



THE MORNING STAR INSTITUTE
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News Statement
For Immediate Release

JUNE 20-21 SET FOR 2008 NATIONAL SACRED PLACES PRAYER DAYS

Washington, DC (6/16/08) Observances and ceremonies will be held across the country on June 20 and 21 to mark the 2008 National Days of Prayer to Protect Native American Sacred Places. Times and places for public commemorations are listed in the following 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 commemorations and prayers offered at sacred places that are under threat at this time.

Native and non-Native people nationwide gather at this time for Solstice ceremonies. We honor sacred places, with a special emphasis on the need for Congress to build a door to the courts for Native nations to protect our churches, said Suzan Shown Harjo (Cheyenne & Hodulgee Muscogee). She is President of The Morning Star Institute, which organizes the National Sacred Places Prayer

Days. This will be the sixth of the National Prayer Days to Protect Native American Sacred Places. The observance in Washington , D.C. , will be held on June 20 at 8:00 a.m. on the United States Capitol Grounds, West Front Grassy Area (see details under the Washington , D.C. listing below). The first National Prayer Day was conducted on June 20, 2003, on the U.S. Capitol West Lawn and nationwide to emphasize the need for Congress to enact a cause of action to protect Native sacred places. That need still exists.

Many Native American sacred places are being damaged because Native nations do not have equal access under the First Amendment to defend them,â€ said Ms. Harjo. All other people in the United States have the First Amendment to protect their churches. Only traditional Native Americans cannot get into the courthouse through the Freedom of Religion Clauses. That simply must change as a matter of fairness and equity. Native nations today have to cobble together protections based on defenses intended for other purposes. Those may permit lawsuits, but they do not provide a place at the table when development is being contemplated, and there is no guarantee that a lawsuit won't be tossed out by the Supreme Court for lack of a tailor-made cause of action.

The Supreme Court told Congress in 1988 that it had to enact a statutory right of action, if it wanted to protect Native sacred places. Twenty years have passed without Congress creating that door to the courthouse for Native Americans, said Ms. Harjo, and some of these places cannot withstand many more years of legal and physical onslaughts.

Native and non-Native people are gathering, again, to call on anyone who will listen to help protect these national treasures and to do something about this national disgrace that threatens them.

Alabama: Wetumpka“ Hickory Ground Ceremonial Ground

Traditional religious leaders of **Oce Vbofv Cuko Rakko (Hickory Ground Ceremonial Ground)** are continuing their work to negotiate for the **protection of their pre-removal lands near Wetumpka, Alabama, and the dozens of human remains which have been disinterred without their consent.** Although summer requires their attention to be focused on annual ceremonies to close the old year and start the new year, they have been able to find time to travel from Oklahoma to Wetumpka , Alabama , and participate in the negotiation sessions.

As other Muscogee people gather for ceremonies, the tragic case of the Hickory Ground site is discussed in wider and wider circles. **Absent from the southeast**

for 170 years, and separated by 800 miles, many traditional people in Oklahoma were unaware of the destruction of sacred places and the looting of burials in their ancient homelands.

But discussions have also spread into the Christian community about the documented reports of complete disrespect for human remains and burials, and a growing consensus between the major Muscogee religious communities is that **Muscogee common law regards a burial as a permanent resting place for the dead, to remain undisturbed.**

The **Inter-Tribal Sacred Land Trust** is working to promote the protection of sacred sites throughout the southeastern United States , and to develop model policies and procedures, which could have applications across the nation. Contact www.itslt.org for more information.

Arizona: San Francisco Peaks

The **San Francisco Peaks (Nuvatukaovi, Dokoâooâsliid)** 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 U.S. Forest Service and private business plan to expand the Snowbowl ski resort and to use recycled sewage to make artificial snow.

These 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. The area is within the Coconino National Forest .

Native nations are attempting to protect the San Francisco Peaks in court. The **District Court ruled for the development** in January 2006. In March 2007, the **Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals overturned the lower court's decision and ruled for the Hopi Tribe, Navajo Nation and others.**

Setting new precedent for the protection of Native American sacred places, 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 which 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 the petition. The case was argued in front of the 11-judge en banc panel of the Ninth Circuit in Pasadena in December 2007.

To date, the Ninth Circuit has not issued the decision of the en banc panel.

Ceremonies and gatherings for Solstice prayer will take place on June 21 at the **San Francisco Peaks**. For more information and updates, contact **Save the Peaks Coalition** at <http://www.savethepeaks.org>.

California: Needles June 20, Sunrise

The **Ft. Mojave Indian Tribe** remains in emergency need of support to protect the **Maze** and surrounding sacred site 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 in Needles at the **Maze** property, on June 20, and pray for continued guidance, preservation and national support to defend this sacred area.

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 environmental health problems. PG&E, BLM and 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 many new wells in California and Arizona , on either side of the Colorado River . These, taken together, create continuing cumulative adverse impacts to the sacred landscape and tribal 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 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.

Even though settlement was achieved, deep prayer is needed to ask for further understanding by PG&E and the agencies, particularly the BLM, as to the nature of this traditional cultural landscape and that they should not be afraid to acknowledge it as such during investigations, selection and implementation of the Final Remedy. Prayer is also needed to ask for forgiveness for any continuing desecration that may occur until the offending facilities are actually removed and that a Final Remedy is selected soon that respects the sacred nature of this area.

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 consider direct and indirect impacts to Native sacred places during pollution remediation activities remains a national problem requiring congressional oversight.

Contact: Nora McDowell-Antone, **Tribal Project Manager**, at (928) 768-4475 or Courtney Ann Coyle, **Tribal Attorney**, at (858) 454-8687.

Colorado: Boulder - Native American Rights Fund, Friday, June 20, 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 20, 2008.

The public is welcome to a sunrise ceremony that will be held on NARF's front lawn beginning at 6:00 a.m. The program is expected to last for one hour with a prayer ceremony, speakers and a moment of silence to show concern for the sacred places that are being damaged and destroyed today.

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, the Native American Rights Fund 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.

The Native American Rights Fund 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.

Why should holy places be protected? How well do existing laws and federal agency regulations protect Native American places of worship? These and other questions will be addressed by NARF attorneys Steve Moore and Walter Echo-Hawk (Pawnee), who are active in the Medicine Wheel National Historic Landmark, The Devil's Tower, the Spirit Cave case, Kennewick Man case and the work of the Sacred Lands Protection Coalition, of which the Native American Rights Fund is a member. NARF also represents the Working Group on Native American Culturally Unidentified Human Remains.

The **Native American Rights Fund** is a national nonprofit organization whose mission is to assist American Indians, individuals and organizations in the legal representation and interpretation of federal Indian law. **NARF is headquartered in Boulder, Colorado, with offices in Washington, D.C., and Anchorage, Alaska .**

Contact: The **Native American Rights Fund** at **(303) 447-8760.**

Kansas: Lawrence - Wakarusa Wetlands, Saturday, June 21, at Sunrise

(Storm date, in case of severe weather: Sunday, June 22, at Sunrise)

Save the Wakarusa Wetlands will observe National Prayer Day at Sunrise on Saturday, June 21, in the Wakarusa Wetlands south of Lawrence , Kansas . Save the Wakarusa Wetlands, Inc., is an association of Lawrence-based Haskell Indian Nations University alumni, students and community supporters. In case of lightning strikes, funnel clouds or other severe weather, the observation will take place on Sunday, June 22, at Sunrise .

The ceremony will be led by **Mike Smith** (Dine/Navajo) and is open to all who wish to add their prayers to save this sacred place from the highway builders. **Jeremy Shield** (Crow) will again sing a song to greet the sun. **This year we will make special efforts to honor the return of otters to this place after an absence of more than a century!**

Participants will ask for the protection of the Wakarusa Wetlands (aka, Haskell-Baker Wetlands), threatened by an eight-lane highway project approved by the Army Corps of Engineers, but delayed by state budget constraints.

After years of claiming the trafficway had been "de-federalized," in an attempt to render federal laws protecting Native sites inapplicable, **the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)** is back in the game. It **recently announced its intent to adopt an outdated and severely flawed Corps of Engineers Environmental Impact Statement in order to expedite federal funds for the beleaguered project.**

The announcement of a draft decision finally came last November and, as expected, FHWA went along with the state's plan to pave the Wetlands. A lawsuit is contemplated in response to the FHWA release of the formal "Record of Decision-ROD. There is no money in the current state budget to construct the trafficway, but a new five-year highway plan will be debated in the Kansas legislature next year.

This sacred place is the last significant trace of the original Wakarusa Bottoms, an 18,000-acre prairie wetland environment that existed for thousands of years before whites drained and dammed the wetlands, which supplied Native peoples of the region with valuable medicines and important ceremonial items.

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 sacred healing plants and herbs to be gathered there.

About **600 acres of the Wakarusa Wetlands was located directly south of the dorms at Haskell Institute.** 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** in off-reservation boarding schools.

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 the authorities "kill the Indian" in them.

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

Despite efforts to drain the Wetlands in the early twentieth century, and Haskell's loss 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.

Contact: **Michael Caron** at (785) 842-6293 or by email at mcaron@sunflower.com with **Save the Wakarusa Wetlands** www.savethewetlands.org.

Contact: **Lori Tapahonso**, Executive Assistant/Public Information Officer, **Haskell Indian Nations University** , at (785) 830-2715 or by email at LTapahonso@HASKELL.edu.

Contact: **RaeLynn Butler**, President, **Haskell Wetland Preservation Organization**, Haskell Indian Nations University , at (785) 842-6293 or by email at Rbutler@HASKELL.edu.

New Mexico: Mount Taylor

Mount Taylor is sacred to pueblos and tribes throughout the Southwest. The Acoma, Laguna and Zuni Pueblos , the Hopi Tribe and the Navajo Nation are actively seeking protections for Mount Taylor . They are concerned that the renewed uranium rush in the area will threaten the sacred mountain.

Mount Taylor , a lush forested mesa, is an ancient volcano west of Albuquerque , New Mexico , near Acoma and Laguna Pueblos and the town

of Grants . At 11,301 feet, it is the highest point of the Cibola National Forest and the San Mateo Mountains .

An origin, worship and pilgrimage site, Mount Taylor is home to many sacred beings, waters and shrines. It also is a vital religious and subsistence hunting and gathering place.

On June 14, the New Mexico Cultural Properties Review Committee took emergency action to protect Mount Taylor from potential uranium mining for one year by designating it as a traditional cultural property.

The designation was proposed by the five pueblos and tribes, and the committee voted four to two to list 422,840 acres (660 square miles) of Mount Taylor on the state's Register of Cultural Properties.

The designation lasts for one year, during which the committee will decide if Mount Taylor will have a permanent listing as a traditional cultural property. The TCP listing will not prevent mining or other development, but will halt expedited mining permits and will give the pueblos and tribes a voice in the permitting process when development is being considered.

Later this year, the Pueblo Cultural Center Museum will host an educational forum on the millennial history of the Pueblos and Tribes with Mount Taylor .

Contact: **Brian D. Vallo**, Director, Pueblo Cultural Center Museum , Albuquerque , New Mexico , at (505) 724-3533 or by email at bvallo@indianpueblo.org.

New York: Ganondagan State Historic Site, Friday, June 20, 11:45 a.m. to Mid-day

At **Ganondagan State Historic Site in New York**, there will be a Gahnonyoh (Thanksgiving), starting at 11:45 a.m. and ending at Mid-day, on Friday, June 20, under the Tree of Peace on Boughton Hill 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.

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 Jikohnsaseh 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 (pjemison@frontiernet.net).

Oklahoma: Pawhuska, Friday, June 20, Sunset Ceremony, 8:30 p.m.

Up, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

Youth Council Site Clean-

Dinner, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

The Tulsa Indian Coalition Against Racism (TICAR) invites all to participate in the 2008 National Day of Prayer to Protect Native Sacred Places on Friday, June 20, starting at 4:30, at The Jeannie Garfield Gray Native American Church Site in Pawhuska, Oklahoma.

TICAR is hosting a Sunset Ceremony, beginning at 8:30 p.m. The TICAR Youth Council Site Clean-Up will take place from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., followed by Dinner from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

The site does not have an actual street address. It is located 100 yards past the intersection of Grandview and 4070 Country Road . Volunteers will be at the Kum & Go at the intersection of Hwy 99 and Hwy 11 in Pawhuska at 4:00 p.m., 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. for guests to follow to the events.

Members of the **TICAR Youth Council** will be cleaning up and picking up trash at the site and welcomes everyone's help in this endeavor.

The Dinner will be courtesy of The Gray Family.

All are welcome to the **Sunset Ceremony** to join in prayer for sacred places and for all local and world communities.

Contact: **Louis Gray** at (918) 766-4530 or **Cindy Martin** at (918) 633-3381.

***South Dakota: Bear Butte State Park , Saturday, June 21,
Noon-4:00 p.m.***

The public is invited to a gathering to honor Bear Butte on June 21, Saturday, from Noon to 4:00 p.m., on the National Day of Prayer to Protect Native American Sacred Places. The gathering coincides with World Peace & Prayer Day events at sacred sites across the continents of the world. All are invited to honor sacred places and to pray for peace and healing.

The gathering will take place at the Bear Butte State Park in the picnic area next to main parking lot. All are invited to share a community potluck and should feel free to bring a dish.

Bear Butte is sacred to more than 50 Native Nations, including the Cheyenne , Lakota and Arapaho Peoples, who own small sections of Bear Butte lands. Bear Butte is Nowawus/Noahvose (Holy Mountain) to the Cheyenne Peoples and Mato Paha (Bear Mountain) in the Lakota language. It has been used for thousands of years as a religious and commemorative place for vision quests, ceremonies of passage and renewal, pilgrimages, spiritual offerings and medicine gatherings.

The sacred mountain has been designated as Bear Butte State Park since 1961. Located in western South Dakota near the border with Wyoming , it rises from the Plains and overlooks the Black Hills and Bear Medicine Lodge (wrongfully called Devil's Tower). Bear Butte was listed as a National Natural Landmark in 1965, as a National Historical Place in 1973 and as a National Historical Landmark in 1981. Bear Butte has been on the National Historic Landmarks threat level watch list since 2004.

The gathering at Bear Butte is being organized by **Protect Sacred Sites**, which urges all to sign a petition at www.ProtectBearButte.com to address a current threat to Bear Butte in a pending liquor license proceeding in Meade County , South Dakota . Meade County Commissioners will conduct a hearing on July 1, 2008, and are expected to make a final decision at that time. Protect Sacred Sites explains the threat this way:

Bear Butte is a sacred mountain located eight miles east of Sturgis , South Dakota . Instead of praying in peace, traditional people are forced to pray with loud music from bars, motorcycle noise, flashing strobe lights over the mountain, and intoxicated campers nearby. Blatant disregard for the

spiritual beliefs and ceremonies of Native People and the sacredness of this mountain is evidenced by the increased presence of bars, clubs, strobe lights, campgrounds that sell alcohol and a proposed stadium.

For the past few years there has been a continual encroachment of bars and venues heading towards the sacred mountain. In the summer of 2006, the massive two-story bar opened just one mile from the mountain, called Sturgis County Line. Their goal is to have a 50,000-seat concert stadium and a RV park, in addition to the newly built two-story bar. These large scale commercial developments invite noise and cumulative impacts of increased traffic and travel, which all stand to adversely impact the natural serenity and tranquility needed for cultural, ceremonial and other visitations to Bear Butte. They will also negatively impact the experience of people who enjoy the spiritual, cultural, and natural resources at Bear Butte.â€

President Joe A. Garcia of the National Congress of American Indians wrote to the Meade County Commissioners on June 11, stating that **NCAI opposes the Malt Beverage alcohol license application** submitted by Broken Spoke Campground, L.L.C. Both the location and the character of the applicant are unsuitable for any alcohol licenses.â€ **NCAI also urged the Commissioners to use their broad discretion over alcohol licenses to begin government-to-government consultation with affected local Indian tribes to establish notification and consultation procedures for decisions that affect religious practice at Bear Butte and all American Indian sacred sites.**

The NCAI president also pointed out that the **federal government has already committed itself to consultation with tribes generally and more specifically whenever federal undertakings would affect historic properties of religious or cultural significance** through an Executive Order titled *Indian Sacred Sites* and the National Historic Preservation Act. Furthermore, on September 13, 2007, the United Nations adopted the **Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Article 12** of that Declaration provides that indigenous peoples have â€**the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites.**

Contact: Tamra Brennan, Director, **Protect Sacred Sites**, at Tamra@ProtectSacredSites.org.

South Dakota: Ihanktonwan Dakota / Yankton Sioux Reservation, June 21, Sunrise

On Saturday, June 21, at Sunrise , members of the Ihanktonwan Dakota / Yankton Sioux will be offering prayers for the protection of the area impacted by the intrusion of a CAFO or hog farm from corporate farmers. Prayers will be at 5:30 a.m. or as close to Sunrise as possible.

Despite intense tribal protest, Long View Farms has located a hog farm within:

- . three miles of a Sun Dance area;**
- . three miles of a Peyote fire altar;**
- . three miles of a place recognized as a "dwelling of a spirit"; and**
- . 3.2 miles of the greatest cultural resource of all, the Children.**

The CAFO“ hog farm -- is within 3.2 miles of the Head Start Center for Ihanktonwan Dakota / Yankton Sioux Children.

Numerous tribal protestors have been arrested, and now call themselves, "Protectors of the Red People" or Oyate Duta Awa Yankapo. A tornado recently hit the area, but the developers refuse to take heed.

Prayers will also be offered to protect the thousands of cultural sites that will be affected by the Keystone Pipeline in eastern South Dakota . Once again, parties like the Department of State have refused tribes the need to survey the corridor.

Thirdly, prayers are being offered because of the continuing disrespect of sacred sites along the Missouri River , home to the Yankton for centuries.

The Missouri River Corridor is one of the largest threatened territories in the struggle for the preservation and protection of ancestral burials and sacred and cultural places. Irreplaceable cultural and sacred areas are impacted every day by erosion from the six mainstem dams built on the upper River as a result of the Pick-Sloan Act of 1946. Shoreline Development, recreational use of the reservoirs and agricultural impacts also add to the vulnerability of sacred places that are intrinsic to the **Missouri River Tribes' spiritual and cultural practices.**

And though Missouri River Tribes have forged a new management agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regarding the preservation of sacred and cultural resources on the River, these holy and irreplaceable places remain vulnerable to looting and vandalism as million of Americans come to the reservoirs for recreation and fishing.

**Contacts: Allan Hare, (605) 384-3641 or (605) 491-3383.
Faith Spotted Eagle: (605) 481-0416.
Gary Drapeau: (605) 401-4900.**

Washington, DC : U.S. Capitol, West Front Grassy Area - June 20, Friday, at 8:00 a.m.

The observance in Washington , DC , will take place at the **U.S. Capitol on the West Front Grassy Area** on June 20 at 8:00 a.m. The public is invited to attend this respectful observance to honor sacred places and sacred beings 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 words, songs or a moment of silence for all sacred places, but especially for those that are being 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.

A co-sponsor of the commemoration in Washington is the **Friends Committee on National Legislation** (the Quaker lobbying organization). The **FCNL** issued this statement:

At a recent conference that included discussion of sacred sites, Tom Hoffman of St. Mary's University said, **According to Vine Deloria Jr., experiencing the holy, rather than belief, is what characterizes the American Indian experience.** Daniel Wildcat of Haskell Indian Nations University added, Deloria emphasized the "power of unique places that tell people who are paying attention that we are in a world full of life {from a report by Carol Berry in Indian Country Today 5/5/08}. We at FCNL will be pondering those thoughts on this National Prayer Day.

Faith based organizations oppose the destruction and desecration of sacred places. Quakers have supported legislative efforts to protect religious practices and sacred areas, which are tied to the history, culture, and spirituality of Indigenous people in the U.S.

The Friends Committee on National Legislation advocated for Native American religious freedom through the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, the Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act, and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

Tourists tour famous churches all over Europe . They walk quietly through the Washington Cathedral and the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Many people also travel to beautiful nature spots -- some of which border or encompass sites sacred to indigenous people. Tourists, people of good will and other non-Natives can appreciate Native sacred sites from a distance. To understand, we believe the public will especially benefit from the film "In Light of Reverence" and by learning more about struggles at places such as Bear Butte, South Dakota.

The government is obligated to stop practices such as building roads through sacred sites and allowing ski areas to be built on sacred sites. FCNL strongly supports President Clinton's executive order that agencies must avoid harm to the physical integrity of sacred sites and must guarantee access and use of such sites by Indian spiritual practitioners.

Contact: Patricia Powers (pat@fcnl), **Friends Committee on National Legislation**, 245 Second Street , Washington , DC 20002 , or at (202) 547-6000. **Co-sponsoring the commemoration in Washington again is the General Commission on Religion and Race of The United Methodist Church**, which issued the following statement:

As stated in The 2004 United Methodist Book of Resolutions, the Church supports the God-given and constitutional rights of religious freedom for American Indians, including the preserving of traditional Native American sacred sites of worship (148, page 382). National Day of Prayer to Protect Sacred Places is a day for the Church to stand in solidarity with Natives to strengthen this protection. **The General Commission on Religion and Race encourages United Methodists, Christians and all people to join in this observance and ask Congress to protect Native sacred places.**

Contact: Suanne Ware-Diaz, Associate General Secretary, **General Commission on Religion and Race, The United Methodist Church**, 202-547-2271 or sware-diaz@gcorr.org.

Washington: Snoqualmie Falls, Friday, June 20, Noon

The **Spirit of Snoqualmie Falls** will be honored on the National Day of Prayer for the Protection of Native Sacred Places on **Friday, June 20, at Noon**. All are invited to gather and to bring food to share afterwards.

The Snoqualmie Tribe is presently **awaiting a Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals decision** regarding the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission license to Puget Sound Energy for hydroelectric project 2493.

Lois Sweet Dorman, Snoqualmie Falls Ambassador and Acting Chair of the Snoqualmie Falls Preservation Project, invites œall to join in the much needed prayers for the Protection of Native Sacred Places. Protection of Snoqualmie Falls is foremost in our hearts and minds, says Sweet Dorman. We believe in the power of prayer. We add our hearts, voices and strength to all who continue this work and will also be praying on this.

Snoqualmie Falls is where the Transformer created the first man and the first woman and then climbed back to his Star Father’s people where he can still be seen through the hole his Snoqualmie mother poked in the sky with her digging stick. He is Moon, the Transformer the Changer, providing light in the darkness for the people of the Valley of the Moon. This is our Snoqualmie Creation history,says Sweet Dorman.

Snoqualmie Falls is a sacred place, where the water’s journey completes its sacred cycle at the base of the falls and a transformation of Spirit takes place. The mist creates the connection between worlds and at the same time delivers prayers and blessings.

Snoqualmie Falls is deemed eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as a Traditional Cultural Property.

Snoqualmie Falls is visited by more than 1.5 million people from around the world each year. It is 268 feet high, which is 100 feet higher than Niagara Falls , and is easily assessable from the Seattle metropolitan area. Snoqualmie Falls is on the œ23 Most Endangered Sacred Placesœ list from the National Congress of American Indians.

Go to our Sacred places, be still inside and strengthen your Spirit and your connection to the Creator,œ says Sweet Dorman. Give thanks that we still remain to carry on this Sacred Connection. May you be uplifted.

Contact: **Lois Sweet Dorman** (Snoqualmie) at (425) 941-5795 or by email at nightfishes@qwest.net.

Wisconsin: Aztalan Mounds, Sunrise Ceremony, Run, Friday, June 20

***Ft. Atkinson , Concert, Friday, June 20
Mitchell Park, Milwaukee , Forum, 9:00 a.m. 4:00
p.m., Saturday, June 21***

Friday, June 20: Sunrise Ceremony and a Sacred Sites Run from Aztalan Mounds <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/turningpoints/tp-003/?action=more_essay> to Lake Koshkonong Effigy Mounds <<http://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WM2MD1>>. This will be a 15-mile run and a SSR benefit concert at Cafe Carpe in Ft. Atkinson , Wisconsin , sponsored by Earth Keepers Voices for Native America (EKVNA).

Saturday, June 21: Summer Solstice National Day of Prayer for Sacred Sites will be observed at Mitchell Park in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. EKVNA will call attention to the destruction of sacred sites in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In the 1830s, **217 Indigenous mounds were mapped, all of which have been destroyed** by ruthless developers except the Lake Park Mound. <http://www.lakeparkfriends.org/history.shtml>. Developers continue to uncover ancient remains where previously known sites have been forgotten.

The Sacred Sites Run draws public attention to sites through the annual National Day of Prayer and with the annual youth runs. Many speakers from various organizations and ethnic communities have been invited to share their struggle to protect their sacred places.

EKVNA has recently completed phase 1 of the Great Plains Great Prairie Sacred Sites Run 2008 from Ft. Thompson, Crow Creek Sioux Reservation's sacred sites to Winona, Minnesota, a near 500-mile trek cosponsored by the First Nations United Warrior Society's youth, the Mendota Mdewankanton Dakota Community and the Ho-Chunk Nation Native Cruzers. **The destination for the run is the Indian Summer Festival Prayer Service in Milwaukee , Wisconsin , September 7 - 8, 2008.**

Contact: **Ben Yahola** at 414-383-7072 or at humoti@yahoo.com.

We are mindful of all Sacred Places, Waters and Beings, including:
Medicine Lake, a Pitt River Nation ceremonial and healing place in the Modoc National Forest in northeastern California; Indian Pass, a Quechan sacred place in southern California, which was named on the 2002 list of America's Most Endangered Historic Places; Coastal Chumash sacred lands in the Gaviota Coastal region in southern California; Yurok Nation's salmon fisheries in the Klamath River; Berry Creek, Moore Town and

Enterprise Rancherias' lands; the sacred Puvungna of the Tongva and Acjachemen Peoples; the sacred Katuktu (Morro Hill) of the San Luis Rey Band of Mission Indians; Mount Graham, Arizona -- Apache holy land; Hualapai Nation landforms in Truxton and Crozier Canyons of Arizona; the Boboquivari Mountain of the Tohono Odham Nation; Zuni Salt Lake; Carrizo/Comecrudo lands flooded by Amistad Lake and Falcon Dam in Texas; Badlands; Black Hills; Medicine Wheel; Lummi Nation Tsi-litch Semiahmah Village and the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe Tse Whit Zen Village - Ancestor burial grounds; Cold Water Springs and Pipestone National Monument in Minnesota; Ocmulgee National Monument and Ocmulgee Old Fields in Georgia; Petroglyphs National Monument and the micaceous clay-gathering place of the Picuris Pueblo in New Mexico; Sweetgrass Hills (Badger Two Medicine) in Montana; and the endangered salmon in the Pacific Northwest.

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