



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION & FORESTRY
BUREAU OF PARKS AND LANDS
22 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333

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GOVERNOR

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September 24, 2024

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

RE: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Letter of Intention

The purpose of this letter is to communicate, in writing, the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry's (DACF) intention to engage with the Wabanaki community by continuing to participate as a member of the First Light Community.

Statement #1—Participation: DACF is committed to continuing the First Light Learning Journey through Jocelyn Hubbell's ongoing participation with First Light, and for this new journey, Cohort 3, participation by Christina Bear, the Bureau of Parks and Land's new Historian, and participation by Laura Graham, Director of Lands for Maine's Future within the Bureau of Resource Information and Land Use Planning. Participation by Christina and Laura 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: DACF is committed to building trust and being trustworthy to form the foundation of our work with Indigenous People.

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

Statement #4 – Incorporating Indigenous Knowledge: DACF 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: DACF 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: DACF's work aims to build rather than burden the capacity of our Indigenous partners.

Statement #7 – Land Access: DACF 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 (which will include discussions/collaborations regarding land access for invasive species management and cultural uses).

Sincerely,

Andy Cutko, Director, Bureau of Parks and Lands

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