



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF
INLAND FISHERIES & WILDLIFE
353 WATER STREET
41 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA ME 04333-0041



October 1, 2024

First Light Community
c/o New Learning Journey
700 Bragg Hill Road
Payson, VT 05673

RE: Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife letter of Intention

The purpose of this letter is to communicate, in writing, the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW) intention to engage with the Wabanaki community by continuing to participate as a member of the First Light Community.

Statement #1 - Participation: The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW) is committed to continuing the First Light Learning Journey through Steve Dunham's ongoing participation with First Light, and for this new journey, Cohort 3, participation by Amy Dowley, GIS Coordinator for Beginning with Habitat, a Program within the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Coordinator. Participation by Amy will increase our capacity to continue the work of building relationships and allyship with the First Light community including the Wabanaki Nations of Maine.

Statement #2—Trust as the Foundation: MDIFW is committed to building trust and being trustworthy to form the foundation of our work with Indigenous People.

Statement #3—Building Relationships: MDIFW is committed to building relationships with Indigenous people, organizations, and governments to include their voices and perspectives in the department's work. MDIFW is eager to explore ways to benefit and collaborate with Indigenous people.

Statement #4 – Incorporating Indigenous Knowledge: MDIFW is committed to weaving Indigenous knowledge and Western science into our work and elevating the voices of the Wabanaki in the process.

Statement #5 – Elevating Wabanaki Voices: MDIFW does not speak for Indigenous People. Working together, we can elevate their voices and priorities and advance our shared goals.

Statement #6 – Build Not Burden: MDIFW's work aims to build rather than burden the capacity of our Indigenous partners.

Statement #7 – Land Access: MDIFW will explore how we can partner with the Wabanaki people as they seek access to land for cultural uses and as we collectively deal with the threat of Emerald Ash Borer.

Sincerely,

Judith Camuso
Commissioner