Niweskok
From the Stars to Seeds

Fall 2025 Newsletter

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Wabanaki Aakami Wikewam
A Homecoming in Penobscot Territory

This past January 2025 marked a historic moment for Wabanaki land when after generations of displacement the remarkable of a coastal farm in Penobscot territory/ ancestral home was returned to Wabanaki and was in of Wabanaki of This land stewardship, holds a homecoming and an act of survivance in the face of ongoing colonial genocide.

The Niweskok land and aquaculture working group in collaboration of regional and national partners, including local land trusts completed the farm acquisition, which is especially significant because it was done without a conservation easement. This allows us to enact Wabanaki ethics of care, reciprocity, and relationality with the land, which the attempted possible conservation method.

Since moving to the farm in January, we've been busy grounding Niweskok's mission as a Wabanaki education center for knowledge sharing with renovations of the community center to create safe and comfortable places to gather, launching the first phase of the Outdoor Kitchen Classroom (highlighted below) in Project Updates, and the first plantings and pathways for the Agwa Kihidan (Medicine Garden). These early steps are setting the foundation for the farm to become a place of healing, learning, and growth, hearkening from the land and ways relationship that uplifts our traditional medicines. Food system restoration is also well under way through our building in the growing fields, erecting a greenhouse, and planting spring in the hoop house. We are also assessed both our community apothecary and the first employee housing to the land as new infrastructure.

If you haven't had a chance to come out to Niweskok's farm yet, we can't wait to see you. Keep an eye of the monthly potluck or other events happening throughout the year. Your feet on the ground exploring here at the farm is an integral part of community input for continued relationship with all our relations that make this place home.

Sign up for our mailing list to make sure you get all the updates!

Penobscot Language

This section features Penobscot words and phrases to support ongoing learning and visibility of the language of the land we are remaining.

tpil mamskwasumi	namadamunsis
ntel'qikihlitha	ntel'qikes
pamipeta

Wabanaki *Gratitude for Hearts and Hands on the Land*

Niweskok is deeply thankful to Wabanaki communities, and all the local crews, community groups, organizations, family and friends who have given their time, energy, and heart to tending the land and bringing Wabanaki ways of knowing back into Wabanaki's growing vision.

Since Niweskok's arrival to the farm we've been surrounded by an incredible outpouring of care. Friends, neighbors, and local crews have showed up for us, helping to make the farm's community center safe, warmer, and more welcoming through donated electrical and carpentry work, sharing a new playground out back, and gifting everything from children's books for a future kids' nook, to compostable cups sock for our entryway, and a refrigerator for community meals. We have been gifted plants, trees, seeds, and even a greenhouse, and have been offered more than hands to help build out infrastructure we've had a recent donation of a farm truck!

Work parties, twelve organized this past year, have brought the community together in the spirit of shared care and connection. The "barn frame build crew" helped us get settled in February, and in March we hosted a barn cleaning that sparked an ongoing chat group for community members to share ideas, resources, and mutual support. Community members have joined for spring cleanings, and spring work parties created roadside brush, compost the Agwa Kihidan (Medicine Garden), and planted old apple trees. Fun joined us through the summer for a pizza night and a bonfire, and in fall we hosted a community potluck to kick off our begin our remediating site. Wabanaki again to everyone who has supported us in so many ways and welcomed us with your hearts and hands.

Maqosik'hlamu
Warm Welcome to Jared

We're thrilled to welcome Jared to Niweskok in his first year as our Operations Assistant! A proud citizen of the Passdamaq Nation, Jared brings a deep connection to the traditional homeland of his people, Passed on the Penobscot River and now living in so called Rockland.

He enjoys spending time outdoors and with his family.

Since joining Niweskok, Jared has already made a meaningful impact by revamping our website, maintaining our equipment, and helping with farm preparations. He has also rolled our website recently, you've likely noticed the stunning new visuals and videos showcasing the land Niweskok calls home. We can't wait to see what else he's brought!

Jared is passionate about advancing Niweskok's mission, and he's excited to play a key role in remediating the Penobscot Bay area into a thriving Wabanaki food hub. We're honoured to have him on the team and energized for what's ahead!

Recent Media Coverage

Partnership for Indigenous Land Access and Return A Summary of Legal and Relational Pathways

Land Trust Alliance
November 13th, 2025

Read Article

Niweskok's Seeds of Hope:
Replenishing Power by Remediating Land From the Steward Up
Maine Public Radio
Read Article

Land return along the Goose River Wabanaki Nation to support Wabanaki land access in Searsport

Coastal Mountains Land Trust
Spring 2025
Read Article

Farm partnership to create Wabanaki-led food hub in Penobscot Bay region

News Center Maine
May 14th, 2025
Read Article

Wabanaki-led nonprofit returns to Belfast County with new permanent home

Maine Public Radio
Jan. 29th, 2025
Read Article

Wabanaki food sovereignty group secures no-strings-bond deal

Tribal Business News
January 19th, 2025
Read Article

Program and Project Updates

Wabanaki Revitalization School

This year the Wabanaki Revitalization School (WRS) has been following the land's lead in a deeper, more rooted way. Instead of moving forward with a fixed plan, the school's leadership focus has been on preparing Niweskok Farm to welcome Wabanaki relatives through outfitting the farmhouse community gathering spaces and executing first phases of projects like the build of the Outdoor Kitchen Classroom (deep soaking for roots). We've welcomed and walked the land with Wabanaki families, elders, and artists for visits and sessions at the farm — laying the groundwork for future WRS programming from their place-dreaming.

We also excitedly hosted our first celebration at Niweskok's Farm in Searsville — a joyful welcome home to the Penobscot Bay area. Filled with drumming, singing, and sharing food on a beautiful rainy day. Being on the land also supported by getting to know and holding the space for our relatives. We hope to share more documentation of our YouTube channel to connect with those inspiring visions of Wabanaki elders.

Other highlights from gatherings in nearby mirrored areas — which we now have greater access to thanks to the farm's proximity to these regions — include our trip through Damariscotta and Clarendon in Brooklin. In collaboration with knowledge-sharer Tony Sutton and the Brooklin Shellfish Committee, Wabanaki relatives from as far as Pittsburgh in so called Canada gathered and dug clams, cooked their ever-steaming bads of mussewed, basted together, and served to grow coastal relatives as they care for us. Together, we remember the traditions and lodes for digging clamds, wrasted our responsibilities, and discussed accessibility of shellfish for our people, while extending ecological knowledge to gathering seaweed sustainably for the table.

Summer brought more good gatherings of bring and practicing our ancestral ecological knowledge and responsibilities with the land and other more than human relatives: sweetgrass harvesting with Tribal Land Stewards, and a day of ceremony and gathering with Wabanaki Coastal Mountain's Land Trust. We harvested at the gardens with the assist of the Burnurumutaiek Singers' drums carrying through the fields — some of us joining them at the peak as others kept raking bales. This fall we also came together for an celebratory harvest at Maine Heritage Orchard in Unity.

Each of these moments reminds us of what WRS and Niweskok are all about — bringing Wabanaki families together with the land.

Ecological Restoration

Quoting our early ecological restoration efforts are Abenaki values of reciprocity, sewing, wintwasing, and caretaking for the land, we have been busy at Niweskok for more than a year. We have spent time beginning to learn to support existing plants, perennial, water flow of this land while also nurturing increased biodiversity, in this first 12 months we have welcomed 50 plant varieties to the land focusing on medicinal, culinary, and pollinator perennials. Starting what will be a long-term fence with lattice that can also be used for trellises, small structures.

We have also prioritized the restorative land tending practices of water management and pollinator habitat, including the installation of a pollinator garden and a rain garden/swale. Each of these areas of stewardship have been strengthened through relationships with friends and partners near and deepening. Gifts of seeds, plants, wood chips, equipment, advice, and labor have allowed so much more to be possible. The farm has become a site for expressing shared love for the earth and building the future we all need.

Agwa(medicine)

As Niweskok is getting re-acquainted to the land in ancestral territory, we are working with the land to heal it and restore it to a more traditional way of taking for the earth. Reaching toward ancestral knowledge of Wabanaki ecologists, Wlonaskisol, "Things to Eat", our agricultural program, focuses on growing native plant relatives and traditional food crops.

Climate change is reminding us to adapt to different ways of growing food. One of those responses to this change is to erect a high tunnel greenhouse to protect plants in a more controlled environment from such things as extreme rains and/or unseasonable temperature changes. This will also allow us to produce more food for a longer period of time. We have dissembled, done the site work, and are in the process of reassembling the high tunnel.

This fall of two Bull Bubblers currently is underway at the farm farm. This year long program is bringing Wabanaki-to-back to the land and guiding them to respect the soil during farming activities. This program is designed to educate on the importance of creating & maintaining healthy soils, without harming the ecological system. Participants receive support with tools and materials to help them succeed in their journey to creating their own Wabanaki-centered farm.

In a good way we nurture this earth and in return it shares ahlipwaziwinal

Community Center Renovations

Infrastructure is critical to remediation and we have assured Community Center improvements are rapidly underway at the farm. We are striving to create safe and comfortable places for Wabanaki people to enjoy being together. Making improvements now for future generations of leadership at the farm is a top priority. There are many local contractors helping to make this possible, from electricians updating lines, roofers installing new metal on the roof to insulation contractors helping us to make the community center more comfortable. Wabanaki people and old staircases and plumbing has been updated. The attached barn stable are being renovated into what we are calling the Dance Hall for a 60 person indoor programming space and – of course– music & dancing!

The Niweskok team is making great strides in creating a beautiful space for the community to come and enjoy a homey atmosphere at the farm. We have installed comfortable couches, bookshelves filled with puzzles and board games, and fully outfitted the kitchen. We have a cozy dining table to host and enjoy a tough over great conversations. We have filled bedrooms with bed sets for those wishing to stay over whether it is to visit for a few days or in need of a place for respite care. We are working to have Penobscot language reflected throughout the farm as incrementally progress towards language reinvention. The Community Center is a critical anchor for getting reconnected to the land and is hosting effective programming.

Breaking Ground on the Outdoor Kitchen Classroom

Niweskok has begun the first phase of building the Outdoor Kitchen Classroom, a space for skill shares, cooking, harvesting, and gathering on the land.

In this first phase, we have started with the foundation, including excavation, footing, stone grout and slab work. We have the purchase of timber for framing in the spring — some of which will be milled from trees thoughtfully released at the farm to make room for the structure. The Outdoor Kitchen Classroom is the beginning in Niweskok's broader plan to create outdoor learning spaces across the farm — connecting the community with the cycles of this watershed and the life that moves through it.

Penobscot Language

These are often two names for the same month or moon, as each moon cycle holds many distinct happenings and meanings within it.

kpi'kisuni kisuhs	pskonatmuel kisuhs
kpi'ldas	mpesili kpi'ldas

Wabanaki Elder Interview Project

In this interview series, Steward Dana, Niweskok Co-Director, sits down with elders of the Wabanaki Nations to share stories, reflections, and lessons from a lifetime of living and learning their wisdom from the stories. These digital stories, among other strategies, uplift Wabanaki elders as pillars of cultural survival. Through our elders', their experiences, and their knowledge we are supporting the stabilization of Wabanaki culture into the future. Check out the interviews with Geraldine Haddad and Carol Dana below.

Carol Dana , Wabanaki Elder Storytelling Project

Geraldine Haddad , Wabanaki Elder Storytelling Project

Penobscot Language

tlas	tkipsuns
psuqulel wtas	tkaldi'tlas

Want to Get Involved with our local Remediation Work?

Wabanaki Aid: We welcome Wabanaki individuals, families, and organizations to reach out for collaboration, gathering, and dreaming on the land together.

Donate: Please visit our donation to enhance our impact into the future. We can receive donations online or by mailing a check.

Donate Today!

Our mailing address is:

Niweskok
PO Box 1
Belfast, ME 04481

In-kind Donations: Share your skills with us! We have many renovation and new infrastructure development projects underway and stocked landscapes are highly needed. Other talents you would like to lend? We would love to hear from you at info@niweskok.org.

Organize a Work Party: Broader community support is needed through volunteer work days. Reach out to Niweskok if you would like to host a work day at Niweskok or at info@niweskok.org to explore leading a work party with us.

Give through a Donor Advised Fund, ACF or set up planned giving to Niweskok: Contact Maine at maine@wabanaki.org or get details on these forms of support.

Wabanaki's mission as a collaboration of food and medicine provides, is to remediate Wabanaki life ways by engaging with our kinship responsibilities and reclaiming traditional food and healing. We prioritize restoring the Penobscot Bay region as a Wabanaki food hub.

Niweskok is a Wabanaki non-profit 501(c)3. Donations are tax deductible.
Our Federal Tax ID is 83-2222294.

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