



For immediate release: June 16, 2022
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Four-Day Summer Solstice Event Slated at Serpent Mound Shawnee tribes, Ohio History Connection organizing June 18-21 observance

PEEBLES, Ohio – The Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma, the Shawnee Tribe and the Ohio History Connection are collaborating on a Summer Solstice at Serpent Mound event from June 18-21.

Serpent Mound, 3850 state Route 73 in Peebles, is a National Historic Landmark built by the ancient American Indians of Ohio. The effigy mound in the form of a snake with a curved tail has become an icon of Indigenous cultural achievements, primarily because of its enormous scale. It also is on the [UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List](#) for consideration as an internationally recognized landmark.

Serpent Mound's American Indian builders likely created the mound in alignment with the sun's cycle. The mound's head is aligned to the setting sun on the summer solstice.

To mark the June 21 summer solstice, the longest day of the year, the Eastern Shawnee and Shawnee tribes and the Ohio History Connection are working in collaboration to showcase the significance of Serpent Mound as a sacred American Indian site.

Both tribes have worked with the Ohio History Connection to provide perspectives on their American Indian ancestors who lived in this area of Ohio. A collaborative summer solstice event also was held in 2021.

Chief Glenna Wallace of the Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma is expected to attend.

"When I first became acquainted with the mounds it was just at Newark—then I quickly learned of Ohio's many mound sites," Wallace said. "I found out that the Serpent Mound is the most famous, most mysterious and most misunderstood of the mounds in Ohio. I believe that, in an effort to protect the mounds, I have the responsibility to share what I know about them in order to protect them, and that includes being present at Serpent Mound. I'm looking forward to being there this summer and sharing an Eastern Shawnee perspective with everyone."

"Having our Tribal Partners here is vital to our commitment of sharing the authentic history of this sacred place," said Burt Logan, executive director and CEO of the Ohio History Connection. "This collaborative observance of the summer solstice will continue to be part of our sharing the history of ancient Ohio and, specifically, Serpent Mound."

Because of an increase in COVID-19 cases in northeast Oklahoma and Adams County in Ohio, members of the Shawnee Tribe will not travel to Serpent Mound from June 18-21.

"We are disappointed to not have the gathering we hoped for this solstice, but the health of our citizens, staff and community is paramount," said Chief Ben Barnes of the Shawnee Tribe.



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"The Ancient Indigenous peoples of this region—the Shawnee homelands—built these geometrically sequenced effigy mounds with careful intention. ... They were built because it had sacred meaning to those Indigenous peoples. Because of the age and location and geography, the Shawnee feel close kinship to this place. There's a lot of evidence that indicates our ancestors may well have built the serpent. And it's not just evidence in Ohio. It's evidence throughout the region, even southward into Kentucky and West Virginia. And evidence from our ceremonial traditions that we still practice today in Oklahoma. So the reason we want to be present at Serpent Mound is to destroy bad stereotypes, those racist ideas, those things that help perpetuate the notion of manifest destiny as if it was a good thing."

Speakers are planned at 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. each day June 18-21, and guided tours of Serpent Mound are scheduled at 2 and 8 p.m. each day. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources will make presentations at 2 p.m. June 20-21. Speakers are expected to include:

- Chief Glenna Wallace of the Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
- Dr. Bret Ruby of Hopewell Culture National Historical Park and National Park Service
- Talon Silverhorn and Aaron Crank of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- Burt Logan, Jen Aultman, Dr. Brad Lepper, Bill Kennedy and Megan Wood of the Ohio History Connection

Please note that the Serpent Mound observation tower, which was built in 1908, is **closed for the season** because of needed repairs. The project is in the planning phase, and work is expected to begin later this year.

Event hours will be 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. June 18-20 and 5 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. June 21. Parking is \$10. For more information, go to ohiohistory.org/events/summer-solstice/. For press kit materials, including photos and video, go to ohiohistory.org/summer-solstice-2022.

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About the Shawnee Tribe: The Shawnee Tribe is a sovereign nation of more than 3,700 citizens living across North America and abroad. Tribal headquarters are located in Miami, Oklahoma. The Shawnee Tribe fought to maintain its independence and homelands despite periods of genocide through warfare and disease at the hands of French, Spanish, British and Americans. The Shawnee were regularly forced to relocate their settlements beyond the ever-expanding boundary of colonial-controlled lands. Thus, the Shawnee are often referred to as the "Greatest Travelers in America," having established historic settlements in more than 20 modern states, with the highest concentration in or near their ancestral homelands of the greater Ohio River region. For more information, go to shawnee-nsn.gov.

About the Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma: The Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma's modern constitution is a multibranch structure with positions elected by the citizens of the tribe. The tribe also offers many services to benefit and empower tribal citizens, including education, career, health and social services. For more information, go to estoo-nsn.gov.



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About the Ohio History Connection: The Ohio History Connection, formerly the Ohio Historical Society, is a statewide history organization with the mission to spark discovery of Ohio's stories. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization chartered in 1885, the Ohio History Connection carries out history services for Ohio and its citizens focused on preserving and sharing the state's history. This includes housing the state historic preservation office, the official state archives, and local history office and managing more than 50 sites and museums across Ohio. For more information, go to ohiohistory.org. The [Greater Columbus Arts Council](#) provides support for Ohio History Connection programs.