

Stop the Illegal Desecration of Glen Cove!

Preserve the Past – Protects the Future – Save Our Sacred Sites!

“A society that cannot remember its past is in peril of losing its soul.”

- Vine Deloria Jr.



The San Pablo Bay Area was once a thriving multi-national region of many indigenous communities. Before the genocide of the Americas initiated by the arrival of Europeans, the area of Solano County was inhabited by the Coastal Miwok and Karkin (Ohlone) nations. Being cultures of traders, they were but a part of a vast network of merchant cultures that extended across the Pacific Ocean and Central America.

Many different tribes utilized the benefits of the once-thriving Northern California chaparral, estuary, and wetlands, respecting the diverse yet delicate ecosystems to preserve them for future generations. The Coastal and Bay Miwok, South Pomo, Wappo, Patwin-Wintun, North Yokut, and Ohlone nations had over 500 shellmounds that were located and recorded by the late 18th century, most of them being thousands of years old. The practice of consciously caring for the land allowed these cultures and ecosystems to thrive. For thousands of years, the ecological balance was maintained, and what is now known as California remained a beautiful, pristine environment.

As Europeans systematically conquered and enslaved California natives, so too were the villages, shellmounds, and ecosystems exploited and desecrated over the years of colonization. Most of these shellmounds were permanently destroyed along with thousands of years of archeological, anthropological, and spiritual history. In the past 20 years, the few remaining shellmounds and burial sites have been destroyed by shopping mall construction, suburban housing tracts, or other corporate-commercial developments. An infamous local example is the Bay Street Mall located in Emeryville, built over a place of ancestral worship with archeological reports proving that it contained vast burial grounds of the Ohlone nation (hence “Shellmound Drive”). Not only are the physical remnants of these ancient peoples destroyed, but so is the respect and awareness regarding our indigenous ancestors.

The 15-acre Glen Cove Shellmound site (registered CA-SOL 236) is one of the **oldest known** shellmounds in the San Pablo Bay. Known as “Sogorea Te,” this site was first documented in archeological records in 1907 by an archeologist from the University of California and, according to a 1988 report by Novato Archeological Resource Service, is at least 3,500 to 4,000 years old. Many of the sacred items unearthed from the site in previous years remain illegally housed in the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology at UC Berkeley which houses over 13,000 ancestral remains and over 200,000 sacred objects. At the Vallejo site, intact skeletal remains and cremations have been documented along with mortars and pestles, arrowheads, spear points, eagle claws, bear teeth, bird-bone whistles, and many ceremonial feather/shell jewelry ornaments. It is literally the many layers of *generations* that actually form the shellmound; it is a sacred site, the **final resting place** for the ancestors of *many* different California tribes.

The Greater Vallejo Reaction District (GVRD) and the City of Vallejo are currently developing a park with trails, parking lot, and amendments that would effectively degrade and destroy this site. Garlon 4, an herbicide, will also be sprayed, saturating the delicate ecosystem with synthetic chemicals. Preserving and protecting this sacred place in the way those who created it means it is a de facto legal right under the **American Indian Religious Freedom Act** and is an *essential* part of Indigenous cultural survival. The desecration of the ancient Glen Cove Shellmound and surrounding burial site and the theft

of remains and sacred items is **criminal**. This ignorance, greed, profit, and power over others, through the abuse of the departed is a crime against humanity. The **\$1.5 million dollar project** is simply an attack by developers who see the land as a direct, intravenous line to their bank accounts. Unfortunately, because of the implications of losing money, many developers choose instead to ignore any artifacts and bones found at a development site. In a bankrupt city, with rising rates of violent crime, schools closing, and homes foreclosed, we can think of better places this money should have been channeled to.

Every day, we see the blatant abuse and destruction of our Sacred Sites. Because **all humans are indigenous to the Earth**, it is up to all of us to protect and preserve the resting places of our Ancestors and other sites that are a rich part of our cultural, spiritual, and traditional heritage. We live in a time where our natural landscapes are fast disappearing, our Sacred Sites are violated, our water and skies poisoned by carcinogenic pollution, our wildlife forced out of their natural habitats while big-box stores, housing developments, and black pavement cover and imprison the land; all in the name of progress.

The following expresses our deeply held convictions about the need to Preserve and Protect the sacred burial grounds at Glen Cove in Vallejo, California:

PRESERVE:

- - Keep the burial site as natural as it was meant to be by Native Ancestors of the Indigenous Tribes.
- - Carefully raze the Stremmel Mansion, the caretaker's house and other structures unnatural to the site. They are built over tribal remains.
- - Adding a protective layer of soil is further desecration of the site. Leave grounds undisturbed.
- - Plan any trails on the perimeter of the site, as the whole 15 acres is shell mound and burial site with significant historical value.

PROTECT:

- - Carefully remove by hand the weeds, and prune if necessary.
- - Maintenance should be done in a non-invasive manner without re grading, discing, etc. with any heavy machinery.
- - Any replanting of Native plant varieties must be done under spiritual and cultural advisement.
- - The Bay Trail and Bay Area Ridge Trail will be safely rerouted around the sacred burial site to safely protect the beauty and history of this sacred place.

We must STAND UNITED for ALL SACRED SITES.

“Only when the last tree has died, the last river poisoned, and the last fish caught will we realize that we cannot eat money.” -Cree prophecy



*For more information visit: www.VallejoInterTribalCouncil.org

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