

# New Hampshire Commission on Native American Affairs

(RSA- 12-A:14-a)

## 2019 Annual Report



Submitted to

His Excellency, Christopher T. Sununu  
Governor

The Honorable Stephen Shurtleff  
Speaker of the House of Representatives

The Honorable Donna Soucy  
President of the Senate

Sarah L. Stewart  
Commissioner of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

Michael York  
State Librarian for the New Hampshire State Library

Prepared by Kathleen Blake, Chair, NHCNAA



# New Hampshire Commission on Native American Affairs

The NH Commission on Native American Affairs (NHCNAA) was founded in 2010 to recognize the historic and cultural contributions of Native Americans throughout the state, to strengthen and promote NH Native peoples' heritage and to represent Native American interests through state policy and programming. The Commission is composed of 15 members including 4 state appointed positions and 11 members appointed by the Governor from the Native American communities throughout the state. The NHCNAA is mandated by New Hampshire [RSA 12-A:14-a](#).

Commission on Native American Affairs  
New Hampshire Department of Natural and Cultural Resources  
19 Pillsbury Street  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301  
USA

[https://www.dncr.nh.gov/commission\\_on\\_native\\_american\\_affairs/](https://www.dncr.nh.gov/commission_on_native_american_affairs/)

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### **COMMISSION MEMBERS (As of 12/31/2019)**

1. Kathleen Blake, Chair (appointed through 11/22/2021)
2. Shawn O’Leary, Vice Chair (appointed by the director of the Dartmouth Native American Program)
3. Kayla Schweitzer, Secretary (appointed by the director of the NH State Council on the Arts)
4. Kris Neilsen, Treasurer (appointed by the director of the NH Division of Travel and Tourism Development)
5. Garrett Chapman (appointed through 6/20/2021)
6. Daniel Howard (appointed through 2/21/2021)
7. Anne Jennison (appointed through 10/2/2022)
8. Peter Kenney (appointed through 6/20/2021)
9. Denise Pouliot (appointed through 2/21/2021)
10. Madeleine Wright (appointed through 2/21/2021)
11. Vacant
12. Vacant
13. Vacant
14. Vacant
15. Sheila Charles (appointed by the director of the NH Division of Historical Resources)

### **COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Arts and Crafts: Madeleine Wright  
Education: Denise Pouliot  
Nominations: Kris Neilsen  
Protection and Preservation: Denise Pouliot  
Social Services: Shawn O’Leary

## LIST OF MEETINGS FOR 2019

**Date:** February 26, 2019

**Time:** 1 p.m.

**Location:** Van McLeod Building, 19 Pillsbury St., Concord, NH 03301

**Date:** April 24, 2019

**Time:** 1 p.m.

**Location:** Van McLeod Building, 19 Pillsbury St., Concord, NH 03301

**Date:** June 13, 2019

**Time:** 1 p.m.

**Location:** Van McLeod Building, 19 Pillsbury St., Concord, NH 03301

**Date:** September 24, 2019

**Time:** 10 a.m.-12 p.m. NHCNAA meeting, 12:30-2 p.m. Joint meeting between NHCNAA and VCNA

**Location:** The Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth

Link to online meeting minutes:

[https://www.dncr.nh.gov/commission\\_on\\_native\\_american\\_affairs/minutes\\_reports/](https://www.dncr.nh.gov/commission_on_native_american_affairs/minutes_reports/)

## 2019 Action Items:

1. There has been an ongoing situation regarding an indigenous canoe that was recovered from Squam Lake in the 1930's and sold to Shelburne Museum in Vermont. Despite on-going discussions with both this commission and the Cowasuck Band of the Pennacook - Abenaki People about this canoe being an item of cultural patrimony, Shelburne Museum chose to give the canoe to the Holderness Historical Society. This commission has serious concerns about this unfortunate decision. We believe that this is a violation of NAGPRA and are monitoring the development of an acceptable solution.
2. The NHCNAA is concerned about New Hampshire signage that is derogatory to indigenous peoples and historically inaccurate. This is a situation that we will pursue in 2020.
3. HB 221, a bill to change Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day, was tabled by the New Hampshire legislature. The NHCNAA remains firmly opposed to the celebration of Columbus Day. We continue to work towards both state and municipal adoption of Indigenous Peoples Day. We also support the retirement of celebration of Christopher Columbus based on his documented history of murder, kidnapping, rape and atrocities towards the indigenous.
4. There is an urgent need for indigenous foster homes for indigenous children. There are none. NHCNAA is actively advising New Hampshire in hopes of rectifying this lack of suitable indigenous homes.
5. The NHCNAA believes that a land recognition of the first people of New Hampshire during ceremonies such as graduations are very important. We are working with several public institutions to begin and institute this practice.
6. We are concerned about inclusion of Native American history and culture in New Hampshire Social Studies standards. We strongly believe that this is a significant need for both New Hampshire students as well as for our indigenous citizens.
7. Following an on-going situation at Merrimack Valley High School regarding indigenous and local citizen concerns about an Indian school mascot, the NHCNAA is working on a positional declaration similar to the one issued by the New Hampshire School Boards Association.

## Committee Reports

### Education Committee

1. NHCNAA has set up educational tents at various public events to raise awareness of the commission. This has given us the opportunity to connect with the community and gather information about what is currently taught for indigenous education, and discover the deficiencies within the state.
2. The Lamprey River Association requested a book review of 'Peter Little Bear' prior to a reprinting. The book was not accurate to the time period and actual events that took place in the region. The commission recommended that the book reflect the true history of the area be corrected prior to reprint.
3. The NHCNAA has continued the process of educating legislators about the historical and contemporary indigenous population that resides within the state.
4. A member of the Education Committee is participating in the revision process of New Hampshire Department of Education's Social Studies Standards.
5. NHCNAA began researching what is available for indigenous educational programs within the NH public school system. During this ongoing process we discovered that NH had once developed and used educational 'kits' consisting of artifacts and other educational information that were shared within the public school system. Unfortunately we were unable to locate any of these educational 'kits'.
6. The NHCNAA has begun collaboration with the Indigenous NH Collaborative Collective (INHCC) at the University of New Hampshire. INHCC is a diverse interdisciplinary, interdepartmental program that includes UNH professors, faculty, students, NH Indigenous Tribal Leaders and NH residents with diverse professional backgrounds.
7. The NHCNAA in collaboration with INHCC has agreed to jointly develop a manual about the repatriation process that includes protocol to initiate the Native American Graves and Protection Act (NAGPRA)

Respectfully submitted:

Denise Pouliot  
Education Committee Chair

## **Committee Reports**

### **Arts & Crafts Committee**

The Arts and Crafts Committee created an exhibit on Indigenous New Hampshire at the request of the New Hampshire Fire Academy. We consulted and collaborated with the Mt. Kearsarge Indian Museum for this project. The exhibit was up for November; Native American Heritage Month, December, and will run until the end of January 2020.

Respectfully submitted:

Madeleine Gosselin Wright, Chair  
Kayla Schweitzer

## Committee Reports

### Protection & Preservation Committee

1. NHCNAA contacted NH State Archaeologist Dr. Richard Boisvert (now retired) regarding providing input on Native American human remains, grave goods, and sacred sites in New Hampshire. The commission agreed to work with the Native American community and the Division of Historical Resources to generate recommendations for responding to these concerns. This project is ongoing and current.
2. The NHCNAA was contacted by State Archaeologist Dr. Richard Boisvert about a request to ensure that all Native American human remains and grave goods that had long been held in state custody are repatriated. The NHCNAA unanimously supported the repatriation request. Boisvert provided information on the status of the former and current Native American remains in the State Archaeological Laboratory. Steps are being undertaken to complete the repatriation actions with the assistance of current NH State Archaeologist Mark Doperalski.
3. It was discovered that one of the Northern New Hampshire sites provided for repatriation purposes was identified on Google maps. Due to the history of looting and desecration that has historically occurred with Native American burial sites, our concern was shared with Dr. Boisvert. Dr. Boisvert contacted Google requesting that this site detail identifying the location as a Native American Reburial Ground be removed from its maps. Google complied with this request and the identification is no longer on their website.
4. The NHCNAA received a correspondence from a Franklin Pierce Student stating that unreported Native American remains and grave goods were knowingly in possession at Franklin Pierce College in the Copeland Collection. This information was also forwarded to the NH Division of Historical Resources and to Dr. Richard Boisvert. We received an inventory completed by a Franklin Pierce student that disclosed and documented grave goods and Native American remains in the Copeland Collection. Franklin Pierce was given the Copeland Collection in the 1970's, yet has never officially "received it," so there is an unresolved question regarding ownership. After consultation with NAGPRA representative David Tarler in Washington, D.C., this commission sent a letter to Dr. Jennie Brown, interim dean at Franklin Pierce University to request that a determination be made as to ownership of the Copeland Collection. To date, Dr. Brown has not responded. This commission will continue to work on this issue.
5. A bridge replacement and rehabilitation project at Weirs Beach in Laconia on US Route 3 over the Scenic Railroad proposed a 30 day temporary easement for an emergency access road to avoid an extended detour during construction. The temporary easement would extend within the Weirs Aquadocton archaeological site, listed on the National Register of Historic



Places. The NHCNAA expressed concern about this proposed easement as this area has not undergone an archaeological survey. The NH Department of Transportation has included commitments, which will ensure there will be no ground excavation, geotextile and gravel will be laid, and existing travel ways will be used to avoid impacting the archaeologically sensitive area. NHCNAA also made a request that barrier fencing would avoid ground disturbance. To that end, the contractor will use temporary chain link fencing with posts supported on bases rather than driven into the ground. We remain highly concerned about the preservation of this recognized and National Register listed archaeological site, referred to as “one of the most important in the whole of New England” (Moorehead 1931).

Respectfully submitted:

Preservation & Protection Committee