

American Hiking Society Invites Indian Nations to Join National Trails Day(R) June 4

ASPEN, Colo. – May 27 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – June 4, 2005 marks the 13th National Trails Day, an annual celebration coordinated by American Hiking Society, with more than 1000 events across the U.S. “American Hiking Society warmly invites members of the American Indian Nations to join in the fun and healing of Mother Earth on National Trails Day at our magnificent National and Urban Parks,” said Ivan Levin, Trail Programs Manager of the Society.



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Photo Caption: Penobscot Arnie Neptune after blessing the Northern Terminus of the Appalachian Trail at Maine's Mt Katahdin, with Connie Baxter Marlow, Thoreau-Native American seminar leader. Photo courtesy of TheAmericanEvolution.com.

“This is a key step in furthering our vision of a multicultural partnership to restore our lands for all our children,” added Levin. “This will make Mother Earth and Father Sky smile,” according to Olympic skier Suzy Chaffee, co-chair of Native Voices Foundation (NVF).

The President's Healthier US Initiative contacted NVF, (a partnership of US Tribal leaders and Olympians) to spearhead inspiring more sport opportunities for American Indians in the Great Outdoors. “US ski areas are graciously

welcoming the tribes back to their beloved ancestral mountains to ski and snowboard, which is snowballing through the snow states. Along those same lines, National Trails Day is an event that everyone can enjoy, and a chance to put back the wildness in us all," said Chaffee.

In order to engage even more Native peoples in outdoor activities in the coming year, NVF hopes to see National Trails Day events in 2006 include some of the following splendid treasures of our American Heritage that have been uplifting ski communities, as well as the Salt Lake Olympics: Local Indian Elders' blessings, with singing and drumming echoing through the mountains again, sharing their perspectives on nature and earth-honoring dances, like the grass dance to purify the areas, as well as taking mainstream Americans on hikes to see nature through the eyes of "America's First Caretakers," and those of all our ancient ancestors.

"We want to thank the First Americans for their track record of thousands of years of keeping our magnificent lands pristine. Your reverence for Earth, example of taking what you need and leaving the rest for future generations, and sustainable know-how, will make National Trails Day more meaningful at these environmental crossroads," said Levin.

To participate in a National Trails Day event near you, log on to www.nationaltrailsday.org and search for an event in your area. See the fun hiking, restoration, educational and sports activities happening on or around this special day at the most exquisite settings across America.

"Please spread the word, especially to the minorities who may not have received this message before, and let it be known that all people are invited to enjoy and celebrate our trails and public lands together, and be sure to bring the kids," said Levin. Recent studies show that children who do fun activities in nature exhibit more harmonious and calmer behavior and often grow up to be defenders of Mother Nature, so this also makes for a great school project.

"This is a beautiful way for our four colors of humanity, each with a unique gift, to come together to heal Mother Earth," said Penobscot Arnie Neptune, who leads trail blessings at Maine's mystical Mt Katahdin. Coincidentally, the same weekend, this traditional Elder stars in a film series at a historic seminar in Aspen, where Thoreau's 4,000 pages "Indian Notebooks," will be revealed, which show how he revered American Indians. (See

Native Voices Foundation (www.nativevoices.org) is a 501(c)3 Colorado non-profit, whose mission is "to create joyful unity through sports to help preserve Nature's playgrounds for future generations."

For more information on National Trails Day, contact Ivan Levin at ILevin @ AmericanHiking.org or at 301-565-6704 x 208.

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