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April 9, 2020

Letter of Commitment to First Light Conservation Community Delegation on Wabanaki Land Access and Land Issues

This letter documents the commitment of Maine Coast Heritage Trust (MCHT) to serving as a member of the Conservation Community Delegation on Wabanaki Land Access and Land Issues.

Wabanaki Leaders and Community Members engaged with the First Light Journey have requested that the conservation community form a Delegation (similarly sized to the Wabanaki Task Force) to work with the Wabanaki Task Force being formed. Attached is a working document outlining the initial set of goals of such a Delegation.

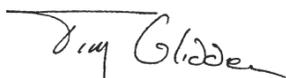
This Delegation is envisioned to meet mostly by phone but occasionally in person, approximately every 6 weeks or a total of about nine times a year, plus approximately 2 hours a week work time on products or other aspects. Understanding that, MCHT commits that a staff person, currently Ciona Ulbrich of our Land Protection staff, will represent MCHT on this Delegation at least until June of 2021. As part of her role, Ciona will keep MCHT, and in particular MCHT's Land Trust Program apprised of this work and progress.

MCHT's Land Trust Program works with land trusts around Maine, and will also work in collaboration with the Delegation. MCHT's Land Trust Program is prepared to assist with communications or other engagement with the broader land trust community in Maine as appropriate. The Program distributes an Infoline e-newsletter once every 2-3 weeks, and could incorporate brief pieces or links to First Light updates. The Program offers workshops throughout the year and could focus one or two on Wabanaki interests, possibly feeding into a Wabanaki thread into the Land Trust Conference in 2021. Thanks in part to First Light, the Program is very aware of the need to not feed land trust interest in requesting information or participation by Wabanaki, so these communications will need to be done thoughtfully.

MCHT understands that this delegation will have a budget and cost needing funding. Currently, we all find ourselves in very uncertain times in terms of fundraising. Therefore, at this time, MCHT and the Land Trust Program are unable to offer a financial commitment to the Delegation effort beyond its substantial in-kind contribution. However, this is something we are willing to reconsider in the future.

In 2019 as part of its new Strategic Plan, Maine Coast Heritage Trust's Board of Directors voted to initiate a discovery process with Wabanaki representatives to explore mutual goals, potential partnerships and avenues for deeper engagement. Maine Coast Heritage Trust is honored to commit to continued participation in this important work.

Sincerely,


Tim Glidden
President