



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

[N7097; NPS-WASO-NAGPRA-NPS0042630; PPWOCRADN0-PCU00RP14.R50000]

Notice of Intended Repatriation: Martha's Vineyard Museum, Vineyard Haven, MA

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), the Martha's Vineyard Museum (formerly Dukes County Historical Society) intends to repatriate certain cultural items that meet the definition of sacred 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 Anna Barber, Martha's Vineyard Museum, 151 Lagoon Pond Road, Vineyard Haven, MA 02568, email abarber@mvmuseum.org.

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 Martha's Vineyard Museum, 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 three cultural items have been requested for repatriation. The three sacred objects are a canoe, a grass skirt and tapa cloth, and a poi pounder. The canoe and poi pounder were donated by Elmer J. Bliss who had acquired them in Hawaii and brought them to Martha's Vineyard before donating them to the Museum in 1941. The grass skirt and tapa cloth were brought to the Vineyard from Hawaii by whaler Manuel Norton c. 1870 before being donated to the Museum by Mrs. Arthur Vincent in 1956.

Determinations

The Martha's Vineyard Museum has determined that:

- The three sacred objects described in this notice are specific ceremonial objects needed by a traditional Native American religious leader for present-day adherents to practice traditional Native American religion, according to the Native American traditional knowledge of a lineal descendant, Indian Tribe, or Native Hawaiian organization.
- There is a connection between the cultural items described in this notice and the Hui Iwi Kuamo'o.

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 Martha's Vineyard Museum 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 Martha's Vineyard Museum 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: April 15, 2026.

Melanie O'Brien,
Manager, National NAGPRA Program.

