

Save Oak Flat Act: Calls to Action for Repair Network



Photo by Carol Rose

Background to the Save Oak Flat Act

The Save Oak Flat Act (SOFA) would protect a 2,422-acre site known as Chí'chil Bíldagoteel (Oak Flat), the foundation of traditional Western Apache culture and religion.¹ Congress now has a historic opportunity to protect American Indian cultural and religious resources by enacting the Save Oak Flat Act.²

Rep. Raul Grijalva, D-AZ, introduced the H.R. 1884 Save Oak Flat Act (SOFA) earlier this year. It is now included in the House's \$3.5 trillion budget reconciliation bill. H.R. 1884 will repeal Section 3003 land exchange of the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act. Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-VT, introduced an identical bill (S 915) in the Senate.

Calls to Action

- 1) **Please ask your members of Congress to protect Oak Flat and support the Save Oak Flat Act.** Below are multiple ways to contact your congressional leaders. Even if you have contacted them in the past, please contact them again. Ask them to keep the H.R. 1884 Oak Flat withdrawal language in the budget reconciliation bill. The bill includes a provision that reverses a land swap from the federal government to private copper mining interests in Oak Flat, an area within Arizona's Tonto National Forest.

[Find your Representatives](#) | [Find Your Senators](#) |
[H.R.1884 \(See cosponsors\)](#) | [S.915 \(See cosponsors\)](#)

¹ For background on Oak Flat, visit <http://apache-stronghold.com/>. Watch this hearing to repeal the Oak Flat land exchange by the Natural Resources Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples of the United States (March 12, 2020): [The Irreparable Environmental and Cultural Impacts of the Proposed Resolution Copper Mining Operation](#). Watch NBC Today, March 3, 2021 episode, [Sacred Apache land 'on death row' in standoff with foreign mining titans](#).

² The Save Oak Flat Act is currently included in the [House version](#) of the pending budget reconciliation legislation in Subtitle B—Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands 3 SEC. 70201. OAK FLAT WITHDRAWAL on page 10.

2) **Please call or write each of the [Arizona Congressional Leaders](#) (or the Congressional Leaders in your state) and request that they DO NOT REMOVE the H.R. 1884 Save Oak Flat language from the Reconciliation Bill.** Arizona's two Democratic senators, [Mark Kelly](#) and [Kyrsten Sinema](#) as well as Democrat Rep. [Tom O'Halleran](#), whose 1st Congressional District includes Oak Flat, have not taken a public position on the legislation.

- Click here for a pre-written letter to AZ Senators via the Center for Biological Diversity: [Oak Flat Needs Arizona's Senators to Step Up](#)
- Click here for a pre-written letter to members of Congress via Center for Biological Diversity: [Take action now to help push through this critical legislation](#)

3) **Share these [printable prayer cards](#) with your community, or include them as a church bulletin insert. One of the main calls to action from Oak Flat is PRAYER.**

4) **Pray: Calling all people of faith to pray for Oak Flat!**

- Please ground all actions in prayer.
- Pray in your own manner, organize others to pray with you.
- Find a personal prayer practice that fits you—take a walk, light a candle, sit quietly...
- Reach out to your religious and spiritual leaders and congregations to ask for communal prayers for Oak Flat.
- Pray for the safety and wellbeing of Oak Flat, of all life and water of that Sacred site and of all who defend it, for the passing of the Save Oak Flat Act by Congress.
- Pray for leader Wendsler Nosie's safety, the San Carlos Apache Nation, the fresh water that runs at Oak Flat, and for the trees, plants, and animals in danger.
- Pray for an upcoming Apache Stronghold court hearing on Oct. 22nd with the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco. A caravan will be traveling from Oak Flat.

For more resources before or after you pray:

- [Wendsler Nosie Sr pt 1 | Circle Prayer | Protect Oak Flat](#)
- [Wendsler Nosie Sr pt 2 | The Time is Now! | Protect Oak Flat](#)
- [Wendsler Nosie Sr pt 3 | Testimonies | Protect Oak Flat](#)
- [Video of Oak Flat and Gaan Canyon from above](#)
- Apache Opening Prayer Song (Listen to before you pray) – [Going With My Prayer Song](#)
- Apache Closing Prayer Song (Listen to after you pray) – [Going Home Song](#)

Prayer posted at Oak Flat:

*"We pray for the sacred land of Oak Flat
For the ancestor hawks who watch over us
for the holy trees that keep their arms open for us
for the soothing leaves that provide medicine for us
for the glistening waters that preserve fresh life for us
for the canyons that maintain centuries of healing prayers for us
for Resolution Copper to stop its attack and instead show love and compassion
We pray for the sacred land of Oak Flat."*