

Vision and Mission Statement of the Schoodic Riverkeepers

(February 20, 2013)

Tribal members have experienced and witnessed much change over the course of their lives. Individuals bring unique perspectives, life teachings and stories to the collective group. Our individual strength comes from our core Passamaquoddy values which originate from elders, relatives and traditions. As a group we contribute our values and strengths, striving to preserve and enhance the lives and traditional culture of the Passamaquoddy.

Employing traditional technologies and utilizing trade routes over land and water the Passamaquoddy established a nature-based economy that enabled the Passamaquoddy to live in balance and thrive within our Ancestral Homeland for many thousands of years. Tribal members deeply understand that Nature provides all the necessary resources for our continued survival – resources that are not infinite and therefore must be nurtured and protected for future generations. We have developed a personal and tribal sacred trust responsibility to protect and preserve the environment and natural resources within our Ancestral Territory. We are stewards of the land, water and all life. This truth was known by our Ancestors.

We have shared this earth with all other creatures. The Creator has blessed the Passamaquoddy with an abundance of fish and wildlife upon which our culture is defined and without which we would not have survived. Over the past 500 years tribal members have witnessed the over-exploitation of the indigenous food fish and natural resources and the damage done to Nature's ecosystems within our Homeland. The Schoodic Riverkeepers dedicate our efforts and work toward reversing and restoring the damage done to our Homeland. We recognize our mission can only be accomplished in concert with others who have similar goals.

As stewards of this land and water we believe that the Natural ecosystems and related Natural Communities have an inalienable and fundamental right to exist, flourish and evolve. We also recognize that water has a right to be clean and flow unobstructed and that the fish have a right to spawn and to live out their natural history and life cycles.

Specifically, we will work toward restoring the indigenous fish and wildlife such as Atlantic Salmon, Shad, Blueback Herring, Alewife and American eel to their historic homelands. We strive to endorse only appropriate technology that will enhance and not damage the natural ecosystems that these and other indigenous fish and wildlife need to survive. We desire to preserve and restore traditional food sources – our physical, cultural and spiritual sustenance.

We, the Schoodic Riverkeepers believe that much of our Ancestral Homeland is in a state of distress and we fully agree with and support the June 14, 2012 Tribal Sovereign Declaration of Emergency signed by the Passamaquoddy Chiefs and the September 26, 2012 Joint Tribal Council St Croix River and Alewife Resolution. We pledge to work to raise awareness to this situation and improve conditions for the betterment of future generations.

“Nothing in the Settlement provides for acculturation, nor is it the intent of Congress to disturb the culture or integrity of the Indian people of Maine.” *Senator Melcher, Report to the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs, Authorizing Funds for the Settlement on Indian Claims in the State of Maine, S. 2829, Report Number 95, 95th Cong., 2nd Session, September 17, 1980.*