



# Casco Bay Estuary

PARTNERSHIP

Caring for our waters together

March 20, 2026

Dear First Light Community:

Casco Bay Estuary Partnership is grateful for the opportunity to participate in Confluence, the 2024 – 2025 cohort of the First Light Learning Journey. As an alumni organization, we would like to express our commitment to continued learning and to working toward Wabanaki sovereignty. This statement represents a formal commitment by CBEP to continue this work.

## **1. Build relationships with Indigenous communities**

CBEP staff will actively seek, in partnership with other organizations, to build mutually beneficial and authentic relationships with Indigenous people, tribal governments, and Wabanaki organizations, with the intention of incorporating Indigenous perspectives in our work.

## **2. Donate to the Wolankeyutomone Kisi Apaciyewik Fund**

The Wolankeyutomone Kisi Apaciyewik ("Let us take good care of what has been returned") Fund is a Wabanaki-led participatory grant making program that provides unrestricted, general operating support to Wabanaki tribal governments, Wabanaki NGOs, and Wabanaki citizens. The Fund seeks to repair, rebuild, and sustain Wabanaki relationship, kinship, and access to place by directly helping Wabanaki people and institutions to fulfill their care-taking responsibilities of lands and waters across Wabanaki Traditional Territory in what is now known as Maine.

*CBEP pledges \$1,000/year for a period of five years to this Fund, using money from our "Gift Fund."*

## **3. Participate in the First Light Learning Journey**

When the next First Light Learning Journey begins, CBEP will encourage staff and Management Committee members to participate. CBEP will cover travel and other costs for staff as well as for Management Committee members if cost is a barrier to their participation.

*Our intent is that at least two CBEP staff and/or Management Committee members will participate in the next scheduled First Light Learning Journey cohort.*

## **4. Educate CBEP staff and Management Committee**

For those staff and Management Committee members who are unable to participate in future First Light Learning Journey cohorts, CBEP commits to finding other ways to share learnings and resources with our

staff and partner organizations, and to highlight and sponsor participation in related educational opportunities.

**5. Collaborate on stewardship and research**

We commit to growing Wabanaki engagement with CBEP habitat restoration and scientific work via co-management and incorporation of Indigenous knowledge (“two-eyed seeing”) early in that work.

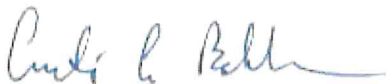
**6. Provide incentives for access for Indigenous uses and land return**

CBEP commits to integrating incentives for access to conserved lands for indigenous cultural uses into our Habitat Protection Fund grant program, and to the extent allowed under legal restrictions on use of National Estuary Program funds, to encourage land return.

**7. Collaborate with Wabanaki communities on educational initiatives**

We pledge to seek collaboration with Wabanaki people in CBEP educational efforts. We will offer honoraria for Wabanaki participation in CBEP activities and remuneration for time and expertise. We will revise Community Grants program criteria to encourage Wabanaki initiatives and respectful collaboration with Indigenous people.

Sincerely,



Curtis Bohlen, Director



Charlene Poulin, Outgoing Chair