

# PRESS RELEASE

## ORGANIZATION CONTACT

Valerie J. Grussing, Ph.D.  
NATHPO, Executive Director  
Valerie@nathpo.org  
202-628-8476

## PRESS CONTACT

Julie T. Nelson  
Julie@nathpo.org  
919-602-8157



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
OF TRIBAL HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION OFFICERS

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

### **NATHPO Announces First Annual Sacred Sites Summit Will Be Held Virtually September 22 & 23, 2021**

Washington, D.C., September 3, 2021 – National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (NATHPO), a national non-profit 501(c)(3) membership organization, founded in 1998, of tribal preservation leaders protecting culturally important places that perpetuate Native identity, resilience, and cultural endurance, is thrilled to announce its **First Annual NATHPO Sacred Sites Summit – Virtual Event will be held September 22 & 23, 2021**. The conference theme is *“The Stars Align to Protect Native Places.”*

NATHPO is committed to providing solutions-focused programming in support of Tribal historic preservation. With the unique opportunities being opened by the current social and political climate for Indigenous Peoples, the organization recognized the need to offer a space for Native voices, legislators, and agency leadership and staff to come together in understanding the current legal and policy framework and ways to strengthen protection of Tribal sacred sites. The Sacred Sites Summit is the result. Each subsequent annual Sacred Sites Summit will help effect real change through accountability, as well as through the establishment new goals and relationships. The 2021 summit’s virtual venue will ensure all parties are able to meet safely due to the continued threat of Covid-19, while also providing the opportunity for broader engagement since travel time and expense is not involved.

The virtual Sacred Sites Summit agenda is comprised of two days, each with multiple sessions progressing through four aspects of protecting sacred sites. First, connecting to place through virtual experiences with the land and those who hold it sacred. Second, what is the state of current sacred sites protection in the U.S.? What is the existing legal and policy framework and what are the gaps from the Tribal perspective? Third, what should be in place to close the gaps? What solutions would truly address the issues and protect the places that define us? Fourth, action by defining recommendations and deliberate, measurable steps forward for preservation and reconciliation.

“The time for the Sacred Sites Summit is here. In this historic moment, the stars have aligned – now is the time to work toward real, enduring solutions for protecting Tribal sacred sites. NATHPO has set the stage and this event is shaping up to be a powerful incubator of possibilities as we bring Tribes, legislators and agency leadership and staff together to share best practices, learn from one another and work together,” says Dr. Valerie Grussing, NATHPO Executive Director, “If we and the earth are made from the same stuff, our health and survival are linked to taking care of places.”

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**For more information about the First Annual NATHPO Sacred Sites Summit** – Those interested in more information about NATHPO can visit the website at <https://www.nathpo.org/> For more information on the First Annual NATHPO Sacred Sites Summit, including how to register and sponsorship opportunities, go to the summit registration page at <https://www.nathpo.org/sacred-sites-summit/>.

***Who we are** – NATHPO is a 501(c)(3) non-profit membership association of tribal preservation leaders protecting culturally important places that perpetuate Native identity, resilience, and cultural endurance. Connections to cultural heritage sustain the health and vitality of Native peoples. We provide guidance to preservation officials, elected representatives, and the public about national historic preservation legislation, policies, and regulations. We promote tribal sovereignty, develop partnerships, and advocate for Tribes in governmental activities on preservation issues. For more information visit our website at [www.nathpo.org](http://www.nathpo.org).*

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