



September 27, 2024

### **First Light Commitment Letter**

Maine Coast Heritage Trust (MCHT) is grateful for the opportunity to again have staff and Board participants in the 2024 -2025 cohort of the First Light Learning Journey.

As an alumni organization, we were asked to indicate commitment to continued learning and work. MCHT has actively participated in and learned from and with First Light and has been evolving our work in multiple ways as we learn more. Slowly, our organization is changing what we do and how we work and plans to continue learning and changing. The spectrum of land projects that this organization is involved in has expanded to include a number of active land return projects, and MCHT has two staff positions focused on relationship building with Wabanaki communities.

We are changing decision making processes: a cross departmental work team has been formed to focus on Wabanaki relations for the organization, building an annual budget and workplan for this work, creating resources for the staff and Board, and recommending changes for all departments. MCHT's Board and staff have participated in training and learning opportunities focused on Wabanaki people and around land return. Externally, MCHT continues to serve on the Conservation Community Delegation, and is helping to facilitate learning opportunities for land trusts through the Maine Land Trust Network conference, workshops, and more.

MCHT is committed to further evolving our approaches to this work as well. Our commitment here includes to build on the piloting of the We Commit mechanism by aiming to add more preserves to invite cultural access. MCHT offers to continue facilitation of learning opportunities for land trusts around Maine through the Maine Land Trust Network where that is helpful to First Light and to the work of land return. We commit to continuing to learn about how to improve land stewardship, and to continuing to collaborate in this work.

MCHT realizes that we need to continue the learning and that there is much more work to do. Therefore, it is an honor to participate in the 2024-2025 cohort of the First Light Learning Journey. We are committed to continued participation in this important work and excited about the opportunity to further our learning as individuals and as a group.

Sincerely,

Tom Armstrong, MCHT Board Chair

Angela Twitchell, Land Trust Program Director

Nolan O'Brien, Executive Assistant to the President and to the Director of Engagement