**

We welcome all visitors to join us on this Day of Prayer for the continuation of traditional customs and practices of our ceremonial obligations.

The prayer will be open to the public and the gathering at the Stone Mother/Pyramid Area will begin at 10:00 a.m., PST, on Tuesday, June 21st.

For more information, **contact: Ms. Della John, Tribal Administrator, Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, (775) 574-1000 ext. 125 or djohn@plpt.nsn.us**

***New Mexico: Albuquerque – Rain Cloud Gathering, Saturday, June 18, 6:00 p.m.
Albuquerque Center for Peace & Justice, 202 Harvard SE***

This year, **Rain Cloud will gather** at the Albuquerque Center for Peace and Justice on Saturday, June 18, 2011, at 6:00 p.m. **for a Ceremony to honor the sacred connections between Indian people and Mother Earth. We also will send prayers to the Wallow fire in Arizona** and for all the lives, two legged, four legged, winged creatures, the flora and the fauna that are affected by this fire.

We ask everyone to join us as we observe the **2011 National Day of Prayer to Protect Native Sacred Places.** Refreshments will be served following the Ceremony. Please feel free to bring something to share with everyone!

Rain Cloud was created in response to the total lack of resources for off-reservation Indians in Albuquerque and the associated appalling socio economic conditions of our people. Rain Cloud is a grassroots community-based organization. We are almost 100% consumer and family driven. Rain Cloud is comprised of off-reservation Indian people and was established to address housing, health and economic disparities and to insure that all Indians have a voice in their treatment and access to culturally appropriate services.

Rain Cloud is concerned with the emotional, physical, spiritual, family, social and cultural well being and health of our people. Our motto in addressing these concerns is "Unity through Integrity." This involves us working together, with integrity for the good of our communities.

We have established the following principles and core values for ourselves:

Respect for all life on this planet. Respect the rights, culture and autonomy of each individual and each community. Honor the choices and decisions that people make. Support the changes that individuals, families and communities request. Work to restore Balance and a Sense of Belonging. Involve and include people in our community from all walks of life. Integrate traditional and western knowledge and healing concepts. Promote individual and community health to support economic development and viability.

Analyze and integrate the impact of race, class, gender and other cultural factors into our work. Uphold and support our youth who bring energy and innovation into our vision. Value the voices and the participation of all our people. Speak the truth and provide valuable education and information on a continuous basis to our community. Create and maintain an informed community. Engage and encourage family and community people and grassroots and community-based groups in an ongoing dialogue to strengthen their impact on policies and strategies.

Come join Rain Cloud on June 18 for the 2011 National Day of Prayer to Protect Native Sacred Places.

For more information, **contact Gwen Packard at 505-321-6532 or Donna Kipp at 505-315-6498.**

***New York: Ganondagan State Historic Site, at the Great White Pine Tree of Peace
Tuesday, June 21, at 11:30 a.m.***

At **Ganondagan State Historic Site in New York**, there will be a Gahnonyoh (Thanksgiving), starting at 11:30 a.m., on Tuesday, June 21, to protect sacred places and to promote world peace. **"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, 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>

***New York: Onondaga Nation -- Onondaga Lake Park
Monday, June 20***

Onondaga Nation invites all to Honor the Lake with a peaceful gathering at Onondaga Lake Park, near the Salt Museum, on Monday, June 20. A Thanksgiving will be offered beside Onondaga Lake.

All who wish for the full clean up and healing of the Onondaga Lake are invited to attend and to bring friends and family. Please note that Prayers and Meditations for the Lake take place on an ongoing basis.

For the time of the gathering, the speaker and other details, contact Onondaga Nation communications at 315-492-1922 or ONONCOMM@verizon.net

***Oklahoma: Inter Tribal Sacred Lands Trust – Commemorations at "Loyal Creeks" Sites
Beggs, Cleveland, Bird Creek (Turley) and Skiatook***

The **Inter Tribal Sacred Lands Trust** will conduct observances of the 2011 National Days of Prayer to Protect Native Sacred Places, at four locations in the former Indian Territory **where "Loyal Creeks" battled Confederate forces in 1861, 150 years ago.**

The **"Loyal Creeks"** were a **12,000 strong column of "armed neutrals" working toward promised federal protection in Kansas** (after being informed that federal treaty obligations to protect them could not be provided where they lived), **including Muscogee, Euchee, Seminole, Shawnee, Delaware and Kickapoo peoples, as well as Free Blacks and slaves** (some escaped from their owners, others accompanying their owners en route to freedom).

The **first conflict occurred just west of what is now Beggs, Oklahoma**, as the Confederate militia pushed north in pursuit, **when the prairie in front of them burst into fire.** As they halted in confusion with the smoke and fire racing toward them, the Euchee Lighthouse burst through, scattering the militia before disappearing back into the flames.

The **second conflict was further north, just south of present-day Cleveland, Oklahoma**, at the junction of OK99 and US412. After masking the movement of the civilian column to the east, armed Loyal Creeks moved west and camped. When Confederate militia approached, **a short battle occurred before the prairie was again set afire,** forcing the militia to retreat. When they regrouped and advanced to Round Mountain, the Loyal Creek force had disappeared, and the Confederates claimed victory.

The **third conflict was between Loyal Creek scouts seeking a promised ammunition train from Springfield, and Confederate forces trying to find the main body of the armed neutrals.** At the horseshoe bend of **Bird Creek outside present Turley, Oklahoma**, the two forces encountered each other, with sporadic gunfire until dark. During the night, Loyal Creeks and members of Skiatooka's band of Cherokee (whose homes were nearby) sneaked through Confederate lines and spoke with Drew's unit of Cherokee, allied with the southerners. By daybreak, the Cherokee unit had withdrawn. Exchanges of gunfire continued that day as the Loyal Creeks withdrew, and the Confederates claimed another victory.

The fourth and final conflict is a singular event in the history of North America for many reasons. The Loyal Creek camp was secured in a rocky hollow above Battle Creek, just northwest of what is now Skiatook, Oklahoma. Nearly out of ammunition, the Loyal Creeks (now a unified command of Natives and blacks) set up defensive lines to the south to face the approaching militia from Arkansas and Texas and their allied units of Choctaw and Cherokee. The confederate forces quickly overran the outgunned defenses and charged into the main camp. **Muscogee oral history preserves the image of women picking up their cast iron skillets and swinging them at the horses and gunmen. At least 3,000 of the civilian column died that day**, more than the dead at the World Trade Center or Pearl Harbor and almost as many as the Union dead at Gettysburg. Attempting to escape to Fort Scott, about **another 1,000 survivors died from exposure or from being hunted down by Creek confederates, and another 1,000 or more would die over the next three years in federal camps in eastern Kansas.**

No other Native and black armed alliance on this scale has ever occurred, although the Seminole Wars saw smaller examples. **No other civilians were attacked on this scale during the Civil War, by either side. It is quite likely that more women and children were killed on that one day of the final battle than in the rest of the Civil War.** While many starved in the federal camps in eastern Kansas, federal contractors were slaughtering bison in the central and western parts of that state, stripping them of their hides and leaving the meat to rot.

These sites are not protected by federal, state or local law. The Inter Tribal Sacred Lands Trust is exploring protecting these sacred places by adding them to the Fort Scott National Historic Site.

For details on the commemorations, contact Robert W. Trepp at the Inter Tribal Sacred Lands Trust, r_w_trepp@yahoo.com

**Tennessee: Chattanooga – Sunday, June 19, at Sunrise, 6:27 a.m., Chickamauga Mound and at Noon, Moccasin Bend Mound
Nashville – Fewkes Mound Site, at 1:00 p.m.**

The 2011 Tennessee Day of Prayer to Protect Native Sacred Places will be observed on Sunday, June 19, with gatherings in Chattanooga and Nashville to remember Citico Mound and all the other Native sites along the river which have been removed and destroyed.

The first gathering in Chattanooga will be at Chickamauga Mound at Sunrise, 6:27 a.m. The street address is 3701 Amnicola Highway, Chickamauga Creek Riverwalk Park, Chattanooga. Chickamauga Mound is one of two remaining Woodland-period mounds in Chattanooga.

The second gathering in Chattanooga will be at Moccasin Bend Mound at Noon. Moccasin Bend Mound is the other remaining Woodland-period mounds in Chattanooga.

In Nashville, the gathering will take place at 1:00 p.m., at the Fewkes Mound Site, at Primm Park, Brentwood.

The public is invited to observe the Tennessee Day of Prayer to Protect Native Sacred Places on Sunday, June 19. The 2011 National Days of Prayer to Protect Native Sacred Places are June 17 – 21.

For the Chattanooga gatherings, contact: Tom Kunesh at tom@kunesh.net or 423-781-0197. For the Nashville gathering, contact: Melba Checote Eads at melbaceads@dtccom.net or 615-210-7276.

Washington, DC: U.S. Capitol, West Front Grassy Area - June 21, Tuesday, at 7:30 a.m.

The observance in Washington, DC, will take place at the U.S. Capitol on the West Front Grassy Area on Tuesday, June 21, at 7:30 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 or Suzan Shown Harjo at suzan_harjo@yahoo.com

Washington: Snoqualmie Falls, at the Cedar Tree, Tuesday, June 21, 7:00 a.m.

Snoqualmie Falls is a Sacred Place of Creation for the Snoqualmie and other Tribes of the Puget Sound region. It is a **268-foot waterfall** listed on the Register of Historic Places as a Traditional Cultural Property. **It is also impacted and desecrated by a hydroelectric facility, which diverts the river before it can complete the Sacred Cycle** of reaching the base of the falls and creating the connection by its transformation to the mists that connect worlds and carry prayers and deliver healing and blessings.

Over 2 million people come from all over the world to visit Snoqualmie Falls annually. There is a public park owned and operated by Puget Sound Energy located there. The trail down to the viewing area at the base falls of the falls continues to be closed to visitors until sometime in 2013.

Water is universally a Sacred Being, part of sacred ceremonies in all faiths and religions.

On June 21st, Tuesday, at 7:00 a.m., there will be a gathering, rain or shine, at Snoqualmie Falls.

We welcome anyone who would like to respectfully join together in Spirit for observance of the urgent call, placed years ago by Arvol Looking Horse, 19th Generation Keeper of the Sacred White Buffalo Calf Pipe and The Morning Star Institute, to gather on the same day and pray for our Sacred Places.

"We give a prayer of thanks for those that came before us who prayed for us and we in turn pray for those that come after us. Stay strong in Spirit, stay grounded in who you are. Pray for us all; we are together connected in Spirit."

***Breathe in the Peace of the Spirit * Be still within * listen with your heart * Give Thanks* We are still here* In the Spirit of Snoqualmie Falls, Lois Sweet Dorman.**

Contact: **Lois Sweet Dorman**, Snoqualmie Falls Ambassador, at nightfishes@qwest.net.

Wisconsin: Bad River Reservation and Lake Superior -- Mother Earth Water Walk 2011

The 2011 Water Walk unites all the waters of our Mother Earth. Water from the vast Pacific Ocean, from the Gulf of Mexico, from the Atlantic Ocean and from Hudson Bay will be gathered in copper pails and carried by hand to the shores of Lake Superior. Ocean water from the four directions will travel the miles with Anishinaabe women and men walking side by side.

The purpose of the Water Walks, which began with a walk around Lake Superior in 2003, is to call attention to the sacred gift of water, the source of our life, the source of all life. The past Water Walks also raised awareness of the need to take care of the water, **and to help our Mother Earth who is struggling to survive and to provide for all her children.**

The **Western Water Walk** began Sunday, April 10 in Olympia, Washington, passing through Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, Minnesota and Wisconsin. On Wednesday, April 20, the **Southern Water Walk** left Gulfport, Mississippi, traveling through Mississippi, Tennessee, Illinois, Iowa and into Wisconsin. Walkers on the **Eastern Water Walk** left Machais, Maine on Saturday, May 7. Their Walk took them through Quebec, Ontario and into Michigan and Wisconsin. Churchill Manitoba was the beginning point for the **Northern Water Walk**. Water from Hudson Bay and the Water Walkers traveled on Saturday May 21 by train toward the south to Winnipeg. Their route carried the sacred water through Manitoba, Ontario and into Minnesota and Wisconsin.

The **Walkers journeyed over 10,400,000 steps, carried the healing and sacred salt water from the four directions and converged on June 12 in Bad River, Wisconsin. The water is now being united in Lake Superior, where the first Water Walk began.**

The Anishinaabe, also known as the Ojibwe, Odawa and Potawatomi, are the caretakers of the eastern woodlands and Great Lakes, the largest freshwater system on Earth. Anishinaabe women, as givers-of-life, are responsible for speaking for, protecting and carrying our water.

All people are encouraged and welcome to participate in and to support the 2011 Mother Earth Water Walk.

For more information: <http://www.motherearthwaterwalk.com>

The Morning Star Institute, 611 Pennsylvania Ave., SE #377, Washington, DC 20003 (202) 547-5531