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## 2011 National Day of Prayer to Protect Native American Sacred Places

By ICTMN Staff June 21, 2011

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June 21 is being observed as the 2011 National Day of Prayer to Protect Native American Sacred Places and is being recognized throughout the country by gatherings and observations involving American Indians and non-Natives alike.

Below is a listing of observances taking place today.

### National Day of Prayer for Alaska Sacred Sites

Alaska is home to **229 federally recognized** Alaskan villages and five unrecognized Tlingit Alaskan Indian tribes. On Tuesday, June 21 the Alaska office of the Native American Rights Fund will participate in the **National Days of Prayer to Protect Native Sacred Places**.



The **Sealaska Lands Bill**, introduced in Congress early this year by Senator Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, points to about 200 sacred sites on a map that shows blue dots representing the sites across the islands and inlets of southeast Alaska.

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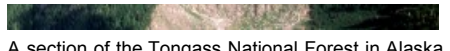
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A section of the Tongass National Forest in Alaska, is shown in this aerial photo taken in 1990. The patches of bare land in the center of the photo show where clear-cutting has occurred. The roadless rule, a Clinton-era policy that blocks development on nearly a third of national forests, may be at a dead end. The rule remains on the books, but a federal judge earlier in July, 2003, struck it down, pending appeal. The ruling case came one day before the Bush administration formally proposed exempting the nation's two largest federal forests from the rule. Critics say the plan would open up vast areas of Alaska's Tongass and Chugach forests for logging.

used since time immemorial by Alaska Native people for a variety of uses,” Sealaska CEO Chris McNeil told **KCAW** in January.

For example, Dot Number 119 is a 10-acre village site with petroglyphs on the east shore of Kalinin Bay, on Kruzof Island near Sitka and Dot Number 198 is a two-acre seasonal village site on the northeast shore of Port Banks, south of Whale Bay on Baranof Island.

Other areas of concern for Alaska Natives include Tongass National Forest, Glacier Bay and fisheries in southeast Alaska.

The bill introduced by Murkowski would set aside 151,000 acres of the Tongass for conservation, and other bills aim to return **85,000 of the 23 million acres taken by the U.S. in 1907.**

Glacier Bay is an ancient homeland to Tlingit clans. According to an Alaska History & Cultural Studies website Glacier Bay became a National Monument in 1925 and a National Park in 1980, which has “has created some tension with Alaska Natives who continue to view Glacier Bay as an area of traditional land and subsistence use.”

“I can remember our elders telling us about U.S. National Park Service personnel burning our cabins at Glacier Bay to try to force us to leave,” wrote Rosita Worl for **Indian Country Today Media Network**. “One of the ancient practices among our people is to gather seagull eggs, a traditional delicacy, at Glacier Bay. But now we are not allowed to do even that.”

Worl mentions that state licensing has also restricted subsistence fishing for Alaska Natives, a practice that historically provided wealth to their families.

“Our subsistence fishing, which should be protected, amounts to only 2 percent of the fishery. Yet we are 16 percent of the population,” Worl wrote. “If our fishermen were allowed even 16 percent of our aboriginal fishery, we could feed whole villages.”

National Prayer Days gives Native Americans a chance to describe sacred places and threats they face.

“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), president of The Morning Star Institute, which organizes the prayer day events. “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. 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.”

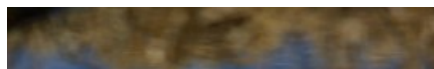
The National Days of Prayer observance, scheduled for noon on June 21, will be an educational forum and is open to the general public. Contact Natalie Landreth, NARF staff attorney, at (907) 276-0680 or [Landreth@NARF.org](mailto:Landreth@NARF.org) for location details.

### Protecting the Sacred Wakarusa Wetlands in Lawrence, Kansas from Highway Construction

The Wakarusa Wetlands in Lawrence, Kansas—an area steeped in Indian history, a former refuge for Indian boarding school students and home to a variety of animal habitats—are threatened by a proposed eight- to ten-lane highway called the South Lawrence Trafficway.

Approved by the Army Corps of Engineers, construction of the \$192 million highway funded by Kansas taxpayer money is delayed by a federal law suit filed by the Haskell Indian Nations University student group **Wetland Preservation Organization** (WPO) and a consortium of supporter groups.

The wetlands sit south of the **Haskell Indian Nations University** campus, the country's



## Reason #2

Feeds have become the talk of town

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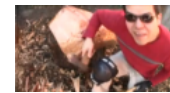
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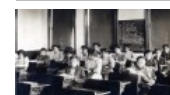
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Teen Junior Boys

largest and most tribally diverse federal off-reservation boarding school. The wetlands once served as a crucial escape and harbor for young Indian students and their families fighting government efforts to exterminate their cultures. Parents and other tribal leaders often camped in the wetlands to visit their children, and elders used the Wakarusa Wetlands as an outdoor classroom to pass on traditional knowledge and their lessons on healing.



Turtles at the Wakarusa Wetlands (Photo by Kyle Gerstner, SaveTheWetlands.org)

“...[T]hat camp ground became a magnet for children to run out of the dorms and try to get down to get news from home, or to try to find someone that could pass on news to the family that weren’t censured by folks that were running the institution here,” Michael Caron, member of the [Save the Wakarusa Wetlands](#) group, an association of Lawrence-based wetlands supporters, said in the video [“A Fight for the Land.”](#)

While the University was originally created to assimilate Indians into society in the 1800s, it has transitioned overtime from a “cultural extermination camp” to “the principal Native American institution of higher learning,” Caron explained in the video.

The less than 600 acres of sacred wetlands behind the University is the largest intact trace of the original Wakarusa Bottoms, an 18,000-acre biologically diverse prairie wetlands that existed for thousands of years before white people drained the vast majority of it in the early twentieth century. Natives in the region previously sourced valuable medicinal plants and food like waterfowl—in the duck family—and furbearers from the environment. Wetlands are known to be naturally occurring aquifers that filter out sediment before the water runs into rivers and act as flood control systems. A variety of fish, reptiles, mammals and birds have survived and flourished in the Wakarusa Wetlands, but recently, a report by the National Audubon Society listed about 20 common birds that have experienced sharp decline in the last 40 years in direct response to habitat loss, reported [LJWorld.com](#). The historic Haskell campus, including the Wetlands, is being considered for designation as a National Historic Heritage area.

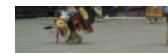
“I think the wetlands are very important for all those reasons,” [Michael Dever](#), Lawrence commissioner, said in a [KUJH-TV](#) video of the wetlands’ use as an agricultural, educational and spiritual environment. “The construction, the traffic way, is not going to inhibit any of those uses, but actually heighten the number of wetlands that are available and allow more people more access to the wetlands, I think in an easier fashion.”

On the contrary, WPO asserts that construction of the South Lawrence Trafficway would destroy the wetlands and a fundamental remnant of Indian history. The highway would also detract from the use and enjoyment of the wetlands due to noise, pollution and reduction of wildlife caused by the project, states WPO.

WPO and Save the Wakarusa Wetlands will observe National Prayer Day at noon on Tuesday, June 21, beside the Wakarusa Wetlands to pray for protection of the wetlands from highway builders. Participants will mark the exact position of the summer solstice at 12:16 p.m. local time at the Haskell Medicine Wheel, located south of Lawrence. Haskell students and friends will then erect stone landmarks to permanently add to the healing site.

### **Bdote, Minnesota, World Peace and Prayer Day**

In 1996, Chief Arvol Looking Horse started the annual World Peace and Prayer Day. The first WPPD ceremony was held at Gray Horn Butte in Wyoming following a horseback ride from the Wahpeton Dakota reservation in Saskatchewan. On that site, according to tradition, the Buffalo Calf Woman first appeared to the tribes, hundreds of years ago, bringing instruction in sacred ceremonies of how to live in balance with all life, and leaving behind a sacred bundle containing a sacred pipe of peace. Today, Chief Arvol Looking Horse is the 19th Generation Keeper of the Tradition of the



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## Sacred White Buffalo Calf Pipe.



Bdote, where the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers meet, in the painting View of Fort Snelling by Edward Thomas. In the background is Fort Snelling, where in 1862 many hundreds of Indians were imprisoned following the Dakota War.

The World Peace and Prayer Day ceremonies have been held in different locations around Turtle Island—and beyond, to Ireland, South Africa, Australia, Japan, and Costa Rica.

From June 18 to 21, activities and events will be held in Fort Snelling State Park, at the place called *Bdote Minnesota* or *Mdote*, where the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers meet. According to

[worldpeaceandprayerday2011.org](http://worldpeaceandprayerday2011.org),

*“Bdote has always been and remains a place of importance in the Dakota belief system, central to Dakota culture. It is the cultural equivalent of the Garden of Eden. This is also a place where many important events*

*in the past 200 years of Dakota written and oral history have occurred. This is the ‘Gathering Place’ where leaders of multiple tribes would negotiate and make critical decisions.”*

A “Peace Ride” on horseback to honor Tail Feather Woman began at Pickerel Lake, SD, on June 5th and is set to conclude at Bdote on June 18, 2011.

Other activities taking place include concerts on the 18th and 19th featuring musicians Michael Bucher, Mitch Walking Elk, Louis Alemayehu, Los Nativos, Chase Manhattan, Will Hale and DJ Cavem. On June 19, from 2 to 4 PM, people will gather on the Mendota Bridge to attempt to set a new Guinness World Record for the largest hug.

On June 21, Chief Arvol Looking Horse will conduct a public ceremony at Bdote/The Center, Fort Snelling State Park. Other speakers include Isaac James Bishra of the Maori Nation of New Zealand; Adele Honde of Japan, organizer of WPPD 2004; the Brave Heart Society and Elk Soldier Society of the Yankton Sioux Tribe; Swami Nityamuktananga Saraswati; Shri Natha Devi Premananda; and Rabbi Bob Carroll from Israel.

For more details on this multi-faceted four-day event, visit [worldpeaceandprayerday2011.org](http://worldpeaceandprayerday2011.org).

“All Nations, All Faiths, One Prayer is respecting each others’ traditions, culture and religions,” said Arvol Looking Horse in his World Peace and Prayer Day message for 2011. “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).”

### **Ganondagan**

The Ganondagan State Historic Site in Victor, New York, will be the site of a Gahnonyoh (Thanksgiving), starting at 11:30 a.m., on Tuesday, June 21. This gathering is aimed bringing awareness to the importance of protecting sacred places and to promote world peace.

G. Peter Jemison, manager of the site, spoke to us about the importance of the event; “Ganondagan is and has been a sacred site to Haudenosaunee for many generations long before it became a State Historic Site. My effort as the manager has been to protect the site and interpret the various traditions that are tied to the site. Early on it was related to me that we can go back to the time of Jikonhsase and the Journey of the



Peacemaker. She was the first person to accept the message of Peace, Power and Righteousness among our people. She united the Haudenosaunee or Five Nations: Seneca Nation, Cayuga Nation, Onondaga Nation, Oneida Nation and Mohawk Nation. When she embraced that message she earned for our women the rights, privileges, and responsibilities they have until this day.”

Just south of Rochester, this site was once the vital capitol for the Seneca, populated with 150 bark longhouses and 4,500 residents. It was destroyed by the French in 1687. Eventually declared a National Landmark in 1964 by the United States Department of the Interior, Ganondagan is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is currently the only site in New York State dedicated to Native Americans

For more information, please contact G. Peter Jemison at (585) 924-5848 or by e-mail at [pjemison@rochester.rr.com](mailto:pjemison@rochester.rr.com)

### **Washington, D.C. is Playground to the Decision Makers**

American Indians and non-Native supporters have been gathering at places around the country since June 17 in support of the 2011 National Day of Prayer to Protect Native American Sacred Places. Observances have been scheduled in Alaska, Oklahoma, Michigan, California and New York to name a few. But one of the strongest places of observance will be June 21, at 7:30 a.m. on the west Front Grassy Area at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C.

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**Have you heard about the 2011 National Days of Prayer to Protect Native American Sacred Places?**

**Are you planning to attend one of the events in your area to support endangered sacred Indian sites?**

If so, we would love to hear from you! Please send us your written observations, photos or links to video from the event you attended. All submissions will be evaluated and we will publish the best ones on our website.

Submissions can be sent to [editor@ictmn.com](mailto:editor@ictmn.com). We look forward to hearing from you!

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This observance is on the playground of the politicians who vote on the legislation for off shore drilling in Anchorage, artificial snow on the San Francisco Peaks, or digging up of burial mounds in California for the placement of a dam for municipal water.

The observance is an open invitation for anyone who wants to join and discuss their feelings on places of importance to the American Indian culture, or to others. This will follow the form of a talking circle.

“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), 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. 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.”

### **Kumeyaay Fight for Burial and Ceremonial Grounds**

News broke in 2010 of the Padre Dam Municipal Water District’s plan to develop a reservoir and pumping station in San Diego County, California—the problem is the site of planned developments.

The Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians have waged a legal and political battle to protect the site, considered a tribal burial ground and ceremonial site, from being destroyed for the planned reservoir.

Over the past year, progress has been made in protecting the area, the site has been designated a sanctified burial ground and ceremonial site by the Native American Heritage Commission, the California Attorney General filed it’s own lawsuit against the district and the Supreme Court granted an injunction to stop all construction on

the property.

According to a press release, 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.

“This site is sacred to our people, and it is culturally and historically significant for all residents of San Diego County and southern California,” then-Viejas tribal chairman Bobby Barrett said in the *East County Magazine*.



The Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians have waged a legal and political battle to protect the site, considered a tribal burial ground and ceremonial site, from being destroyed for the planned reservoir.

The Viejas Band is only one tribe struggling to maintain its sacred sites and requesting prayers on the 2011 National Day of Prayer to Protect Native American Sacred Places on June 21.

### Help the Pechanga Pray for Ancestral Landscape

As part of the 2011 National Sacred Places Prayer Days the Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians is asking for prayers to get county officials to see the dire impacts Granite Construction Company’s proposed Liberty Quarry will have on the Pechanga community and other Luiseno peoples in the region.

According to the *National Prayer Days* press release, “the proposed quarry would be located on a sacred mountain within the Luiseno people’s sacred place of origin.” The mountain is home to the *Kammalam*, or ancestors in the form of rocks.

*Granite Construction* says the site is “ideal for making concrete and asphalt materials,” and that it “would provide 40 percent of current aggregate needs for western Riverside County for 75 years.”

The company says the Inland Empire—the Riverside-San Bernardino area—will run out of raw materials in 20 years if a new source isn’t found. It also points to a number of economic benefits that would come from the quarry including \$300 million in new sales tax revenue and \$41 million in new property taxes and fees.

But all the Pechanga can see is the “permanent scar” that would be left in their sacred landscape.



The Pechanga are especially asking for prayers during the June 22 public hearing to help county officials see that “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,” reads the press release. Through prayer, the Pechanga hope the county will see its mistake in not consulting with the tribe and deny the quarry.

An article by Aaron Claverie at [Nctimes.com](http://Nctimes.com) noted that more than 1,000 people showed up for the Liberty Quarry public hearing held April 26.

Pechanga Chairman Mark Macarro got a standing ovation at the hearing after saying, “these places define who we are.”

For more information on how you can help protect the Luiseno ancestral landscape, contact Paul Macarro, Pechanga cultural coordinator, at [pmacarro@pechanga-nsn.gov](mailto:pmacarro@pechanga-nsn.gov) or 951-770-8102.

### Pyramid Lake and Stone Mother

Iconic Pyramid Lake and its surrounding Paiute landmarks are under siege by a combination of vandalism and conflicts over water rights. Decades of litigation and



court decisions contrary to the Paiute Tribe's spiritual sustenance and the health of the lake have depleted the waters.

The lake could use the tears of **Stone Mother**, who wept so long and profusely for her exiled children that her tears filled up the lake, according to Paiute legend. She sat so long that she turned to stone, and there she still sits today, her basket next to her. Except that now she presides over a diminishing body of water.

Over the past century, so much water has been diverted from the Truckee River, which is Pyramid Lake's lifeblood, that the lake's water level has dropped by 80 feet and the wetlands of Winnemucca Lake have dried up, according to the tribe.



Stone Mother's tears of grief for her children formed Pyramid Lake. Today she'd be grieving for the depleted waters and at the vandalism.

To pray for healing from this and other ills, the public is invited to this gathering at the Stone Mother/Pyramid Area at 10 a.m. PST on Tuesday, June 21, the longest day of the year and the last of a series of Sacred Places Prayer Days for Mother Earth organized by the Morningstar Institute.

As if the assault to the Paiute's spiritual and physical survival wasn't enough—besides using the lake for sustenance, the tribe preserves the petroglyphs and rock art that chronicle its existence—these places have also been smeared with graffiti and otherwise vandalized, so much so that the Stone Mother and Pyramid on the east shore of the lake had to be closed to visitors.

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

Pyramid Lake and its environs, including the northwestern part of the Great Basin, are home to many sacred sites. It recently held a cleanup and will hold another on Saturday June 25.

“The human responsibility is that we all must conduct the necessary measures to protect our precious resources and treasures,” the Paiute said in their invitation. “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.”

### **Eagle Rock, Michigan**

Some sacred sites are threatened, and others are on the road to recovery; Eagle Rock, on Michigan's Upper Peninsula, awaits its scheduled end like a convict on death row.



Fences and signs keep civilians off Eagle Rock, which is slated for demolition by a UK-based mining company

Rio Tinto, a UK-based mining company, plans to demolish Eagle Rock for the sake of mining primarily nickel and copper, but also gold and other precious metals. Eagle Rock is sacred to the Anishinaabe people, who call it *Migi zii wa sin*.

A year ago, activists camped out on Eagle Rock for a month, but were eventually forced off by Michigan police, and two of them were arrested. Defenders of Eagle Rock have been fighting a legal battle against Rio Tinto and Kennecott Eagle Minerals Co.; as things currently stand, [according to the activist blog StandForTheLand.com](#), Rio Tinto says it will not begin blasting at Eagle Rock earlier than September 14.

### **San Francisco Peaks**

The **San Francisco Peaks** are located in Arizona, on federal land within the Coconino National Forest. They are sacred to Apache, Hopi, Hualapai, Navajo, Yavapai and other Native Nations. These hugely important 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 has indicated that the San Francisco Peaks are sacred and holy to over thirteen Tribes in the southwestern United States.

Yet the Forest Service and the privately owned Snowbowl ski resort, which is located on the Peaks, plan to expand the ski area and to use recycled sewage to make artificial snow. This could have a hideous impact on the Native religions and Native peoples, as well as on the water and health of the region. Native spiritual leaders have watched the creeping recreational development of the area with a wary eye for decades, but these current plans are so beyond what is tolerable action is now the only sensible course.

"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. The development plans released by Snowbowl include clear-cutting 74 acres of rare alpine habitat (home to a multitude of wildlife, including several threatened species) while making new runs and lifts, adding more parking lots, and building a 14.8 miles buried pipeline to transport up to 180 million gallons of wastewater per ski season to use as artificial snow for the 205 acres of ski slopes. The Forest Service and the U.S. Department of Agriculture gave **Snowbowl approval** for pipeline construction this past May.



San Francisco Peaks, Arizona

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.

The protection of San Francisco Peaks has been taken up by **Native Nations as well as environmental organizations**. In 2006, the District Court ruled for the development of Snowbowl. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals overturned the lower court's decision in 2007 and ruled for the Hopi Tribe, Navajo Nation and others. Then 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.

More legal battles followed. The federal government challenged the decision by the Ninth Circuit and by August of 2008, the Ninth Circuit issued a new decision, 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 have since attempted to reach some sort of administrative accommodation with the Obama administration but so far they've not gotten anywhere. *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. The Coalition's appeal continues today, 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](mailto:howard@shankerlaw.net).

### **Snoqualmie Falls in Washington State**

On Tuesday, June 21, at 7:00 a.m., a gathering will be held at the base of Snoqualmie Falls, 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. Lois Sweet Dorman, Snoqualmie Falls Ambassador



said, “Through the work of a diverse group of people, our pre-contact history and the Falls were honored by being recognized as a Traditional Cultural Property on the National Register of Historic Places. The great Indian Peace Councils held on the prairie above the Falls, brought Tribes from the North, South, East and West together.”



Snoqualmie falls in Washington State

The falls have been 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.

“Our Snoqualmie People hold a distinct honor and responsibility as spiritual caretakers of the Falls. It is a place of power, beauty and grandeur that has for over 100 years been strangled to provide a relatively

small amount of electricity. The electricity produced was originally for the still new, City of Seattle. We have for over two decades been public in our efforts to stop the destruction and desecration and to protect, preserve and celebrate Snoqualmie Falls for the Sacred Place of Creation that it is,” Dorman said.

“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,” Dorman said.

Contact: Lois Sweet Dorman, Snoqualmie Falls Ambassador, at [nightfishes@qwest.net](mailto:nightfishes@qwest.net).

### Loyal Creek Sites to be Commemorated

In 1861 “Loyal Creeks” battled Confederate forces around Oklahoma to gain promised federal protections in Kansas. As part of the **2011 National Days of Prayer to Protect Native Sacred Places**, the **Inter Tribal Sacred Lands Trust** will conduct observances at four locations where battles took place.

When the “Loyal Creeks”—a group of 12,000 Muscogee, Euchee, Seminole, Shawnee, Delaware and Kickapoo, as well as free blacks and slaves—discovered federal treaty obligations couldn’t be provided where they lived, they fought back.

The first conflict between the “Loyal Creeks” and the Confederates happened west of what is now Beggs, Oklahoma.

The first conflict happened west of what is now Beggs, Oklahoma; the second was north, just south of what is now Cleveland, Oklahoma.

The third conflict happened at the horseshoe bend of Bird Creek outside what is now Turley, Oklahoma. According to the National Prayer Days press release, the Confederates won the second and third conflicts, and quickly overran the “Loyal Creeks” defenses again during the fourth and final conflict which occurred in a rocky hollow above Battle Creek, northwest of what is now Skiatook, Oklahoma.



The second conflict between the “Loyal Creeks” and the Confederates was just south of what is now Cleveland, Oklahoma.

“Muscogee oral history preserves the image of women picking up their cast iron skillet and swinging them at the horses and gunmen,” reads the press release. “No other Native and black armed alliance on this scale has ever occurred. 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.”

The sites of these conflicts are not protected by any federal, state or local laws, but the Inter Tribal Sacred Lands Trust is trying to change that by having them added to the Fort Scott National Historic Site.

For details on the commemorations, contact Robert W. Trepp at the Inter Tribal Sacred Lands Trust at [r\\_w\\_trepp@yahoo.com](mailto:r_w_trepp@yahoo.com).

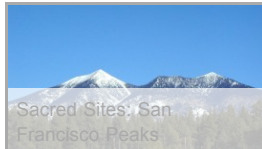
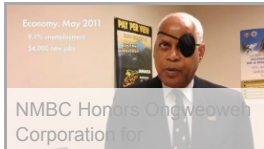
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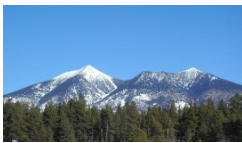
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