

Land Acknowledgment (Comp Plan)

We respectfully acknowledge that the places in which we reside and the land and water addressed in this Comprehensive Plan are the traditional territory of the Abenaki and Wabanaki Peoples. The region where we are living, known to the original Indigenous stewards as Westcustago, has been - and continues to be - their ancestral homeland. We recognize the historical and ongoing impacts of colonization and we now strive to build community connections marked by compassion and mutual respect.

With deep admiration and gratitude for the Indigenous community past and present and for Indigenous models of reverent stewardship for the natural world, we strive in this Plan to nurture the natural environment that sustains us all and of which all living things are a part. We hope this acknowledgment provides context for our Plan and is a small step towards fostering a more inclusive and equitable future for those who call this place home.

Parks and Lands Land Acknowledgement

The current stewards of open space in what is now known as Yarmouth, Maine recognize that the lands and waters we inhabit and enjoy are places from which Wabanaki peoples were forcefully removed. The Abenaki and other tribes of the modern Wabanaki Confederacy lived here and are still present. They stewarded these lands and waters as part of an interconnected ecosystem for thousands of years prior to European colonization. Let us respectfully acknowledge and learn from this significant history, while also appreciating the current beauty that exists here and recognizing the social, health, and other benefits we now derive from these unceded ancestral lands of indigenous people.

YCARE Land Acknowledgement

We, members of the Yarmouth Community Alliance for Racial Equality, occupiers of the town in Maine known today as Yarmouth, express our recognition that we are on indigenous land. The area that we live in, originally known as Westcustago, was named by the original Abenaki dwellers here. The Abenaki are one of the 5 remaining tribes that today make up the Ckuwaponahkiyik, the people of the land where the sun first looks our way, now known as Maine. Our area is part of the larger one referred to as The Dawnland.

For thousands of years, and hundreds of generations, the ancestral, as well as contemporary Wabanaki people have lived in this territory, a land that has always been sacred, with the tallest trees and oldest rivers. We give thanks to the Indigenous people past and present for their stewardship and resilience.

We also recognize that we occupy, and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of the land here in our town. This land includes locations such as Westcustago, an original Abenaki term for the mouth of what is called in the present day the Royall River, the Shusquisacke River, or Cousins River, as well as many scenic parks, vistas, marshlands, waterways, islands and falls, such as Pungustuck.

As our YCARE group learns of the real history of this territory, our curiosity and awareness grows. Uncovering the true narrative of this history, not taught to us in our colonial upbringing, can provide part of the foundation needed to transform our worldview.

We acknowledge the ongoing injustices of a settler colonialism system that continues to this day. We recognize the need to address the harm from the physical and cultural genocide, and slavery that has happened here and beyond. The harm is still felt by our Wabanaki neighbors.

We seek to act in solidarity with our indigenous friends and neighbors who are still here, supporting the inherent sovereignty that, along with hundreds of other indigenous nations, is rightfully theirs.

There is much to be learned about what really happened here. Our curiosity and awareness grows as we envision an inclusive and rich destiny for all of our peoples.