



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

[N6957; NPS-WASO-NAGPRA-NPS0042473; PPWOCRADN0-PCU00RP14.R50000]

Notice of Intended Repatriation: The University of Maine, Orono, ME

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), the University of Maine, Orono, intends to repatriate certain cultural items that meet the definition of unassociated funerary objects and that have a cultural affiliation with the Indian Tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations in this notice.

DATES: Repatriation of the cultural items in this notice may occur on or after [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE **FEDERAL REGISTER**].

ADDRESSES: Send additional, written requests for repatriation of the cultural items in this notice to Dr. Bonnie Newsom, Anthropology Department, University of Maine, 5773 South Stevens Hall, Orono, ME 04469, email bonnie.newsom@maine.edu.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This notice is published as part of the National Park Service's administrative responsibilities under NAGPRA. The determinations in this notice are the sole responsibility of the University of Maine, Orono, and additional information on the determinations in this notice, including the results of consultation, can be found in the summary or related records. The National Park Service is not responsible for the determinations in this notice.

Abstract of information available

A total of 184 cultural items has been requested for repatriation. These items include artifacts, soil and ocher samples, and casts of funerary objects that were donated to the University of Maine over its history by collectors such as Walter B. Smith and materials left from Dr. Brian Robinson's research into funerary practices in Maine and New England prior to European Contact.

A total of 26 unassociated funerary items could not be associated with a known

archaeological site but are reasonably assumed to be from sites located in Maine based on regional typologies and research interests of Northeastern archaeology faculty. The 26 unassociated funerary objects include two ochre-stained gouges, an ochre-stained celt, an atlatl weight, an ochre-stained ground stone preform, 16 bifaces, a rounded pebble, a slate point fragment, and three abraders.

A total of 113 items are from the Godfrey Cemetery site, dated to approximately 3800 BP, and located in Old Town, Penobscot County, Maine. The 113 unassociated funerary objects include a small lithic flake from a stone tool, a limonite sample with insect pupae from a fire-starting kit, two sediment samples, one charcoal sample, 19 plaster artifact casts, and 89 wax flakes scraped from funerary objects after making casts of the objects.

A total of 45 plaster casts created directly from funerary objects are from the Overlock Cemetery site located in Warren, Knox County, Maine. The site dates to approximately 3800 – 3600 BP.

Determinations

The University of Maine, Orono, has determined that:

- The 184 unassociated funerary objects described in this notice are reasonably believed to have been placed intentionally with or near human remains, and are connected, either at the time of death or later as part of the death rite or ceremony of a Native American culture according to the Native American traditional knowledge of a lineal descendant, Indian Tribe, or Native Hawaiian organization. The unassociated funerary objects have been identified by a preponderance of the evidence as related to human remains, specific individuals, or families, or removed from a specific burial site or burial area of an individual or individuals with cultural affiliation to an Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian organization.
- There is a connection between the cultural items described in this notice and the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians; Mi'kmaq Nation (previously listed as Aroostook Band of Micmacs); Passamaquoddy Tribe; and the Penobscot Nation.

Requests for Repatriation

Additional, written requests for repatriation of the cultural items in this notice must be sent to the authorized representative identified in this notice under ADDRESSES. Requests for repatriation may be submitted by any lineal descendant, Indian Tribe, or Native Hawaiian organization not identified in this notice who shows, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the requestor is a lineal descendant or a culturally affiliated Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian organization.

Repatriation of the cultural items in this notice to a requestor may occur on or after [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE **FEDERAL REGISTER**]. If competing requests for repatriation are received, the University of Maine, Orono, must determine the most appropriate requestor prior to repatriation. Requests for joint repatriation of the cultural items are considered a single request and not competing requests. The University of Maine, Orono, is responsible for sending a copy of this notice to the Indian Tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations identified in this notice and to any other consulting parties.

Authority: Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, 25 U.S.C. 3004 and the implementing regulations, 43 CFR 10.9.

Dated: March 20, 2026.

Melanie O'Brien,
Manager, National NAGPRA Program.

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