

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Chris Oakes: 510.500.5777 — chrisoakesoak@gmail.com

Indigenous California Women Leaders Join Forces to Protect Sacred Sites and Salmon

Ohlone leader Corrina Gould of the Confederated Villages of Lisjan and Chief Caleen Sisk of the Winnemem Wintu will hold a press conference at the West Berkeley Shellmound site (1900 4th Street – corner of Hearst Avenue) this Friday, September 8 at 2:00 PM. The two highly respected women leaders will announce their mutual alliance to protect California's indigenous sacred sites and the state's endangered salmon runs from development.

Berkeley's historically landmarked Shellmound Village Site at 1900 4th Street is threatened by a proposed five-story residential and commercial development. The West Berkeley Shellmound was at the heart of the oldest Ohlone village site on San Francisco Bay, believed to have been inhabited for at least 5,000 years. Local Ohlone oppose the proposed development, as do more than 1,800 Berkeley residents, community leaders and experts in anthropology, archeology, history, law and engineering who provided public comment opposing development earlier this year.

Up north in Mt. Shasta's McCloud River watershed, Chief Caleen Sisk is making a parallel stand to protect Winnemem Wintu sacred sites. These sites, in continuous use for thousands of years, are threatened by the U.S. government's proposal to raise the height of Shasta Dam, a public works project that would flood more than 40 Winnemem sacred sites.

Gould and Sisk are joining forces this fall to raise awareness of the negative impacts that development projects have on California's indigenous communities. In addition to protecting their sacred sites on their traditional territories, Gould and Sisk are launching their alliance by working together on the **Run4Salmon**. The Run4Salmon is a participatory, prayerful journey taking place from September 9th to 22nd, to raise awareness and build public support to help protect and restore declining salmon populations, California river systems and indigenous lifeways.

Native California peoples relied on salmon for thousands of years. Today the salmon are on the verge of extinction due to climate change, pollution, extreme water diversions, and the proposed Delta Tunnels, which environmentalists and tribal leaders say would nearly guarantee the destruction of California's salmon runs. The fight to save the salmon and preserve sacred sites has brought these two leaders together.

Ohlone leader Corrina Gould said, "The salmon that came up our rivers and took care of my ancestors are the same salmon that spawn in Chief Sisk's river and took care of her ancestors."

Winnemem Wintu Chief Caleen Sisk added, "Our tribe has an ancient prophecy, 'When there are no more salmon, there will be no more [Winnemem Wintu](#) people.' For this reason, we believe that we must do everything we can to bring back our salmon. This is our

Dakota Access Pipeline: we have to wake the people up before we are standing in front of bulldozers, and we will.”

A prayer ceremony from 3:00 to 4:00 PM will follow the 2:00 PM press conference. The following day, the Run4Salmon opening ceremony will take place at Sogorea Te near Vallejo at 4:00 PM. Both ceremonies are open to the public. Interviews and photo opportunities will be available on site.

For further information:

Contact: Chris Oakes: 510.500.5777 — chrisoakesoak@gmail.com

West Berkeley Shellmound Facebook page:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/1328362423841558/?ref=br_rs

Run4Salmon website:

<http://www.run4salmon.org/>

Sacred Land Film Project blog (contains list of all Shellmound media coverage to date):

<https://blog.sacredland.org/berkeley-sacred-site-threatened>

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