

Wabanaki Youth in Science SEASONAL REVIEW

Youth Programming Across Wabanaki Communities

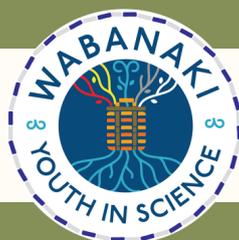
Throughout the winter months, the WaYS team continued Wabanaki Ecological Knowledge programming with youth across several communities, including Indian Island, Motahkomikuk, Sipayik, and the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians. Youth participated in a variety of hands-on cultural and land-based activities such as snow snake, drumming, fire making, nature walks, tree identification, hide tanning demonstrations, and ice fishing at Meduxnekeag Lake. During these visits, youth learned about the story and technique behind traditional snow snake race, explored the proper ways to honor and respect the big drum, and practiced identifying culturally important trees like brown ash, cedar, white birch, and white pine.

One highlight included an ice fishing outing where youth learned how to set traps, drill holes in the ice, jig for fish, and practice patience. Snow snake activities were especially popular, with youth building tracks and challenging each other to see who could throw the farthest or hit a target.

These visits were led by WaYS team members Wambli Martinez, Damon Galipeau, Apemesim "Bem" Galipeau, Logan Dana and Jayden Dana, who together reached more than 130 youth participants through winter programming. Through these gatherings, WaYS continues to create opportunities for youth to connect with culture, land, and community while learning traditional knowledge and outdoor skills.

Edition Includes:

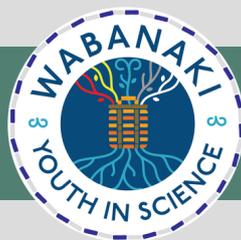
1. Wabanaki Winter Ecological Knowledge Programming (TEK)
3. Hides and Beaver Mitts
4. Honoring Reuben Butch Phillips - Birch Bark Project
5. Internships - Spring on the Opportunities!
6. 2026 Trail Crew Season
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WABANAKI WINTER ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE PROGRAMMING



Wabanaki TEK - The WaYS After-School Program brings Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) directly into Wabanaki classrooms and community spaces. Youth engage in hands-on cultural and science-based activities like medicine walks, archery, storytelling, basketmaking, and plant identification - guided by Cultural Knowledge Sharers and mentors. These gatherings strengthen cultural identity, connection to place, and a love for learning that continues beyond the school day.



HIDES AND BEAVER MITTS OH MY! WORKSHOP WITH NATE JOHNSON, JOHN NEPTUNE AND GABE PAUL



This winter, the Wabanaki Youth in Science (WaYS) team joined community members for a week of hands-on learning focused on hide processing and beaver mitten making with instructor Nate Johnson, alongside teachings from John Neptune and Gabe Paul.

During the first part of the week, participants learned the process of preparing hides, including scraping, brain tanning, stretching, softening, and smoking. The group worked on both deer and moose hides, gaining a deeper understanding of the care and patience required to turn a hide into usable leather.

Later in the week, participants created their own beaver fur mittens using traditional sewing techniques and sinew thread. Before beginning, the group gathered in a smudging circle to give thanks to the beaver and acknowledge the life that made the work possible. The workshop not only strengthened technical skills but also created space for staff, youth leaders, elders, and community members to learn together.

Woliwoni to Nate Johnson, Gabe Paul and John Neptune and everyone who helped make this learning possible. We look forward to making beaver mittens with youth at the Fall 2026 wskitamikw camp at Nibezun!



HONORING REUBEN “BUTCH” PHILLIPS THROUGH BIRCH BARK AND COMMUNITY

Wabanaki Youth in Science (WaYS) is honored to support a series of birch bark gatherings this spring and summer that center cultural knowledge, creativity, and connection to land.

This project is dedicated to the memory of Penobscot Nation ancestor, Reuben “Butch” Phillips, whose deep love for culture, birch bark artwork, and commitment to supporting youth and the continuation of this artform inspire this work. Through these gatherings, we carry forward this spirit, uplifting birchbark as both teacher and relative, and creating space for community learning and expression.

We began in March with scouting birch trees for harvesting, guided by Ben Stevens of Penobscot Nation Forestry. The trees were carefully marked and will return to harvest when the time is right, grounding this work in respect for plant relatives and seasonal knowledge.

This spring, community members will gather for birch bark etching workshops led by the Penobscot Nation Cultural & Historic Preservation Department on May 15 and May 16. These workshops will offer an opportunity to learn etching techniques and create small pieces while deepening understanding of the cultural significance of birch. Limited spots will be available, with more details to come.

Looking ahead, James Francis, Butch’s nephew, is creating a birch bark art piece that will be unveiled during the summer wskitkamikw Camp in July 2026. With an accompanying statement from Butch’s granddaughter, Sage Phillips.

We extend our deep appreciation to the Phillips family, Penobscot Nation Cultural & Historic Preservation Department, Ben Stevens, Kristin Peet and the Appalachian Mountain Club, and all who are supporting this work.

Together, these efforts honor Butch’s legacy by continuing the art, teachings, and relationships he cared so deeply about.

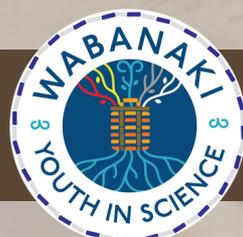


Reuben Butch Phillips 1940 - 2025



Damon Galipeau - WaYS Forestry Lead and Wambli Martinez, - WaYS Trail Crew Leader scouted for birch with Penobscot Nation Forest Manager, Ben Stevens (March 2026)

Read more about - Butch Phillips
<https://downeast.com/maine-made/butch-phillips-birch-bark-moose-calls-alive/>



WaYS INTERNSHIPS

Welcoming Sierra Lank!

SPRING ON THE OPPORTUNITIES!

Wabanaki Youth in Science (WaYS), in partnership with the Ash Protection Collaboration Across Waponahkik (APCAW), is excited to welcome Sierra as the 2026 Sustaining Basketmaking Intern. Sierra is a third-year undergraduate studying Ecology and Environmental Science and is from Motahkomikuk.

Sierra will work with Gabriel Frey, APCAW, and WaYS staff to support efforts that sustain Wabanaki basketmaking traditions and the stewardship of brown ash. We are grateful for Sierra's commitment to sustaining this important cultural practice and knowledge for future generations.



WaYS to Apply!

We have many exciting Spring and Summer internship opportunities on the horizon for Wabanaki students to apply:

- 4 placements with Restoring Tribal Relations and Forest Knowledge, an immersive cultural and ecological exchange in collaboration with St. Regis Mohawk
- Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument to support fish passage efforts.
- Energy resilience projects with the Sipayik Resilience Committee.
- 3 placements with plant restoration work with Dr. Suzanne Greenlaw.
- Penobscot Nation Forestry/GIS.
- Mi'kmaq Nation Forestry

More opportunities are emerging across Wabanaki homelands.

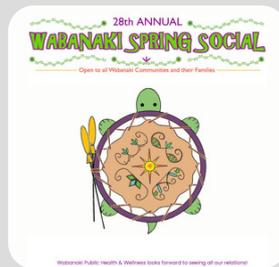
Restoring Tribal Relations and Forest Knowledge Application



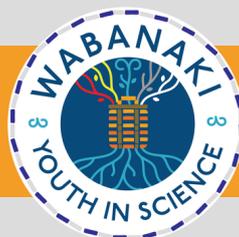
WaYS General Internship Application



Visit our table at the Wabanaki Spring Social April 4, 2026 to apply



WaYS Internship Program empowers Wabanaki students to excel on their chosen career paths. They gain professional skills in forestry, fisheries, conservation, cultural preservation and more while learning from mentors rooted in both Indigenous knowledge systems and western science practices. These paid internships help Wabanaki students explore career paths, strengthen identity, and build leadership skills.



WAYS ANCESTRAL LANDS TRAIL CREW



The WaYS Ancestral Lands Trail Crew is preparing for 32 weeks of land stewardship across Wabanaki homelands. The crew will begin with Trail Crew Orientation at Nibezun in Passadumkeag before heading into a season of trail restoration and conservation work.

Throughout the spring, summer, and fall, the crew will work with partners including:

Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, Appalachian Mountain Club, Hog Island Audubon, Friends of Acadia, Land Peace Foundation, Forest Stewards Guild, Passamaquoddy Tribe, Penobscot Nation, Downeast Coastal Conservancy, Niweskok, and the National Park Service at Acadia National Park and Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument.

Along with trail work, the crew will take part in cultural learning throughout the season, including drumming, lacrosse, harvesting fiddleheads, clam digging with Tony Sutton, and learning about petroglyphs with Donald Soctomah. Crew members will also participate in wskitkamikw Camp at Medawisla Lodge in July and continue intertribal relationship building through

Visit the WaYS table at the Land Fair Exhibition featured at the MLC Conference presented by Maine Coast Heritage Trust
April 28 - 29, 2026

Established in 2020, the WaYS Ancestral Lands Trail Crew restores and maintains trails across Wabanaki homelands while caring for the forests, rivers, and cultural sites that hold deep meaning. Crew members gain hands-on experience in conservation, land stewardship, and teamwork.

WABANAKI YOUTH IN SCIENCE

2026 WaYS Ancestral Lands Trail Crew

WE ARE HIRING!

WaYS is seeking to hire 5 crew members ages 18 - 35 who are interested in hands-on trail maintenance work throughout Wabanaki territory. This is your opportunity to build skills, connect with culture, and spend the season working outdoors with a supportive 8 - person crew.

Details:

- Season: Late April - Mid November - 2026 (1,280 hours for the season)
- Starting wage: \$18/hour (increase with prior experience)
- Monday thru Thursday - 40-hour work week
- Camping/Lodging onsite

What you'll gain:

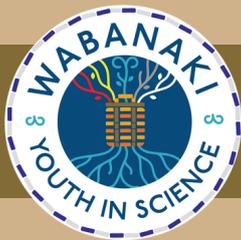
- Valuable professional career building knowledge and trainings
- Wabanaki Cultural and Nature-based activities
- Camping gear, work boots, clothing provided
- Meals and Transportation
- Lasting Friendships

If you're interested in being out on the trails, working as a team, and connecting with Wabanaki lands and culture, we encourage you to apply!

Contact Wamblim or Jayden if you have any questions at wamblim@wabanakiyouthinscience.org or jaydend@wabanakiyouthinscience.org

Photo Credit - Logan Dana

Restoring Tribal Relations and Forest Knowledge with the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe. This season will continue to build leadership and career pathways for young people while strengthening their connection to the lands they help steward. Woliwoni to the crew, mentors, and partners who support this work. We look forward to sharing updates throughout the season!



WAYS WSKITKAMIKW CAMPS

est. 2013

Save the dates!

Up next!

2026 wskitkamik^w (Earth) Camps

WABANAKI YOUTH IN SCIENCE

Do you know a special place where WaYS could host a future Earth Camp? We'd love your help - please fill out this form to share a location. Woliwoni

March 20 -22
New England Outdoor Center
Millinocket

May 8 - 10
Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences
East Boothbay

July 13 - 17
Medawisla Lodge and Cabins
Greenville

October 16 - 18
nibezun
Passamkeag

QR code

Spring wskitkamik^w Camp

save the date

MAY 2026

Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences is an independent, nonprofit research institute that studies the foundation of global ocean health and uses our discoveries to improve the future for all life on the planet. Learn more about our ocean discoveries, solutions, and inspiration at bigelow.org

FRI	SAT	SUN
08	09	10

Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences

WABANAKI YOUTH IN SCIENCE

Cyanotype art with Maya Attean!

More information to follow

Winter Wskitkamik^w (Earth) Mini Camp

WABANAKI YOUTH IN SCIENCE

Camp Activities Include:

- Snowshoeing
- Track ID
- Wildlife Biology
- Beading
- Snow snakes
- Star Knowledge
- Medicinal tea and herbs
- Fire Building
- Tree Knowledge
- Cultural Knowledge Jeopardy
- Strengthening Kinship

Hosted at
New England Outdoor Center,
Millinocket, Maine

NEOC

March 20th-22nd, 2026
rescheduled from Jan 23 -25

Meals and lodging provided.
Transportation provided at the following pick up & drop off locations:

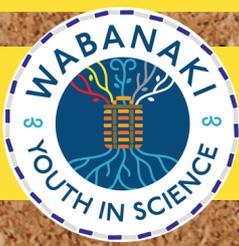
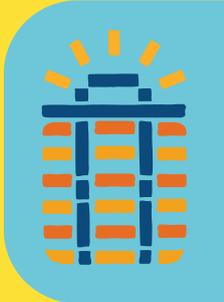
- Indian Island, Sockalexis Arena
- Baileyville Irving
- Houlton Big Stop

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Limited Space! Register Today!

Happening now!

wskitkamikw Camps are immersive, land-based seasonal multi-day experiences where Wabanaki Knowledge systems and western science come together. Youth learn directly from Wabanaki Cultural Knowledge Sharers, educators, and scientists through hands-on activities such as forest knowledge, fishing, food systems and environmental sciences. Through these experiences, Wabanaki young people develop a relational understanding of place - strengthening their connection to culture, land, waters, and community. Offered at no cost, the camps ensure every student has the opportunity to learn, belong, and build relationships with the lands and waters that sustain us.





WAYS WISH LIST & DONOR SUPPORT

To support land-based learning, canoe travel, and environmental education across Wabanaki homelands, WaYS welcomes support for the following program equipment and materials:

Transportation

- Canoe trailer
- Fuel gift cards

Canoe & Water Safety

- Canoes
- Paddles
- Youth PFDs
- Throw ropes and safety gear

Field & Program Supplies

- Student laptops
- Walkie-talkies or radios
- Portable tables and camp kitchen supplies
- lumber

Youth Outdoor Gear

- Hiking boots (youth sizes)
- Rain gear and muck boots

Woliwoni for supporting Wabanaki youth as they learn, travel, and connect to their Wabanaki homelands

Established in 2013, Wabanaki Youth in Science empowers Indigenous youth by connecting them to culture, science, and the land through hands-on, land-based learning rooted in Indigenous knowledge.

WaYS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All donations are tax-deductible.
EIN: 47-5239057

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