



MAINE INDIAN
TRIBAL-STATE
COMMISSION

MAINE INDIAN TRIBAL-STATE COMMISSION MEETING

June 6, 2025 -- 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians Community Center
568 Foxcroft Road, Houlton, ME

Remote Access Available

Public Live Stream: <https://www.youtube.com/@maine-tribal-state-commission/streams>

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	2. Review and Approval of January 6, January 10, and April 18, 2025 Meeting Minutes (*)	3, 4, 8
	3. Update on State-Appointed Commissioner Vacancies	—
	4. Maine State Archives-MITSC-University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections Memorandum of Understanding (*)	9
11:00 a.m.	5. Report on Wabanaki Cultural Competency Training—Survey Results & Curriculum Development <i>Guest: Ralph Cammack, Director of Research Wabanaki Public Health & Wellness</i>	14, 20
	6. Report on Revision of 1998 MITSC Fishing Rules & Possible Tribal-State MOU on GIS Data Sharing <i>Commissioner Robert Checkoway</i>	28
12:00 p.m.	-- BREAK --	
12:30 p.m.	7. Reflections on the 132 nd Legislature and Impact on Wabanaki Nations and Citizens <i>Commissioner Oshikiyol Crofton-Macdonald, President, Wabanaki Alliance</i>	30
	8. Approval of Bylaws Amendments (*)	32
	9. MITSC Financial, Grant Projects & Staff Activity Reports	39, 42
2:00 p.m.	-- ADJOURNMENT --	
	Next MITSC Meeting: July 18, 2025, Mi'kmaq Nation (or Presque Isle)	

(*) Vote needed.



Chair		Penobscot Nation Commissioners			
1.	Newell Lewey [Seat 1] Passamaquoddy Tribe 293 Leighton Point Road Pembroke, ME 04666 (C) (207) 944-2331 newell.lewey@gmail.com (Appointed to 4-Year Term on 01/25/2022) (4-Year Term Expires: 06/25/2027)	6.	Robert (Bert) Polchies [Seat 9] Penobscot Nation Current Mailing Address: 101 Midway Lane Glenburn, ME 04401 Reservation: 8 Loop Road Indian Island, ME 04468 (C) (207) 385-3239 n8v_songwriter@yahoo.com (3-Year Term Expires: 01/08/2027)		
Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians Commissioners		7.	Darren Ranco [Seat 8] Penobscot Nation 43 Thompson Road Dedham, ME 04429 (C) (603) 252-2030 darren.ranco@maine.edu (3-Year Term Expires: 01/17/2028)		
2.	Oshikiyol (Ezekiel) Crofton-Macdonald [Seat 12] Tribal Ambassador Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians 245 Henderson Road Hodgdon, ME 04730 (O) (207) 532-4273 (C) (207) 538-1760 (F) (207) 532-7287 Zcroftonmacdonald@gmail.com (3-Year Term Expires: 02/07/2027)				
3.	Samuel St. John [Seat 13] Water Resource Technician Houlton Band of Maliseet Indian 88 Bell Road Littleton, ME 04730 (C) (207) 267-0911 (O) (207) 532-4273 ext. 221 samstjohn7@yahoo.com (3-Year Term Expires: 02/27/2027)	State of Maine Commissioners			
		8.	Robert (Bob) Checkoway [Seat 11] 6 Broad Sound Lane Freeport, ME 04032 (C) (207) 272-0389 robert.checkoway@gmail.com (3-Year Term Expires: 04/01/2027)		
		9.	Gordon (Nels) Kramer [Seat 3] 180 Abbott Drive Enfield, ME 04493 (207) 290-0850 Gnkramer51@gmail.com (3-Year Term Expires: 04/10/2027)		
Passamaquoddy Tribe Commissioners		10. 11. 12. 13.	Vacant [Seat 2] Vacant [Seat 4] Vacant [Seat 5] Vacant [Seat 10]		
4.	Joseph (Joey) Barnes [Seat 6] Passamaquoddy Tribe at Motahkomikuk P.O. Box 275 Princeton, ME 04668 josephb1968@hotmail.com (207) 214-0626 (Reappointed to 3-Year Term on 5/31/2024) (3-Year Term Expires: 04/10/2027)				
5.	Rena Newell [Seat 7] Passamaquoddy Tribe at Sipayik P.O. Box 329 Perry, ME 04667 rena@wabanaki.com (C) (207) 214-1177 (3-Year Term Expires: 06/25/2027)			Mi'kmaq Nation Observer Richard Silliboy Mi'kmaq Nation (C) 538-8328 richard.silliboy@myfairpoint.net	

**Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission Minutes
Special Meeting - January 6, 2025
Virtual via Zoom
Public Live Stream Provided**

The meeting was called to order at 12:10 p.m.

Commissioners Present (by Zoom):

Robert (Bert) Polchies, Robert (Bob) Checkoway, Joseph Barnes, Oshikiyol (Ezekiel) Crofton-Macdonald, Darren Ranco, Rena Newell

Commissioners Absent: Sam St. John, Newell Lewey, Gordon (Nels) Kramer

Staff Present: Jill Tompkins (Executive Director), Rachel Bell (Projects Coordinator)

Guests Present: Vice-Chief Richard Silliboy

Public: By audio stream

Review of Agenda and Quorum: Quorum was not established. Commissioners reviewed the agenda and made no changes.

Legislative Update:

The special meeting aimed to get approval to submit the proposed legislation, “An Act Regarding Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission Employee Group Health Plan Eligibility” [working title and draft only]. Before the meeting, Jill emailed to the Commission a memo dated December 23, 2024, explaining the background of the proposed bill to extend state employees’ group health plan eligibility to MITSC employees and the draft proposed bill. Commissioners discussed the bill. Everyone present was in favor, and it was agreed that staff would follow up with any commissioners who were absent to move forward and submit the bill by the cloture date.

Next meeting:

January 10, 2025, at Passamaquoddy Tribe at Motahkomikuk Tribal Offices, 8 Kennebasis Road, Indian Township.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:34 p.m.

*Not for release until formally approved
by the Commission.*

**Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission Minutes
January 10, 2025
Passamaquoddy Tribe at Motahkomikuk
Tribal Offices - 8 Kennebis Road, Indian Township
Public Live Stream Provided**

Commissioners Present (In person and by Zoom):

Robert (Bert) Polchies, Robert (Bob) Checkoway, Joseph (Joey) Barnes, Samuel (Sam) St. John, Oshikiyol (Ezekiel) Crofton-Macdonald, Gordon (Nels) Kramer, Darren Ranco, Rena Newell, Newell Lewey (Chair)

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Jill Tompkins (Executive Director), Rachel Bell (Projects Coordinator)

Guests Present: Elliott Shibles (Jill Tompkins' son)

Public: By audio stream

The live stream started at 10:00 a.m. and the meeting came to order at 10:19 a.m.

Opening: Newell Lewey offered an honoring to the Creator.

Introductions: Those in attendance in person and on video introduced themselves.

Review of Agenda and Declaration of Quorum: Quorum was established. Commissioners reviewed the agenda and made no changes.

Approval of Minutes: The Commission reviewed the proposed minutes for the meetings on September 13, 2024 and November 8, 2024. No changes were requested.

Motion to approve the September 13, 2024 and November 8, 2024 meeting minutes made by Bert Polchies. Seconded by Joey Barnes. Vote in favor of approving the September 12, 2025 minutes: Unanimous. Vote in favor of approving the November 8, 2024 minutes: 6. Opposed: 0. Abstentions: 3 (Rena Newell, Newell Lewey, and Darren Ranco were absent from the November 8, 2024 meeting).

MITSC Financial Report:

Jill Tompkins provided an update on MITSC's bookkeeper, Pat Mallar, who had to take time off due to an unexpected health crisis. Jill has been covering Pat's work. Jill reported

her intention to shift from using the desktop version of QuickBooks to QuickBooks Online so that she will have remote access to the finances. Jill shared MITSC's Machias Savings Bank and Bangor Savings Bank statements. MITSC changed its payroll company from Paychex to Bangor Savings Payroll. The change ensured better reliability, more responsive customer service, and reduced processing fees.

Staff Report on Work Plan Progress and Grant Deliverables:

Jill reviewed the written staff report and shared a chart outlining the various grants MITSC has received, along with their respective deliverables and reporting requirements. Rachel provided a brief report on current *Tributaries* projects.

Legislative Update:

There was a brief discussion of new legislative bills. Ambassador Crofton-McDonald provided an overview of the anticipated tribal bills, which include another sovereignty bill implementing the Task Force recommendations, another beneficial federal laws bill, a Wabanaki Studies bill, and other smaller, more specific bills dealing with fisheries, online gaming, and the commercial sale of game meat.

MITSC-Waters Fishing Rules Project Report

Bob Checkoway shared where things currently stand with the fishing rules update project. Tribal biologists had requested that the application of the S-33 rule (which limits the length of salmon and trout that may be taken to 25 inches) be expanded to prevent the catching of endangered Atlantic salmon, which are sometimes confused with landlocked salmon. This issue requires input from the Department of Marine Resources, so MITSC has taken steps to bring them into the conversation. Bob has also established contact with Joe Overlock's replacement at IF&W. Nels Kramer suggested another in-person meeting between tribal and state biologists might be very helpful and effective.

-LUNCH BREAK-

MITSC Outreach Enhancement Project:

Rafi Hopkins of Section Sign, LLC, shared the recent redesign and improvements made to the MITSC website's home page and library. Commissioners expressed their appreciation for and approval of the new website.

MITSC Name and Logo Update

A discussion occurred about seeking a legislative change of the name, Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission, to a title that eliminates the word “Indian.” Along with a name revision, it was decided that the MITSC logo should be updated accordingly. A subcommittee comprised of Newell, Nels, and Bert was formed to work on the name change and logo.

Wabanaki Cultural Competency Training Survey Update:

Ralph Cammack from Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness joined the group via Zoom and provided an update on the development of the new cultural competency training and shared the two surveys drafted for use with tribal members and state workers.

Judiciary Committee Presentation:

Jill and Rachel requested feedback on what the Commissioners would like them to share with the Judiciary Committee during their informational presentation the following week. During this discussion, Newell Lewey reported on his last meeting with Jerry Reid when they discussed the four vacant State MITSC Commissioner seats. The vacancies have not been addressed yet.

America’s Field Trip Presentation:

Andrei Jacobs, Director, Tribal Partnerships, America250.org, made a presentation to the group via Zoom about an opportunity for Native youth to enter the America’s Field Trip Youth Contest: “What Does America Mean to You?” celebrating the United States’ Semiquincentennial. Winners will receive an all-expenses paid trip to one of a selection of historic locations around the country. Jill said that MITSC would distribute the contest notice via its list serve.

MITSC “Remote Participation in Public Proceedings Policy” (Bylaws Amendment):

A draft Bylaw provision “Remote Participation in Meetings” to be added at “Organization” (I)(1-5) was discussed briefly. The commission agreed to revisit the proposed amendment at its next meeting. Other amendments that will be considered at the March 14, 2025, meeting include the substitution of the term “tribal citizen” for “tribal member”

and updating the “Terms,” I(C) section to reflect the change in Maine law that created staggered terms for the Governor-appointed MITSC Commissioners.

Next meeting:

March 14, 2025, at the University of Maine in Augusta.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 2:42 p.m.

*Not for release until formally approved
by the Commission.*

Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission Minutes
April 18, 2025
Randall Student Center, 134 (First Floor Conference Room)
University of Maine at Augusta
Public Live Stream Provided

Meeting was called to order at 10:20 a.m.

Members Present (In person and by Zoom):

Chair: Newell Lewey

Commissioners: Robert (Bob) Checkoway, Oshikiyol (Zeke) Crofton-Macdonald, Gordon (Nels) Kramer, Rena Newell, Robert (Bert) Polchies, Darren Ranco, and Samuel (Sam) St. John

Commissioners Absent: Joseph (Joey) Barnes

Staff Present: Jill Tompkins (Executive Director), Rachel Bell (Projects Coordinator)

Guests Present: Chief Clarissa Sabattis, Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, Christian J. Cotz, Deputy Secretary of State, Kimberly (Kim) Patwardhan, Assistant Attorney General, Gregory Curtis, Head, Special Collections and Projects, Fogler Library, University of Maine, Ralph Dana, Sipayik Environmental Department, Brian Altvater, Passamaquoddy Citizen and Schoodic Riverkeeper, Eric Altvater, Passamaquoddy Citizen, Laura Rose Day, Skutik River Restoration Trust, and Teresa Singh, J.D.,

Public: By audio stream

Opening: Newell Lewy offered an honoring to the Creator.

Introductions: Those in attendance in person and on video introduced themselves.

Review of Agenda and Declaration of Quorum: Quorum was not established. Commissioners reviewed the agenda and made no changes.

Approval of Minutes: Carried Over.

Maine State Archives-MITSC-University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections Memorandum of Understanding

Christian passed around a copy of the MOU outlining the components of a draft agreement between the Maine State Archives, MITSC, and the University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections. The proposed agreement would formalize the storage of the MITSC archives at the Fogler Library and would facilitate their digitization to make them searchable and publicly accessible. Christian and Greg were able to answer questions from the Commissioners, but no formal motion approving the agreement could be made due to a lack of quorum.

Sipayik-Eastport Causeway Project Presentation

Ralph presented a PowerPoint presentation discussing the complex history of the causeway and its environmental and tribal community impacts. He explained the current efforts and collaboration towards the goal of removing the causeway. Ralph shared a copy of the Passamaquoddy Chief and Council at Pleasant Point Resolution #3.4.2025-1, “Opening of the Causeway to Restore Aquatic Connectivity Between the Passamaquoddy Bay and the Cobscook Bay.”

12:00 p.m. -- LUNCH -- 12:30 p.m.

Columbia Law School LL.M. Pathways Fellowship 2025

Teresa introduced herself to the Commissioners. She shared some of her background working with indigenous organizations in Australia, which inspired her to pursue an internship at MITSC. Teresa has been awarded a one-year fellowship, beginning in July 2025, to work on various MITSC projects that implement the recommendations of SEA RUN.

Development of MITSC Testimony Submission Guidelines

There was a group discussion about how and when MITSC should be submitting testimony to the Maine Legislature on bills concerning the Wabanaki nations--especially given the challenges of the Legislature’s schedule, which often moves quickly and without advance notice. The group decided on criteria for participating in legislative activities on bills that are not proposed on MITSC’s behalf, do not mention MITSC, or do not directly affect MITSC’s responsibilities. MITSC will only act on bills that tribal leadership has communicated are a priority. When these bills have been identified, MITSC will decide in a meeting with a full quorum which bills the Commission should submit

testimony for. The full commission will then delegate authority to a sub-committee or legislative committee that can meet as needed to make any decisions that require a quick turnaround. The legislative committee will meet and report back to the whole group. If the committee has questions, they can reach out to the entire commission via email. When it comes time to submit the testimony, either the MITSC Chair or the Executive Director will do so unless there is someone else, such as a Commissioner, with greater expertise in the subject. Jill is willing to draft amendments to MITSC's Bylaws to formalize the guidelines.

Review of 132nd Legislature Bills Affecting Wabanaki Nations and Citizens:

Zeke and Jill provided an update on the status of tribal bills pending in the Legislature, including LD 1474, the Wabanaki Studies bill, and LD 999, the bill submitted on behalf of MITSC to make its employees eligible to participate in the State of Maine group health plan.

Approval of Bylaws Amendments

Carried Over.

MITSC Financial Report & Audit Request for Proposals

Jill provided a financial update, including the transition from desktop QuickBooks to QuickBooks online and the ongoing search for a new auditing firm. Chief Sabattis recommended the firm, Chester M. Kerney of Presque Isle, based on the Band's positive experience working with them in the past.

Grant & Staff Activity Reports

Jill provided a brief update on the various grant-related projects. Due to time constraints, Commissioners were referred to the detailed written staff reports in the materials packet for additional information.

Next MITSC Meeting: It was decided that the May 9, 2025, meeting at the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians Community Center should be postponed until June 6, 2025.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.



Maine Department of the Secretary of State

Memorandum of Understanding / Agreement / Contract

Between

The Department of the Secretary of State, Maine State Archives, Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission (MITSC) and the University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections and Projects.

Purpose/Scope:

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) describes the roles and responsibilities between Maine State Archives, Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission (MITSC) and the University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections and Projects as they pertain to outlining our collaborative relationship and the responsibilities/expectations of each group. While MITSC records will be managed by the Maine State Archives, they will be housed at the University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections and Projects and made publicly accessible there.

Responsibilities:

Department of Secretary of State, Maine State Archives agrees to:

- a. Work with MITSC to draft and approve records retention schedules for the MITSC-created records
- b. Digitally image the existing MITSC records for free and make them available to MITSC in the cloud-based digital preservation system (LibSafe).
- c. Post public (not confidential) MITSC records to the Open Access platform
- d. Accept and preserve both archival and long-term retention records created digitally directly into the MSA's LibSafe digital preservation system.
- e. Store the digital records of MITSC in the LibSafe system free of charge
- f. Provide MITSC staff and those authorized individuals they designate with permission-based access to the MITSC records within the LibSafe digital preservation system.

Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission (MITSC) agrees to:

- a. Follow MSA Title 5, Chapter 6 "Archives and Records Management Law"
- b. Designate a MITSC employee to be a Records Officer who will manage the records created by MITSC and be the direct point of contact for MSA

- c. Transfer paper records on a timely basis, following the approved records retention schedules, to the UMaine Fogler Library Special Collections and Projects and digital records to the MSA digital preservation system, LibSafe.
- d. Clearly communicate with UMaine Fogler Library and MSA about all record transfers
- e. Notify MSA and UMaine Fogler Library within 30 days of any changes in staff contact information or authorized personnel

University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections and Projects agrees to:

- a. Serve as an alternate repository to house and make accessible the collection.
- b. Store the paper records of MITSC free of charge
- c. Provide an annual file-level inventory of the MITSC records held at UMaine Folger Library to both MSA and MITSC

Duration/Termination of Agreement.

- a. This MOU will be renewable every five years.
- b. This MOU may be terminated at any time upon 60 days written notice from any party.

This MOU will take effect when signed by the Maine State Archives, MITSC and UMaine Folger Library. The MOU may be modified at any time by the mutual written agreement of all agencies.

Conflict of Interest. Maine State Archives, Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission (MITSC) and the University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections and Projects warrants that it currently has no interest and shall not acquire any interest, direct or indirect, which would conflict in any manner or degree with the performance of services under this agreement.

Confidentiality. Confidential information in the possession of, or shared with, either party to this agreement will not be released to any individual or organization without written authorization of both parties. Public records as defined in 1 M.R.S.A. §402(3) may not be considered confidential information under this provision.

Use of Information. Maine State Archives, Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission (MITSC) and the University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections and Projects warrants that it has the appropriate knowledge and skill to perform all agreed-upon responsibilities.

In witness whereof, the undersigned have executed this Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the Secretary of State, Maine State Archives, Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission (MITSC) and the University of Maine Fogler Library.

Approved and agreed to as of this 6th day of June 2025.

Newell Lewey

Chair, Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission

Signature

Gregory Curtis

Head, Special Collections and Projects
Fogler Library, University of Maine

Signature

Shenna Bellows

Secretary of State

Signature

MITSC Maine State Employee Wabanaki Awareness Survey

Preliminary Summary of Responses from Tribal Citizens

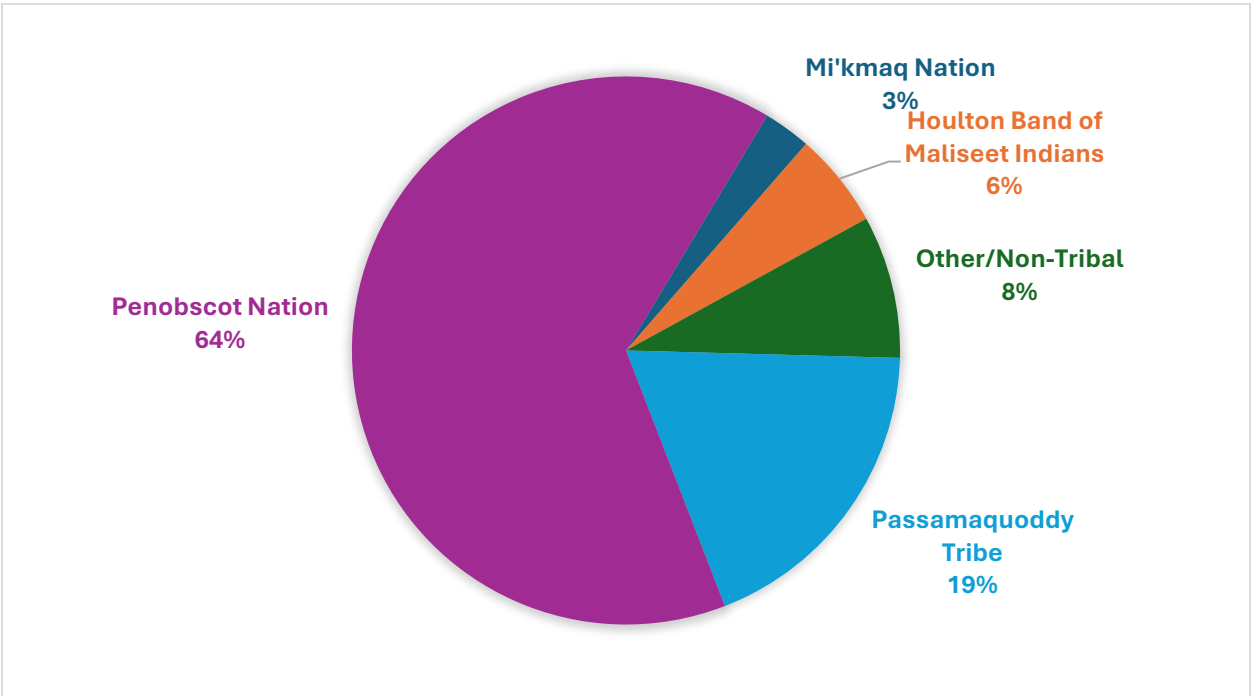
May, 2025

Introduction

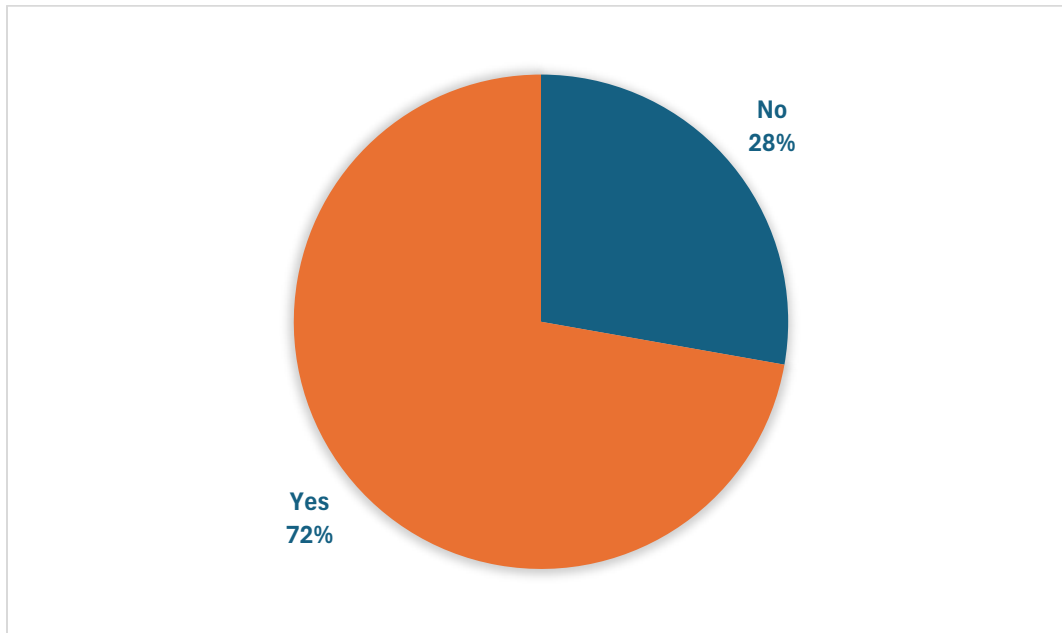
The Center for Wabanaki Research, Knowledge, and Innovation (CWRKI) at Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness (WPHW) supported the Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission (MITSC) in implementing two survey, titled, “Tribal Citizen Survey of State Worker Wabanaki Training Needs,” and “Maine State Employee Wabanaki Awareness Survey,” to gather feedback from Tribal community members and State employees, in order to provide information to guide the development of a training program. The survey was implemented electronically, with responses being collected during March, April, and May of 2025. A total of 327 State employees and 36 Tribal citizens completed the survey. This document provides a preliminary summary of the responses from Tribal citizens.

Summarized Responses

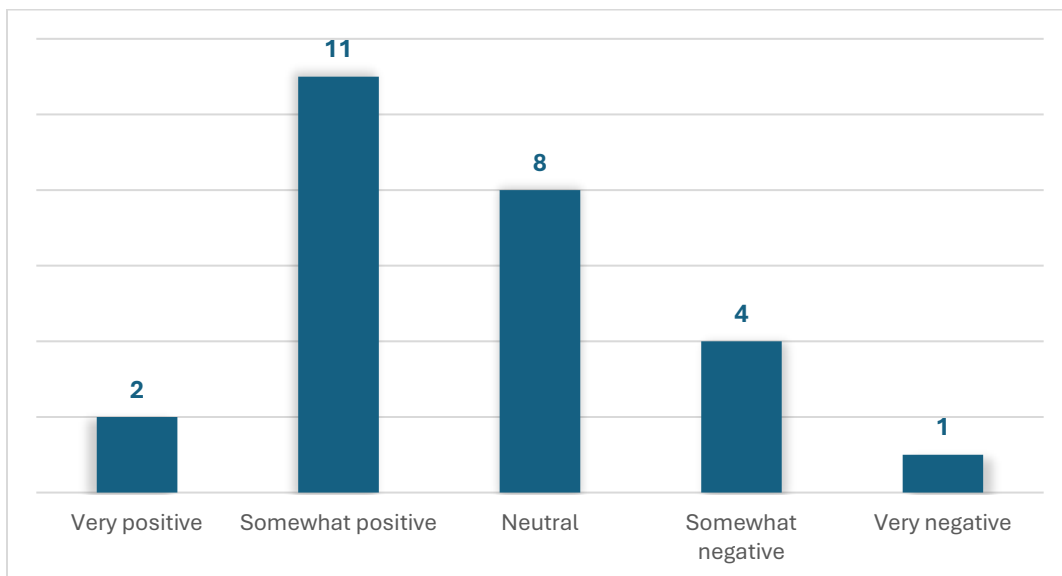
1. How do you identify?



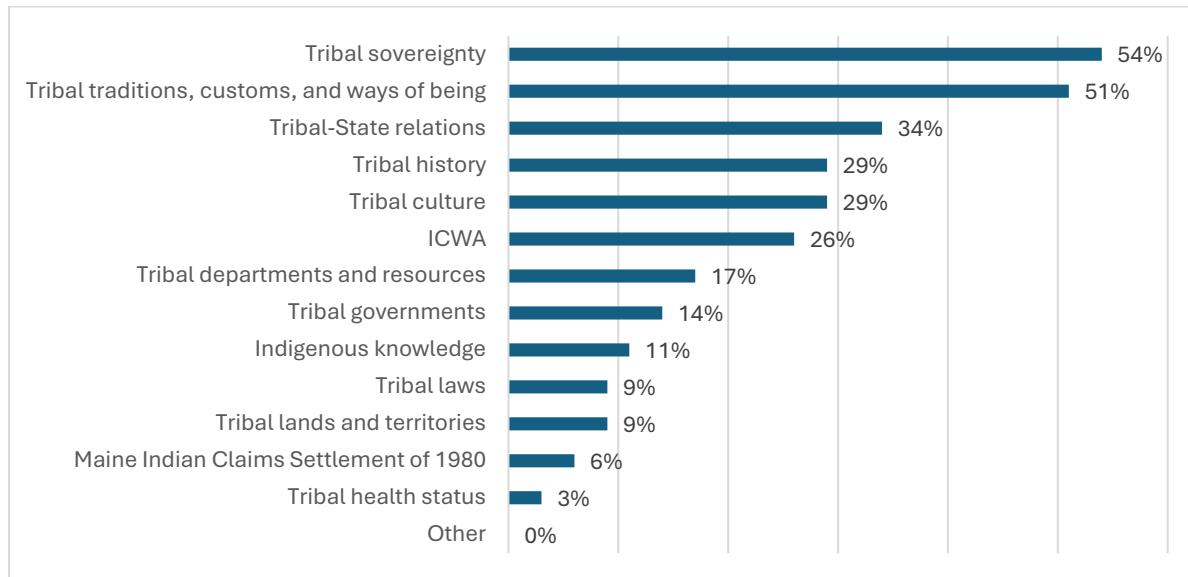
2. Do you have experience interacting with staff from Maine state government agencies (such as the Departments of Health and Human Services, Corrections, Inland Fish & Wildlife, Education, Motor Vehicles, etc.)?



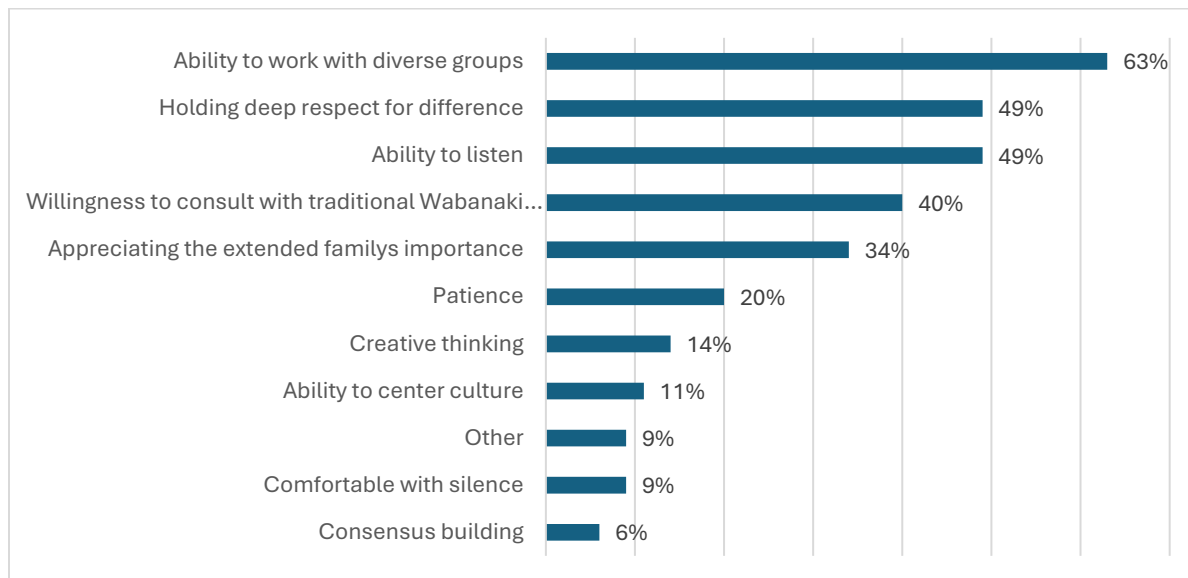
3. How would you rate your experience with government agencies?



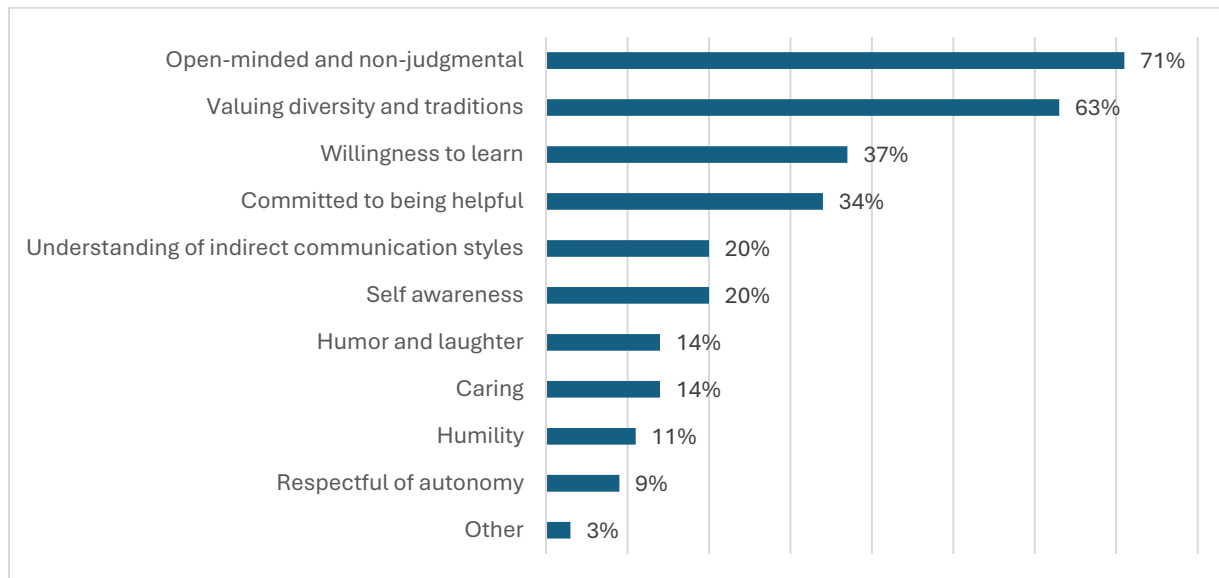
4. What knowledge should a State of Maine staff person have to work with Wabanaki clients or groups in a culturally competent manner? (Please select the top 3)



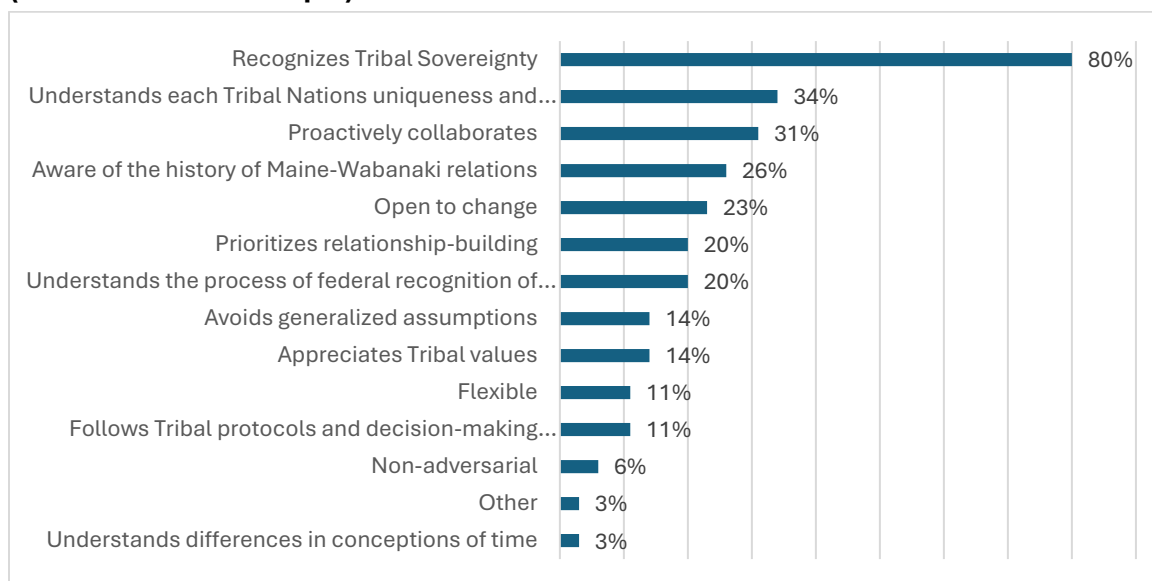
5. What skills should a State of Maine staff person have to work with Wabanaki people in a culturally appropriate manner? (Please select the top 3)



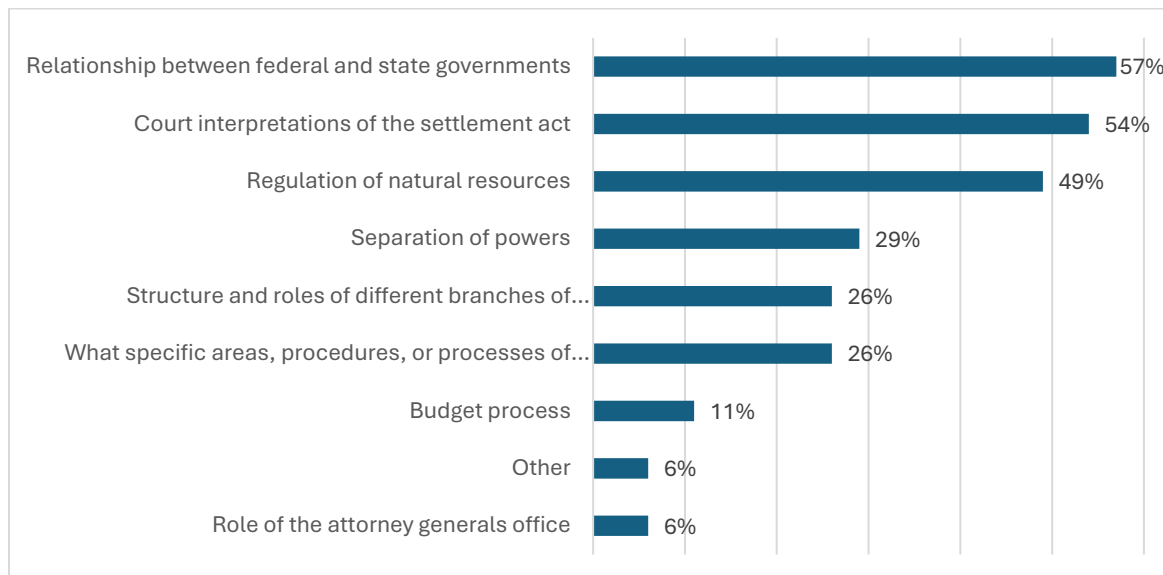
6. What attitudes or values should a State of Maine staff person have to work with Wabanaki people and communities in a culturally competent manner? (Please select the top 3)



7. What does a respectful government-to-government relationship look like to you? (Please select the top 3)



8. What specific areas, procedures, or processes of Maine state government would you like to know more about? (Please select the top 3)



9. What changes would you suggest to improve your future experience with state agencies and state workers?

Responses to the question included the following:

- *Aside from having more knowledge on the subjects, I feel that having a Tribal member as a representative would be helpful. That person can pass along info to the community, help them understand laws, and be their voice for future recommendations.*
- *Begin to accept tribes in a more collaborative approach by visiting tribal communities and involve agencies with related trainings and events*
- *Continue to have tribal representation in state matters & have that communicated back to each community*
- *Cultural sensitivity knowledge and sovereignty*
- *Group sessions that ask for individual ideas, identify what needs clarification and find a common path. We do not need to be saved by outside ideals that conflict with our own. Bring back Elder Council to hear tribal issues before judging the actions by non indigenous ideals*
- *Having more diversity among staff, Indigenous social workers and care workers.*
- *I would like to see all state workers take this training.*
- *learn all i can about all*
- *Learning the true history of tribes and having a willingness to be open to walking in two worlds when you are in spaces that need that openness.*
- *Loaded question, I'd need more time to explore this. It feels impossible to create anything lasting and further past a dialogue. We need more education around these matters.*
- *Mandated training at the State level in Tribal/ State relationships to enhance interactions. Better understanding at the State level of Federal requirements regarding obligations set out in treaties and what Sovereignty means.*
- *More cultural competency training for state workers*
- *More Wabanaki cultural training!*

- *Personally, I have had positive experiences with state agencies thus far, but just as a reminder to remain patient, willing to learn and accept differences, and willing to help however possible regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, and/or tribal affiliation.*
- *The biggest change I'd like to see is for all the people in power, i.e., the governor, to have an open mind around the Land Claims Settlement and Implementation Act. If the governor truly was for the people, in what is now called, Maine, she would have her door open to figuring out ways to help us succeed. Instead she uses the Land Claims to hold us back as if we were her possessions!*
- *They have a biased opinion and the lying is a big issue with them.*
- *When working with us, they need to know they are not in charge if our rules, laws or regulations are different, we are using our own set of standards and court, if necessary.*

MITSC Maine State Employee Wabanaki Awareness Survey

Preliminary Summary of Responses from State Employees

May, 2025

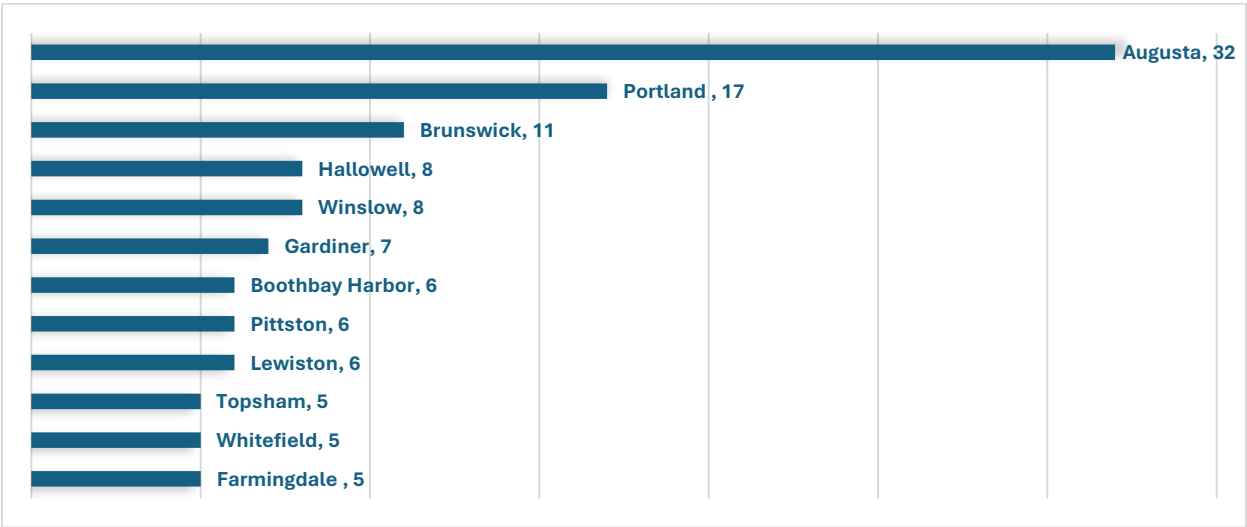
Introduction

The Center for Wabanaki Research, Knowledge, and Innovation (CWRKI) at Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness (WPHW) supported the Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission (MITSC) in implementing two survey, titled, “Tribal Citizen Survey of State Worker Wabanaki Training Needs,” and “Maine State Employee Wabanaki Awareness Survey,” to gather feedback from Tribal community members and State employees, in order to provide information to guide the development of a training program. The survey was implemented electronically, with responses being collected during March, April, and May of 2025. A total of 327 State employees and 36 Tribal citizens completed the survey. This document provides a preliminary summary of the responses from State employees.

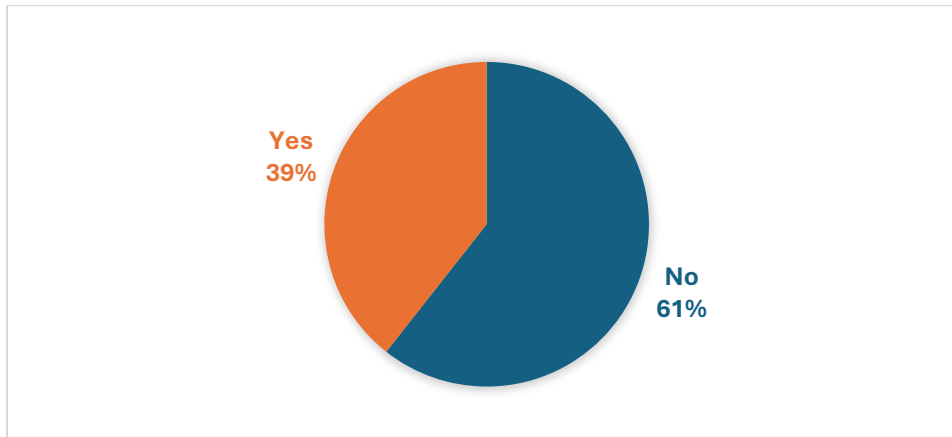
Summarized Responses

1. What town do you live in?

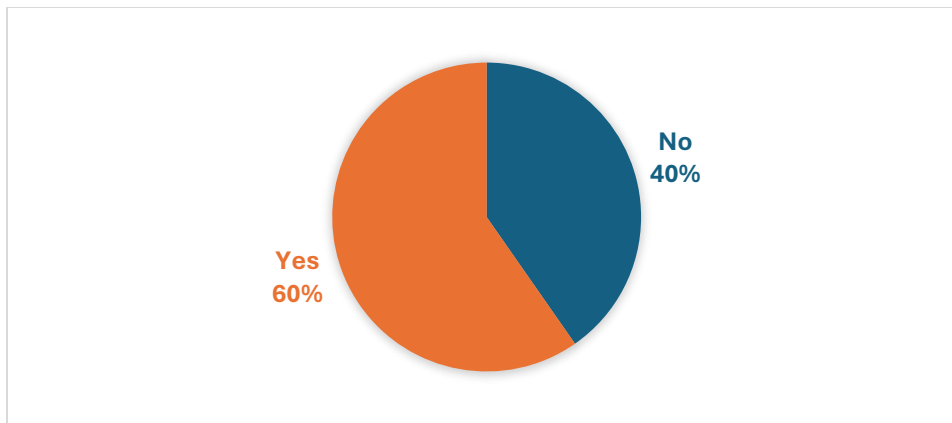
A total of 321 cities, towns, and municipalities were identified. The graph below includes cities with at least five responses.



2. Have you lived in Maine your entire life?

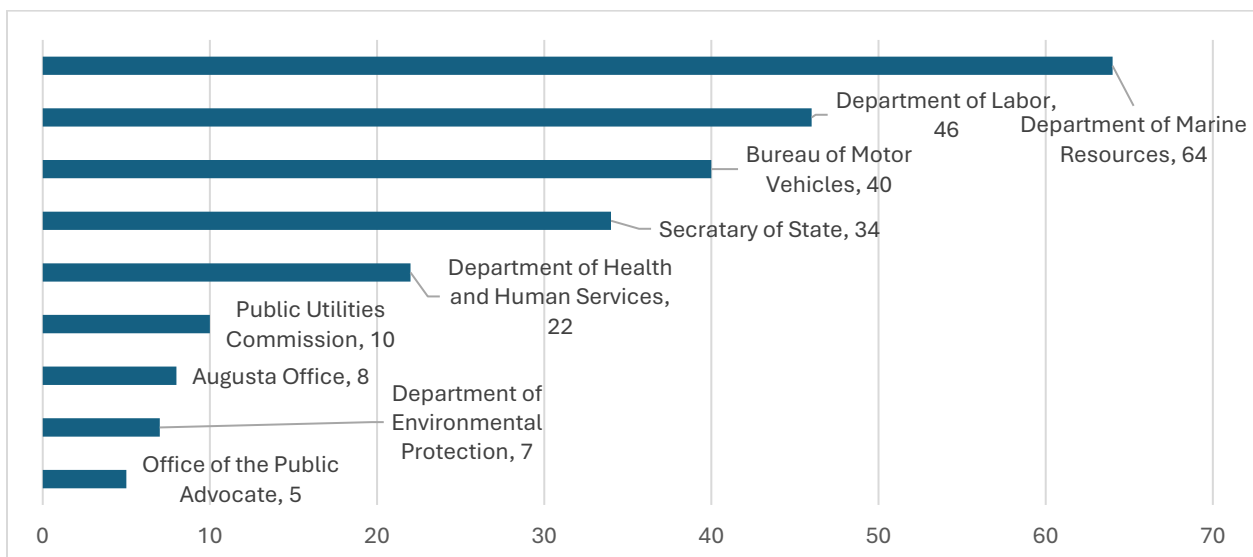


3. Have you had any interactions with Wabanaki people?

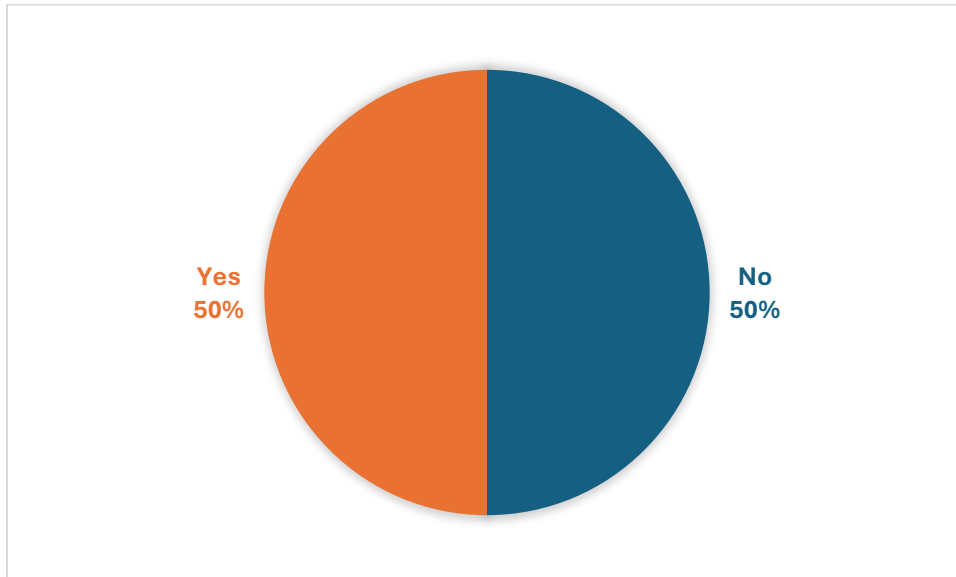


4. Where in State Government are you employed?

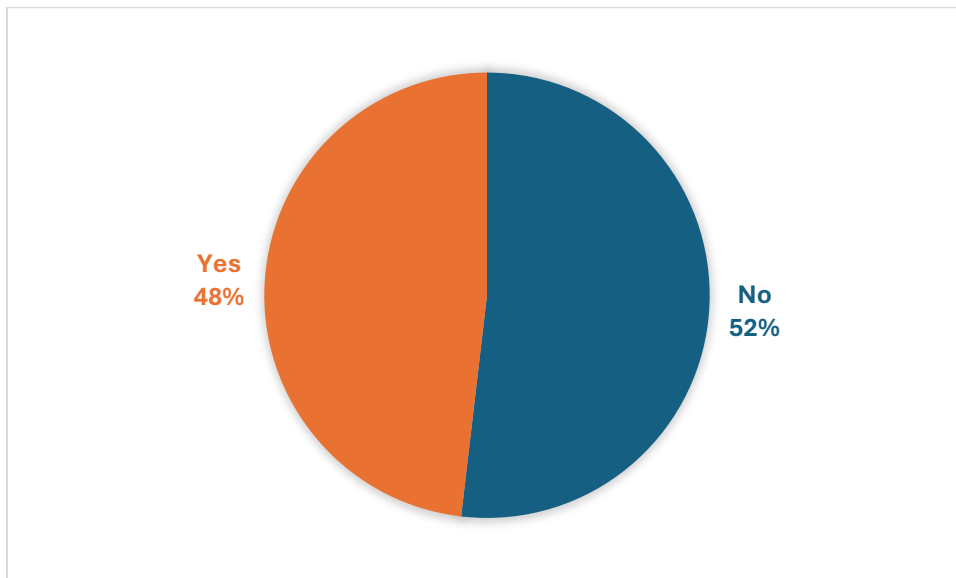
Around 321 different government offices were identified. The graph below shows those with five or more responses.



5. Are you aware of the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act of 1980 and the Maine Act to Implement the Settlement Act?

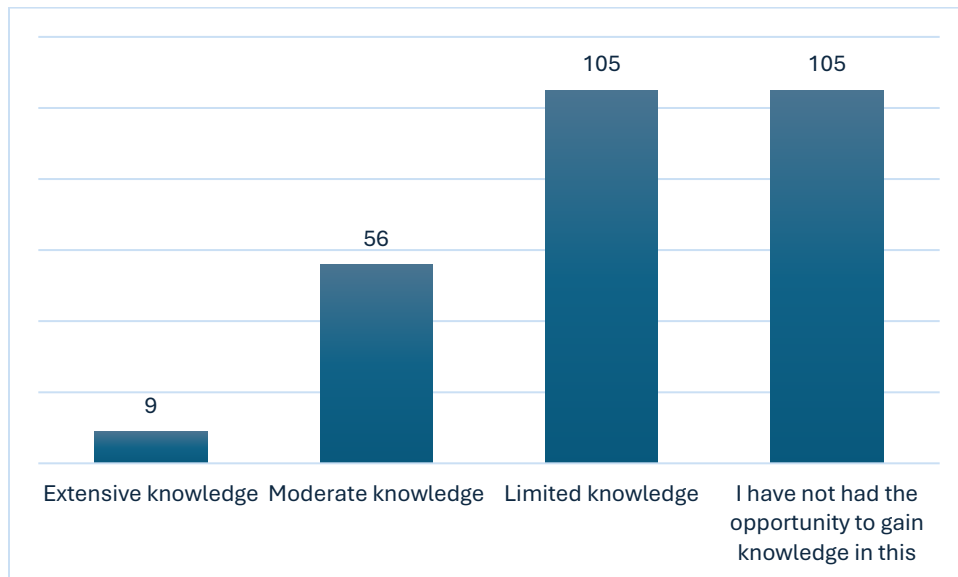


6. Can you name the four federally recognized tribes located in Maine?



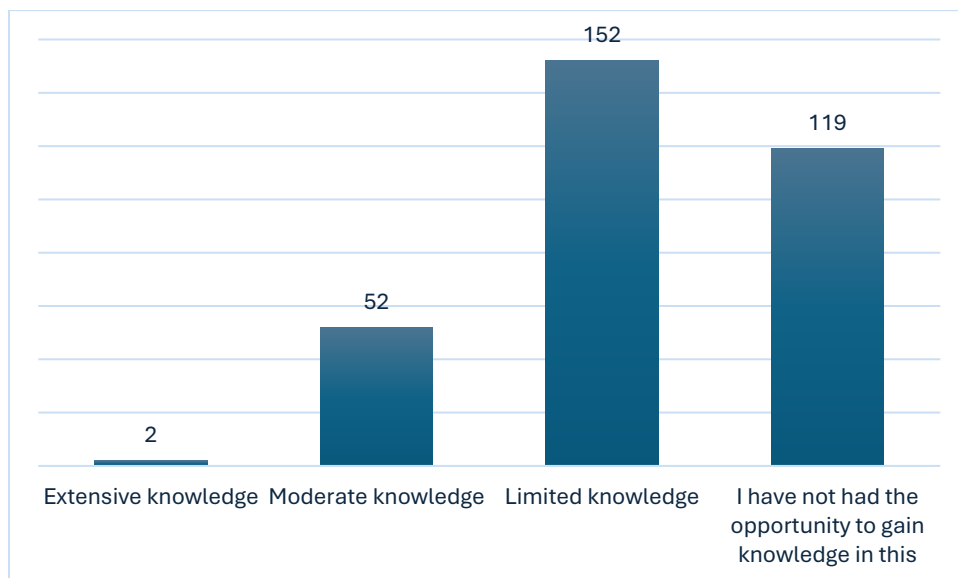
7. Tribal-State relations (This term refers to interactions and collaborations between state governments and tribal nations, focusing on governance, sovereignty, and policies.)

The graph below shows the number of respondents who selected each option the question.



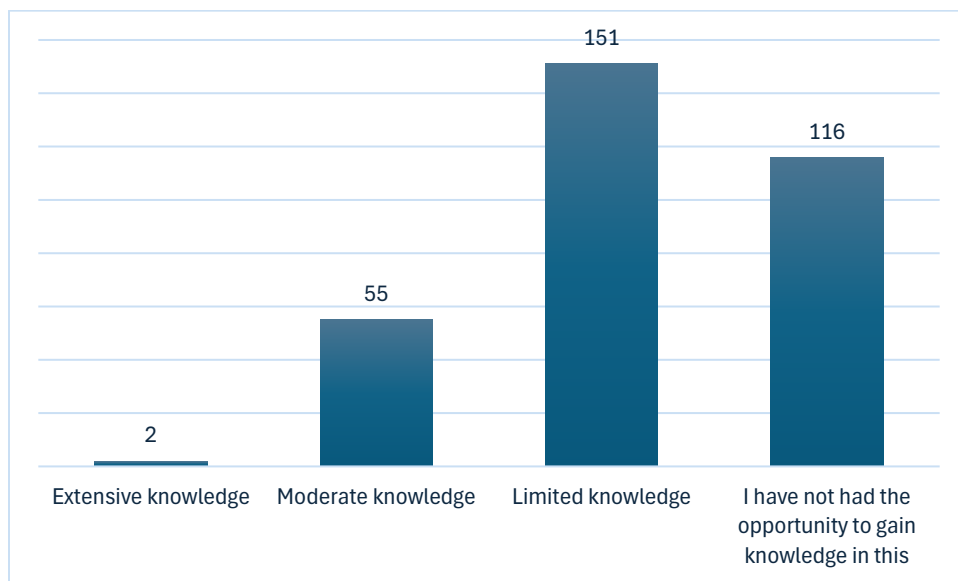
8. What is your experience working with Tribal culture?

The graph below shows the number of respondents who selected each option the question.



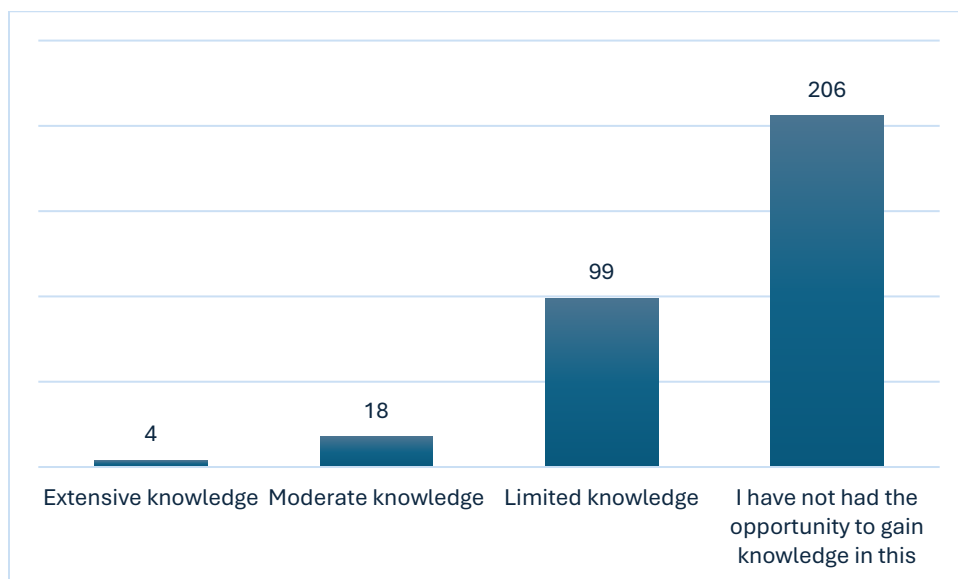
9. What is your experience working with Tribal people?

The graph below shows the number of respondents who selected each option the question.



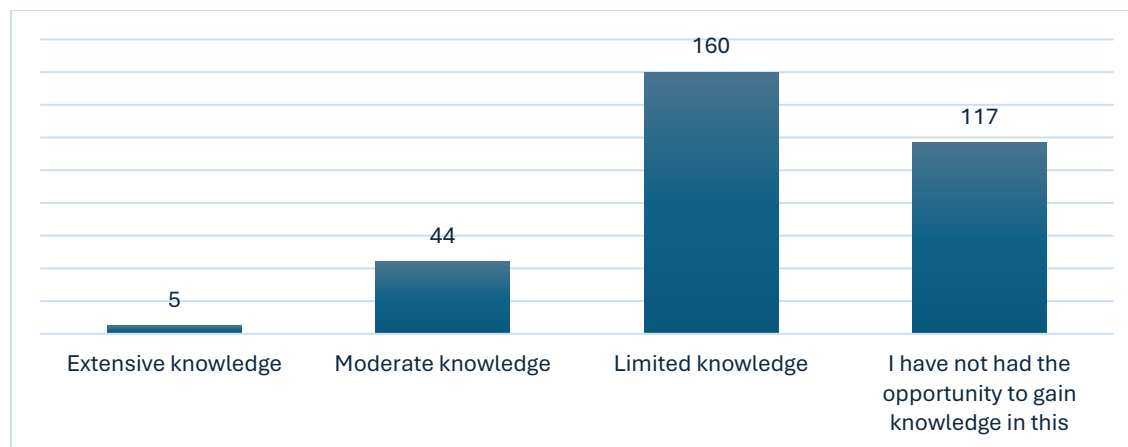
10. What is your knowledge of Tribal laws?

The graph below shows the number of respondents who selected each option the question.



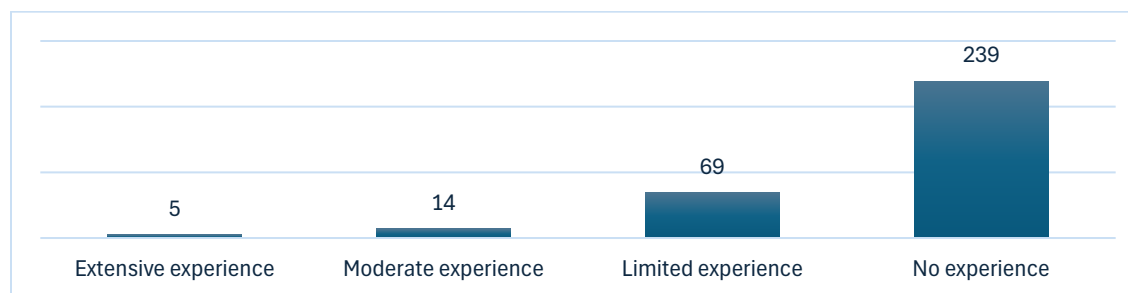
11. What is your knowledge of Tribal history?

The graph below shows the number of respondents who selected each option the question.



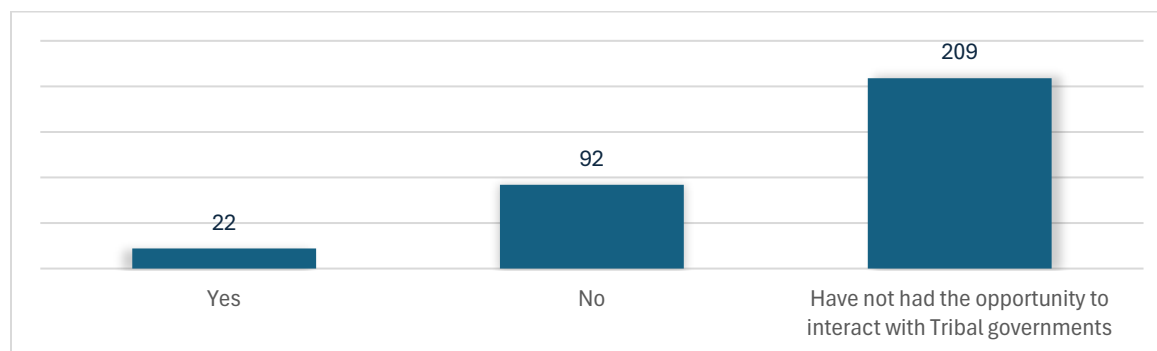
12. What is your experience working with Tribal governments?

The graph below shows the number of respondents who selected each option the question.

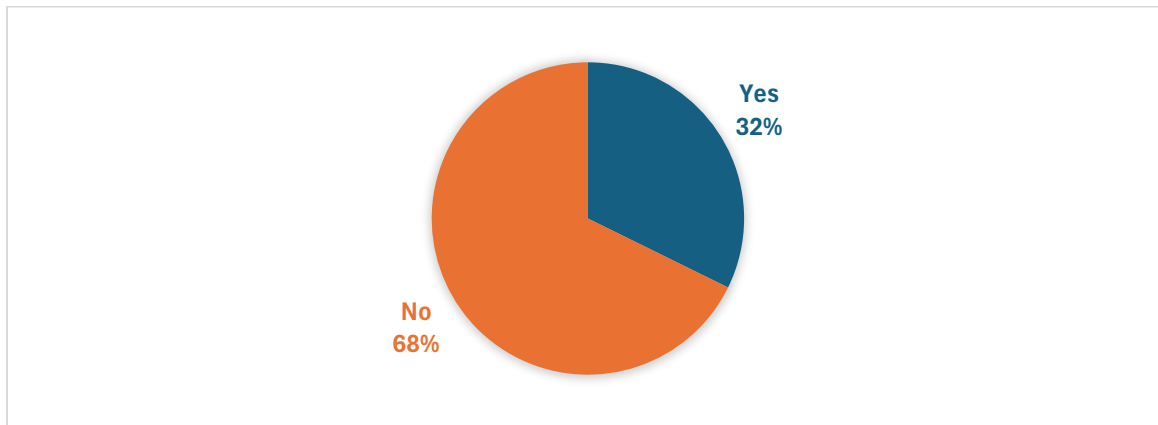


13. Have you encountered any challenges in your interactions with Tribal governments?

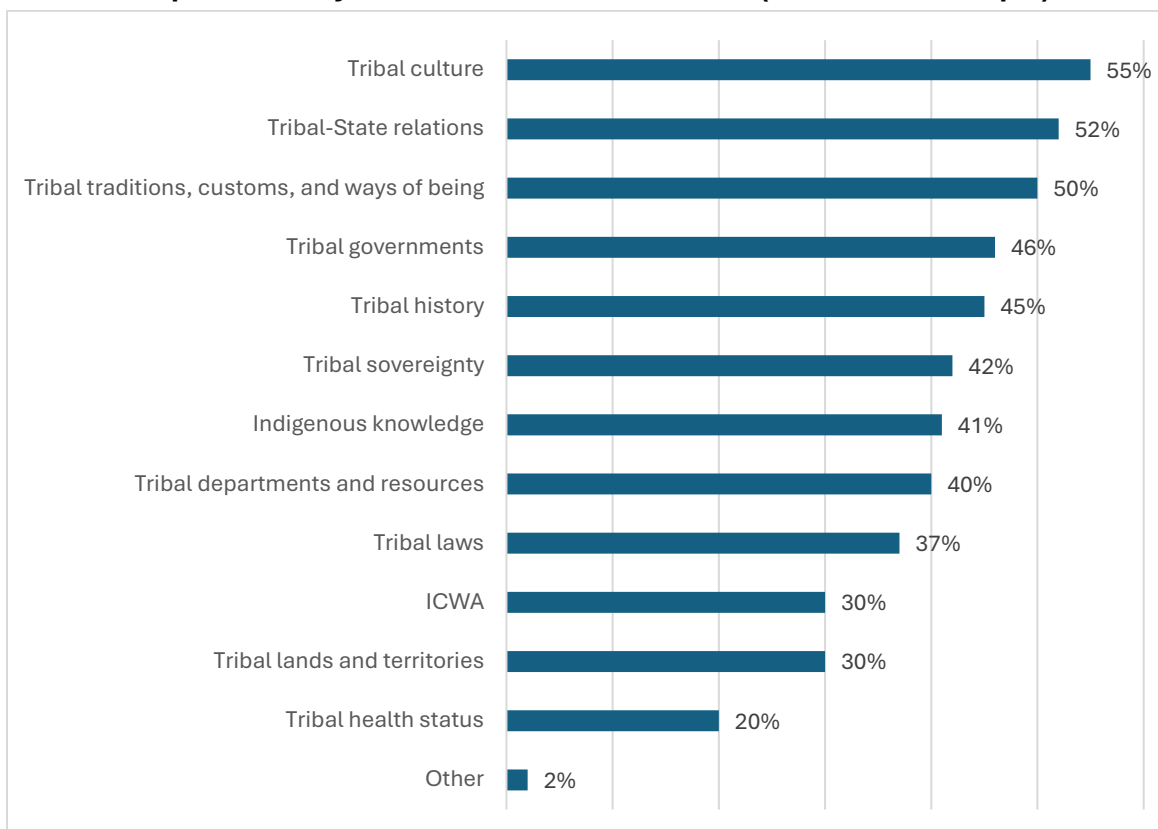
The graph below shows the number of respondents who selected each option the question.



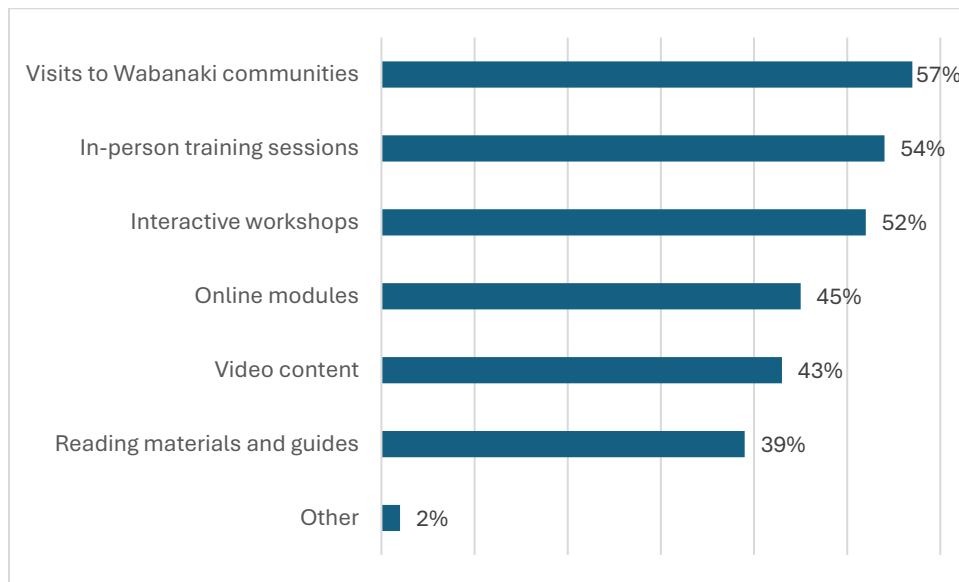
14. Do you feel you have the necessary supports, knowledge, and access to engage appropriately with Tribal governments?



15. What topics would you like to learn more about? (Please select top 3)



16. How would you prefer to learn this information? (Please select top 3)



Tribal Consent and GIS Data

from an email by
Jerrold Parker, Senior Resource Biologist
Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife

May 30, 2025

"Here is the important bit from the thread where I was seeking tribal land GIS data."

The potential conflict is founded in the Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971. According to USGS guidance derived from the Department of Interior's Manual on Intergovernmental collaboration that is written based on the requirements of the Act, the native tribes have the right to allow or disallow the publication of data collected in projects that border or intersect their recognized tribal lands.

In the case of the Penobscot Nation, they have not allowed the Maine Office of GIS to publish content for public use that was derived or collected as part of the Maine GeoLibrary and USGS partnership funded projects. They require parties seeking to use such data to approach them and seek their approval prior to utilizing any such data.

A large blue rectangular area at the top of the page, containing faint, stylized white silhouettes of several people standing in a row.

THE NEED FOR CONFIDENTIALITY WITHIN TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION

Tribal Legal Development Clinic, UCLA School of Law

December 2020

FOR HCFS REVIEW
w/ fiscal

5/30/25

L.D. 999

Date:

(Filing No. H-)

HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

Reproduced and distributed under the direction of the Clerk of the House.

**STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
132ND LEGISLATURE
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT " " to H.P. 646, L.D. 999, "An Act to Include Employees of the Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission in the State's Group Health Plan"

Amend the bill by striking out the title and substituting the following:

'An Act to Include Employees of the Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission in the State's Group Health Plan and to Clarify Future Eligibility for the State's Group Health Plan'

Amend the bill by inserting after section 1 the following:

'Sec. 2. 5 MRSA §285, sub-§17 is enacted to read:

17. Eligibility of persons other than state employees for group health plan. A person other than a state employee may not be granted eligibility for a group health plan pursuant to subsection 1 by legislative action to amend subsection 1 unless the person is an employee of a quasi-governmental entity that receives significant and ongoing operating funds through a General Fund appropriation.'

Amend the bill by relettering or renumbering any nonconsecutive Part letter or section number to read consecutively.

SUMMARY

This amendment changes the title of the bill and adds language to the bill clarifying the eligibility of persons other than state employees for the group health plan provided by the State as an employee benefit. The amendment provides that persons other than state employees may not be granted eligibility under the group health plan unless the persons are employees of a quasi-governmental entity that receives significant and ongoing operating funds through a General Fund appropriation.



Approved: 05/30/25 **LRL**

132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

LD 999

LR 1596(02)

An Act to Include Employees of the Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission in the State's Group Health Plan

Fiscal Note for Bill as Amended by Committee Amendment " "

Committee: Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

Fiscal Note Required: No

Fiscal Note

No fiscal impact

Bylaws of the Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission

The Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission is established pursuant to the Maine Implementing Act (30 MRSA §6212.) The Commission serves as a joint tribal-state governing body with authority principally of an advisory nature.

I. Organization

A. Membership. The Commission consists of thirteen full-voting members, six appointed by the Governor of the State, subject to review by the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary and confirmation by the Legislature, two each appointed by the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, Passamaquoddy Tribe and the Penobscot Nation, and a Chair selected in accordance with the procedure specified in section I-E.

B. Participation of Other Federally Recognized Maine Tribes. All federally recognized tribes that do not belong to MITSC under 30 MRSA §6212 are invited to participate in MITSC as official observers.

C. Terms.

1. Other than the Chair, each member appointed by the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, the Passamaquoddy Tribe, or the Penobscot Nation shall serve for a term of three years and may be reappointed.
2. The first six appointments made by the Governor after November 23, 2024, the Governor will appoint two members for a term of two years, two members for a term of three years, and two members for a term of four years. Thereafter, each member appointed by the Governor shall serve for a term of three years.
3. Each member may be reappointed.
4. ~~Other than the Chair, each member shall serve a term of three years and may be reappointed.~~ The Chair serves a four-year term, except when appointed for an interim term as specified in section I-E. The Chair may be reelected.

D. Vacancies. In the event of death, replacement, resignation, or disability of any member or the Chair, the appointing authority may fill the vacancy for the unexpired term.

E. Chair. The Commission, by a majority vote of its twelve members, shall select a person who is a resident of the State to act as Chair. In the event that Commission members are unable to select a Chair within 120 days of the expiration of the Chair's term or the occurrence of a vacancy, the Governor of the State, after consulting with the Chiefs of the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, Penobscot Nation and Passamaquoddy Tribes, shall appoint an interim Chair for a period of one year or until such time as the Commission selects a Chair by a majority vote of its twelve members, whichever is sooner.

F. Quorum; Vote. Nine members shall constitute a quorum, and no decision or action shall be valid unless seven members vote in favor of such decision or

Mirrors
statutory
changes to 30
MRSA § 6212
(LD1679, Ch.
370)

action. No matter substantially affecting any particular government will be acted on without at least one representative from the affected government present.

In the event that a seat on the Commission becomes vacant for 3 months, either because a government has not filled it or a government has formally indicated that it has decided to suspend participation, then the MITSC will suspend the usual quorum requirements as follows until such a vacancy is filled:

Each vacancy will reduce the quorum, and the number of commissioners required to carry a vote by one.

The requirement that any potentially affected government(s) be present during the discussion and vote remains in place.

When the MITSC is operating under these circumstances the following process will be adhered to:

1. All governments and MITSC commissioners will be notified and apprised of the reasons when the MITSC operates at a reduced quorum.
2. As required under MITSC Bylaw II. D new questions or issues presented to the MITSC will not be acted upon until a subsequent public meeting. These pending decisions or motions will be sent to the governments and nonparticipating commissioners. The number of commissioners required to carry a vote may suspend this bylaw.

G. Call of Meetings. The Chair or any seven members of the Commission may call a meeting. There shall be seven days' notice given to the members prior to a meeting. In addition, notice of all meetings, including location, date, time, and the identity and phone number of a contact person who may be contacted for more information, shall be placed in the Legislative Calendar and sent to the Tribal Governors and Councils.

H. Conduct of Meetings. All meeting proceedings shall be open to the public. Only members of the Commission may request that an item be placed on the agenda for discussion. As to each agenda item, the Chair or another member will define the issue to be discussed, then members may discuss the item, then the Chair may open the discussion up to the public for their comments within the limits of available time, then further discussion may be held by members only, and then a vote may be taken. The Chair and the Commission members are expected to be physically present at Commission meetings, except when being physically present is not practicable. Circumstances in which physical presence is not practicable include:

1. An emergency, urgent issue, or illness;
2. Temporary absence from the State of Maine;
3. Significant distance a member must travel, or impediments to travel such as inclement weather; and

4. Other circumstances as determined by the Chair.

Freedom of Access Act, 1 MRSA § 403-B(2) requires the adoption of a written policy governing remote participation.

I. Remote Participation in Meetings. Meetings may be conducted by remote methods in accordance with this section. "Remote methods" means use of interactive technology that enables meeting participation through live, two-way communication which may be audio-only such as telephone, or video and audio such as an online video conferencing platform.

1. When one or more members participate in a meeting remotely, the public will be provided remote access, and reasonable accommodations may be provided when necessary to provide access to individuals with disabilities. If an opportunity for public input is allowed or required during a meeting with remote participation, an effective means of communication between the members and the public will be provided.
2. Notice of any Commission meeting with remote participation will be provided according to Section I(G). Additionally, notice of a Commission meeting with remote participation will state how members of the public may access the meeting remotely and a location for the public to attend in person unless there exists an emergency or urgent issue that requires an all-remote meeting as determined by the Chair.
3. A member who participates in a Commission meeting remotely is present for purposes of a quorum and voting.
4. All votes taken during a Commission meeting using remote means will be taken by roll call vote that can be seen and heard if using video technology and may be heard if using only audio technology by other members and the public.
5. The Commission will make all documents and other materials considered by the Commission to be available electronically or otherwise, to the public who access the meeting by remote methods to the same extent customarily available to members of the public who attend Commission meetings in person.

J. Record. A written record of each meeting shall be prepared and approved by the Commission and kept permanently on file in the archives of the Commission, except that no written record shall be taken during executive sessions. Minutes of any meetings of the Commission may be released at the discretion of the Chair before they have been approved by the Commission, provided that they are clearly marked with the following statement: "Not for attribution until formally approved by the Commission."

K. Executive Sessions. The Commission may go into executive session only pursuant to the following requirements:

1. No rules, resolutions, contracts, appointments or other official actions may be finally approved at executive sessions.
2. Executive sessions may be called only by a public recorded vote of seven Commission members present and voting.

3. A motion to go into executive session shall indicate the nature of the business to be discussed. No other matters may be considered in that particular executive session.
 4. A motion to go into executive session may include participants other than Commission members, as the Commission deems appropriate.
 5. Deliberations may be conducted in executive sessions only on the following matters:
 - a. The employment, appointment, assignment, duties, compensation, evaluation, disciplining, resignation, or in the event of any dismissal of any appointee serving on the Commission or any employee or independent contractor working for the Commission;
 - b. Consultations between the Commission and an attorney concerning its legal rights and duties on pending or contemplated litigation;
 - c. Matters where, in the Commission's view, premature general public knowledge would cause substantial harm to a Tribe, the State, or the Commission or to the relationship between the State and one or more of the Tribes; and
 - d. Discussions of information contained in records made, maintained, or received by the Commission when access by the general public to those records is prohibited by statute or tribal ordinance.
- L. Amending Bylaws.** These bylaws can be amended at any meeting of the Commission, provided that the proposed amendment has been presented at the previous meeting.

II. Duties

The Commission is charged under the terms of the Act to continually review the effectiveness of the Act; to assist with the implementation of certain provisions of the Act; to continually review the social, economic, and legal relationship between the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, Passamaquoddy Tribe, Penobscot Nation, and the State; and to make such reports and recommendations to the Legislature, the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, Passamaquoddy Tribe, and the Penobscot Nation as the Commission deems appropriate. With respect to the Commission's duties to assist with implementation, the following specific charges are authorized under the Act.

- A. Inclusion of Lands as Indian Territory.** No lands held or acquired by or in trust for the Passamaquoddy Tribe or the Penobscot Nation other than those described in 30 MRSA §6205, sub-§§1, 2, 3, and 4 shall be included within or added to Passamaquoddy Indian Territory or Penobscot Indian Territory except upon recommendation by the Commission to the State, the Passamaquoddy, and the Penobscot Governments. In reaching this recommendation, the Commission shall verify the following:
1. The Tribal Government seeking the addition of lands to Indian Territory certifies that it has approved such action in accordance with its governing laws and procedures.

2. In the case where the lands are within a city, town, village, or plantation, the legislative body of that municipality certifies that it has approved such action in accordance with its governing laws and procedures.

Upon receiving the certification(s), the Commission shall place a legal advertisement which requests public comment on the matter in at least two newspapers of statewide distribution and, when appropriate, one of regional circulation. At least ten days from the latest date the advertisement appears shall be allowed for comments to be received. If, after reviewing the comments, the Commission determines that there are important issues of regional or statewide significance involved, the Commission may choose to conduct a public hearing. At least ten days' public notice shall be given for the hearing.

In making a recommendation the Commission shall consider the comments received and any issues raised which are of regional or statewide significance; suggest any inconsistency with the Act; or concern the social, economic, or legal relationship between the State and Tribal Governments. The Commission may consider the proposed usage of the land as set forth by the Tribal Government but shall not consider any issues regarding possible restrictions which might be put on the use of the lands by the Tribal Government if they are restrictions which any landowner, Indian or non-Indian, has the right to implement.

B. Promulgation of Fishing Rules and Regulations.

Subject to any limitations of 30 MRSA §6207 sub-§6 (Supervision of Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife), the Commission shall have exclusive authority to promulgate fishing rules and regulations on:

1. Any pond other than those specified in 30 MRSA §6207, sub-§1, paragraph B, 50% or more of the linear shoreline of which is within Indian Territory;
2. Any section of a river or stream both sides of which are within Indian Territory; and
3. Any section of a river or stream one side of which is within Indian Territory for a continuous length of 1/2 mile or more.

In promulgating such rules or regulations the Commission shall consider and balance the need to preserve and protect existing and future sport and commercial fisheries, the historical Indian and non-Indian interests, the needs or desires of the Tribes to establish fishery practices for the sustenance of the Tribes or to contribute to the economic independence of the Tribes, the traditional fishing techniques employed by and ceremonial practices of Indians of Maine, and the ecological inter-relationship between the fishery regulated by the Commission and other fisheries throughout the State. Such regulation may include without limitation provisions on the method, manner, bag, and size limits and season for fishing.

Replaces
"member(s)"
with
"citizen(s)."

The Commission's rules or regulations shall be applicable equally on a nondiscriminatory basis to all persons regardless of whether such person is a ~~member~~ citizen of the Passamaquoddy Tribe or Penobscot Nation. Rules and regulations promulgated by the Commission may include the imposition of fees and permits or license requirements on users of such waters other than ~~members~~ citizens of the Passamaquoddy Tribe and Penobscot Nation. In adopting rules or regulations, the Commission shall comply with the Administrative Procedures Act.

C. Implementation of Non-Indian Fish and Wildlife Policies-Protecting Tribal Lands and Waters

The Commission shall undertake appropriate studies, consult with the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, Passamaquoddy Tribe and the Penobscot Nation and landowners and state officials, and make recommendations to the Maine Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Maine Legislature with respect to implementation of fish and wildlife management policies on non-Indian lands in order to protect fish and wildlife stocks on lands and water subject to regulation by the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, the Passamaquoddy Tribe, the Penobscot Nation or the Commission.

The Chair shall appoint, with the approval of the Commission, a committee representative of the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, Penobscot Nation, Passamaquoddy Tribe and the State that shall undertake studies and prepare reports and recommendations for approval by the Commission for presentation to the Maine Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Maine Legislature. The Commission may engage appropriate experts and other resources outside the Commission, if adequate financial resources are available.

- D. Future Indian Communities.** Any 25 or more adult ~~members~~ citizens of either the Passamaquoddy Tribe or the Penobscot Nation residing within their respective Indian Territory and in reasonable proximity to each other may petition the Commission for designation of an "extended reservation". If the Commission determines, after investigation, that the petitioning tribal ~~members~~ citizens constitute an "extended reservation", the Commission shall establish the boundaries of this "extended reservation" and shall recommend to the Legislature that, subject to the approval of the governing body of the Tribe or Nation involved, it amend this Act to extend the jurisdiction of the respective Tribe or Nation to the "extended reservation". The boundaries of any "extended reservation" shall not exceed those reasonable and necessary to encompass the petitioning tribal ~~members~~ citizens.

In addition to the above duties, legislative bills amending 30 MRSA §6205,

sub§1, paragraph B or sub-§2, paragraph B, and adding lands to or including land within Indian Territory shall receive the recommendation of the Commission to the Legislature prior to enactment.

E. Reports and Recommendations to the Legislature, the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, the Passamaquoddy Tribes, and the Penobscot Nation.

At each meeting of the Commission, the Executive Director routinely shall inform MITSC whether it has received since its previous meeting, requests for comment or vote on pending pieces of legislation, or questions within MITSC's purview. If such requests have been received, the Executive Director shall distribute copies of the requests to Commissioners. MITSC will not act upon motions relating to a request until a subsequent meeting, open to the public, is scheduled, publicly announced, and held. This bylaw may be waived only if, after a discussion of the underlying substantive motion, eight members of the Commission vote in favor of a procedural motion to proceed to an immediate vote.

III. Operations

A. Budget. The Commission shall operate on a July 1 to June 30 fiscal year.

B. Per Diem and Expenses. Services that are eligible for per diem payments shall include participation in Commission meetings and Commission committee meetings. For purposes of per diem payments remote attendance at Commission meetings and committee meetings will be treated the same as in-person attendance. Reasonable documented expenses will be reimbursed for Commission meetings and Commission committee meetings. Reasonable documented expenses for attendance by Commissioners at other MITSC-related proceedings and events will be reimbursed on request if authorized by the Chairperson or at a Commission meeting. Commission members shall be paid \$75 per day for their services and shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses including mileage at the applicable rate for business use of an automobile set by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. Upon the vote of the Commission, the Chair also may be paid a supplementary stipend for his/her services each month.

C. Personnel. The Commission shall employ or contract with such personnel as it deems necessary and desirable in order to effectively discharge its duties and responsibilities. The Commission may establish a job description for its personnel.

D. Financial Reports. At each meeting, the Commission shall receive from its personnel or the Chair a statement of current financial condition.

E. Annual Report. At the close of each year the Commission shall prepare an annual report to be transmitted to the State, the Penobscot Nation, the Passamaquoddy Tribe, and the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians.

MAINE INDIAN TRIBAL STATE COMMISSION
PO BOX 35
WHITING ME 04691-0035

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Exceptional Checking Account

Exceptional Checking Account		Enclosures	17
Account Number	XXXXXX9200	Statement Dates	5/01/25 thru 6/01/25
Previous Balance	18,541.42	Days in the statement period	32
5 Deposits/Credits	35,141.01	Average Ledger	15,583.82
38 Checks/Debits	29,470.16	Average Collected	15,583.82
Service Charge	.00		
Interest Paid	.00		
Current Balance	24,212.27		

Overdraft and Return Item Fees

	Total For This Period	Total Year-to-Date
Total Overdraft Fees	\$.00	\$.00
Total Return Item Fees	\$.00	\$.00

Transactions

Date	Description	Amount	Balance
5/01	Bill Paid-COBS COOK INSTITUTE Conf #29	525.00-	18,016.42
5/01	Check 2354	75.00-	17,941.42
5/05	DENTAL INS DELTA DENTAL ME 000500602	90.30-	17,851.12
5/05	Check 2348	360.00-	17,491.12
5/07	Check 2356	75.00-	17,416.12
5/07	Check 2358	273.30-	17,142.82
5/07	Check 2359	387.18-	39,755.64

MAINE INDIAN TRIBAL STATE COMMISSION
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MEMBER FDIC | SUBJECT TO CREDIT APPROVAL | ASK FOR DETAILS



Exceptional Business Savings

Exceptional Business Savings			
Account Number	XXXXXX5420	Statement Dates	5/01/25 thru 6/01/25
Previous Balance	66,534.39	Days in the statement period	32
Deposits/Credits	.00	Average Ledger	58,721.89
2 Checks/Debits	30,000.00	Average Collected	58,721.89
Service Charge	.00	Interest Earned	20.59
Interest Paid	20.19	Annual Percentage Yield Earned	0.40%
Ending Balance	36,554.58	2025 Interest Paid	138.64

Overdraft and Return Item Fees

	Total For This Period	Total Year-to-Date
Total Overdraft Fees	\$.00	\$.00
Total Return Item Fees	\$.00	\$.00

Transactions

Date	Description	Amount	Balance
5/23	Transfer from XXX5420 to XXX92 00: Conf #:2592919	20,000.00-	46,534.39
5/28	Transfer from XXX5420 to XXX92 00: Conf #:2599873	10,000.00-	36,534.39
5/31	Interest Deposit	20.19	36,554.58

BUSINESS COMPLETE MMA 9008Available** **\$80,217.42**Current **\$80,217.42****May 4, 2025 - Jun 2, 2025 30 days**

Date	Description	Amount	Balance
06/01/2025	Interest Deposit	\$35.16	\$80,217.42

** This balance does not include overdraft protection or line of credit funds. If you have chosen these features for your account(s), they are in effect.



MAINE INDIAN TRIBAL-STATE COMMISSION

Staff Report

April 18, 2025 – May 31, 2025
(Submitted for the June 6, 2025 meeting)

By: Jill E. Tompkins, Executive Director
Rachel Bell, Projects Coordinator

Summary

During this period, additional progress was made in improving MITSC's administrative processes and producing many of the deliverables required by the four private grants.

Since the last meeting

Here are some of the accomplishments of this reporting period:

1. Jill drafted for Newell's signature a letter to Governor Mills requesting that she nominate individuals to fill the four vacancies on the Commission. The Governor's Senior Legal Counsel, Jerry Reid, has offered to meet with Newell to discuss the request, and they are working on setting a meeting date.
2. Staff continued to monitor the progress of LD 999, which has a new title, "An Act to Include Employees of the Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission in the State's Group Health Plan and to Clarify Future Eligibility for the State's Group Health Plan." It was determined that there would not be a fiscal note on the bill.
3. Surveys were administered to state workers and tribal members to determine the areas of cultural competency that should be covered in the MITSC training. Ralph Cammack of Wabanaki Public Health & Wellness will present the survey findings to the full Commission on June 6th, 2025. Curriculum development based on the survey results is underway.
4. The Attorney General's office reviewed the proposed MOU for MITSC archives to continue to be housed at the UMO Folger Library and expressed the opinion that language concerning the confidentiality of certain records should be added. Jill and Bob Checkoway reviewed the proposed amendment and agreed that it was not objectionable. The Commission will be asked to approve the MOU on June 6th, 2025. The development of retention schedules will commence once the agreement is finalized.
5. Jill and Pat Mallar attended a three-day virtual training course on QuickBooks Online. It was beneficial, and MITSC contracted for six months of additional one-on-one support with the instructor. Pat has been busy processing regular invoices and is going back and categorizing expenses and income starting on January 1st, 2025. She will create reports from both systems to reflect FY2025 finances. Following up on Chief Sabattis's recommendation, Jill reached out to the accounting firm of Chester M. Kearney in Presque Isle to conduct MITSC's audit. The firm is reviewing the RFP and MITSC's prior audit to see if it can add the Commission to its already full client list.
6. Pat assisted in securing the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Motahkomikuk's \$5,000 contribution. The Judiciary and Appropriations Committees seemed more willing to maintain MITSC's annual allocation once they heard that the tribal nations were also financially supporting the work. The Passamaquoddy Tribe at Sipayik has been contacted numerous times (including resending the cover letter and invoice), but no payment has been received yet.
7. On May 5th, Rachel, along with other members from Living Tides, toured some of the priority river restoration and dam remediation sites around Washington County that the Fundy Bay Connectivity Project hopes to address with its grant funds. The project's long-term goal is "Maximizing positive regional

ecological and societal impact through engagement, collaboration, and coordination.” Representatives from the following groups participated in the tour: Passamaquoddy Tribal Citizens, the Downeast Salmon Federation, and the Cobscook Institute (including the high school students and their teachers). The tour was led by Ben Nauman (NRCF), Zach Sheller (DMR), and Steve Poulos (IF&W).

8. The Elmina Sewall Foundation grant deliverables are almost complete. Rafi and Rachel added a new featured media page to the MITSC website that highlights current events of interest. The SEA RUN audiobook has been narrated, the music licenses secured, and it is now in the editing phase. A short *Tributaries* video introducing MITSC and its work has been completed and is posted on the MITSC website. Two other short videos, one reviewing the history leading up to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement and the other explaining the components of the Settlement itself, are in the final editing stage. Rachel and Rafi are working on a longer video, “My Ancestor’s Paddle,” which tells the story of the making of an exact replica of Darel Bridge’s great-grandfather, Sylvester Gabriel’s hand-carved paddles using MIT’s modern technology. The grant period was extended from April 18th, 2025, to August 18th, 2025, so that the audiobook can be completed and distributed.
9. Jill spent many hours retyping and reformatting the MITSC fishing rules to comply with the Maine Secretary of State standards. She also did some substantive editing, such as including the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, and, with Joe Overlock’s substantial assistance, updated the rules to reflect changes in state rules (which the tribal biologists agreed were acceptable to them to adopt). On May 29th, 2025, Commissioners Checkoway, Kramer, St. John, Jill, and Rachel met with the staff of MDIF&W to review the state’s maps of the waters. Since the publication of the 1998 MITSC rules, the tribal nations have acquired new lands and waters that need to be added. A concern was raised about whether GIS information about tribal lands and resources may be made public. Additional research and work is required to address this issue.
10. The Walking the Working Waterfront event in Portland, Maine, was held on May 31st, 2025. The Gulf of Maine Research Institute invited MITSC to set up a table inside its building for the day. A steady stream of the public visited MITSC’s table. A new quiz about basic information about the Wabanaki nations, tribal sovereignty, the Settlement, and the Wabanaki Studies program has been added to the table. The quiz prompted additional questions and helped to create teachable moments.

Challenges

1. MITSC has four state-appointed Commissioner vacancies, making it very hard to achieve a meeting quorum and depriving the Commission of those alternative perspectives. The 132nd Legislature is coming to an end, and if nominations are not made soon, they will have to wait until the fall session.
2. MITSC needs to institute a network where all MITSC digital materials can be stored efficiently. A VPN should be put in place to allow remote workers to access the network securely.
3. MITSC could use some assistance from a GIS professional to interpret the maps of the state and tribal waterways (if access is permitted).

Questions to ponder

- What should MITSC’s remote Commission meeting participation policy be?
- How will MITSC approach the Houlton Band, Passamaquoddy Tribe, and Penobscot Nation about the need for tribal land and water GIS information to update the MITSC fishing rules?
- Keeping MITSC’s limited staff in mind, what steps can MITSC take to be perceived as more effective, particularly by tribal citizens?

Commission decisions to make at the next meeting

1. Should the Commission approve the proposed MITSC Bylaws amendments, especially for remote meetings?
2. Would it be more appropriate and cost-effective for MITSC to have a “Review of Financial Statements” done annually instead of an “Audit”?

A big thank you

Many people and organizations go above and beyond to support and assist MITSC; they deserve our appreciation.

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