

15 February 2023

Patty Cormier, Chair
Baxter Park Authority
c/o Maine Forest Service
P.O. Box 416
Norridgewock, ME 04957



Dear Chair Cormier;

I write to you and the full Authority today in my capacity as the chair of the Maine Episcopal Diocesan Committee on Indian Relations. In our work we strive to find justice for and promote understanding of the historically broken relations between the Wabanaki and the post-colonial community, and to help move our relationship, as my Maine State-Wabanaki Child Welfare Truth and Reconciliation Commission co-commissioner gkisedtanamoogk so eloquently put it, from being occupiers to neighbors.

We are allocated a modest budget from the Diocese of around a thousand dollars per year. This is not relevant to you, but it is to me. Let me explain.

In 2011, then-Chair of the Committee on Indian Relations, Lee Burns, made an official inquiry with the Baxter Park Authority regarding campsite fees for tribal members participating in the K100 paddle and run from the Penobscot Nation to Katahdin. At the time, the inquiry was generally rebuffed, although a discount on Park fees was offered up. Because of our own commitment to justice and reconciliation, the Committee on Indian Relations has paid the required balance of campsite fees for tribal members participating in the K100; this amounts to just over \$700 per year.

I am relatively new to this committee, so in inquiring after the history of this commitment, it's occurred to me that as time has evolved and as we have sought a better understanding between the tribal and post-colonial communities that it is worthwhile repeating the question from 2011; would the Authority once again consider waiving these fees for tribal members participating in the K100?

We believe now, as we did then, that in our understanding of Katahdin as a sacred place for the Wabanaki, the K100 is a spiritual event. Given our own spiritual compass, we remain committed to the idea that the Wabanaki should have unfettered access to a place of great importance to them. We hope you agree and will regard the loss of revenue as a minor one. We can then use those revenues to continue our work in following our commitment to a better relationship with our Wabanaki neighbors through education, reflection, and understanding.

I look forward to the result of the Authority's deliberations on this small matter.

I am and shall remain,

Very sincerely yours,

Matthew Dunlap
Parishioner of St. James' Episcopal Church, Old Town
Chair, Episcopal Diocesan Committee on Indian Relations