

News from Maine: *Walking with our Wabanaki Neighbors: What Steps Can We Take?*

Awareness is increasing locally of Wabanaki culture and people and their current challenges, yet many among us still remain uninformed about the very existence of our Wabanaki neighbors and the issues they face. This presentation offers “next steps” in growing our awareness by providing needed information and guidance for taking effective action to support the restoration of self-determination for the tribes.

Due to the 1980 Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act, Maine is dead last among states in recognizing the legal rights exercised by nearly all other federally recognized tribes. As a result, Wabanaki people and their governments do not have the same rights and privileges as other tribes in the United States and, since 1980, they have missed out on the benefits from over 150 federal laws designed to assist tribal communities.

LD 1626, legislation now pending in the Maine Legislature, addresses and seeks to remedy many of these inequities. The [Wabanaki Alliance](#), a coalition of Maine’s four federally recognized tribes formed to educate people of Maine about the need for securing the sovereignty of the tribes in Maine, is currently building momentum for actions that will increase the likelihood of this legislation being passed.

An October 4th presentation offers background to the legislation and its impact on Wabanaki life, with information about taking effective action. Presenters included Shirley Hager, lead author of the recent book, *The Gatherings: Reimagining Indigenous- Settler Relations*, and clerk (i.e., chair) of the Friends (Quaker) Committee on Maine Public Policy’s Tribal-State Relations Committee; Greg Sample, retired attorney with Drummond Woodsum, with decades of experience working with Wabanaki tribes and the Settlement Act; and Abbie Bradford, Outreach Manager of Maine Conservation Voters and active participant in the Wabanaki Alliance planning sessions.

[Click here for the recording of this event.](#) All of the links mentioned in the chat are available [on the Curtis Library website.](#)