

November 9, 2010

Poverty Point State Historic Site Designated as an Affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution

BATON ROUGE - Poverty Point State Historic Site, located in northeast Louisiana, has been accepted as a Smithsonian Affiliate. The site is one of four Affiliates in the state, and one of only 160 Affiliate museums and cultural organizations in the United States.

"I am pleased to announce that Poverty Point State Historic Site has been given the honor of being named a Smithsonian Affiliate," said Lt. Governor Scott Angelle. "This is a tremendous honor and I look forward to this partnership with the world-renowned Smithsonian Institution."

Poverty Point SHS offers visitors educational programs, interpretive exhibits with unique artifacts on display, and the opportunity to experience some of North America's most complex earthen mound architecture reflecting the Native American culture that resided in the area centuries before European settlement of the Western Hemisphere. Archaeological digs are an on-going venture at the site, with continuous discoveries revealing discoveries on the daily lives of the area's residents. Office of State Parks staff also offer programs that demonstrate many of the tools - such as atlatls and cooking balls - that have been excavated on the site.

"This is certainly a great honor to be affiliated with the country's foremost cultural institution," said Dr. Stuart Johnson, the Assistant Secretary for the Office of State Parks. "We look forward to working with the Smithsonian for a greater exposure of the significant archaeological findings at Poverty Point."

The Smithsonian's collections-based Affiliations program provides access to pieces within the Institution's 136 million object collection, enabling Affiliates to augment their existing exhibits and enhance the visitors' experience to their sites. Smithsonian Affiliates may integrate Smithsonian artifacts and collections into their exhibitions, their educational initiatives and their research programs.

"The Smithsonian Institution is honored to launch this affiliation with the Louisiana Office of State Parks," stated Harold A. Closter, Smithsonian Affiliations Director. "The Smithsonian has played a major role in studying and explaining the significance of the earthworks at Poverty Point, and now through this partnership, we hope to share that story on a broader scale. We look forward to working together with the staff of the Louisiana Office of State Parks who have done such an excellent job of preserving and interpreting this remarkable site."

Smithsonian Affiliates partner, and share resources, in an effort to share America's artistic, scientific, and historic heritage. Visitors from across the country come together to experience the landmark moments of space flight, the mystery of gems, the beauty of nature, the passion of art, and the march of history at their local Affiliate site. More information on Smithsonian Affiliates can be found at www.affiliations.si.edu.

Poverty Point State Historic Site offers visitors the opportunity to study the culture of area inhabitants from 1600 to 1300 B.C. Many items found during excavations have been determined to come from as far away as the Ohio and Tennessee River valleys, and the Appalachians of Alabama and Georgia, indicating that the Poverty Point civilization was heavily involved in trade.

The \$4 admission to the historic site provides access to the area museum, video and tram tour. Children (12 and under) and senior citizens (62 and over) are admitted free. Poverty Point is located in West Carroll Parish, east of Monroe on La. 577. For more information on the site, call 1-888-926-5492 toll free or 926-5492 locally.