

Inter-faith Statement of Solidarity with Lummi Nation

As developed by the coordinating committee, August 14, 2013

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Respect for sacred places is intrinsic in most religious traditions, often at places where a sense of the divine was manifested or experienced. Sacred sites for Christians in Jerusalem include the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the traditional site of Jesus' burial and resurrection. For Muslims, there is the Dome of the Rock where the prophet Muhammad ascended into heaven. For Jews, there is the area associated with the second temple including the Temple Mount.

There are countless examples on all continents. Buddhists hold as holy the places where Buddha was born, enlightened, and died. The Ganges River is sacred to Hindus. Shinto shrines throughout Japan are used for the safekeeping of sacred objects as well as marking sacred spaces. Phiphidi is part of a network of sacred sites in South Africa. Right here in Whatcom County the Lummi Nation's sacred sites are thousands of years old.

More recently, sites in the US are considered sacred where there have been mass deaths including Gettysburg in PA, Hawaii's World War II Memorials, and Ground Zero in NYC, which have pivotal meaning for a whole nation.

Cemeteries are hallowed places for Christians, Buddhists, Jews, and Muslims. Hindus burn their dead and pour their ashes into the sacred Ganges River. Even among the secular there are the burial places of historical heroes and of fallen soldiers. Sacred are the memories of loved ones who have passed from this life. There is a strong moral presumption to oppose disrupting any of these sites and the sacred meanings attached to them.

We are deeply indebted to the Lummi and other indigenous peoples for reminding us that we are part of a living, dynamic cosmos. Creation has a dignity and purpose that goes beyond human quests for economic gain. We violate this when we refuse to accept the limits of Creation and our responsibilities to it, or when we are complicit in practices that result in the further destruction of the wellbeing of the creation for all.

We pray for help to see this beloved garden in the same way as our Lummi neighbors do—as sacred ground, sacred water, sacred air, mother of us all.

Thus, as people of faith, we stand in solidarity with Lummi Nation in opposing any developments that disrupt their sacred lands and waters at Cherry Point.

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