

June 29, 2023

David Craig, Chair
Members, Town Council
Town of Yarmouth, Maine

Re: *Pumgustuck*, Request USGS Place Naming Petition by Town

Dear Council Chair Craig and Members of the Town Council:

The Wabanaki place name *Pumgustuck* translates as “falls goes out place.” It describes the place where the river falls to the estuary and then toward the bay. The falls goes out place is where paddlers would begin or end a portage, where fish and bears would be plentiful.

In 2015, the place name *Pumgustuck* was recognized and celebrated by the Penobscot Nation’s Penobscot Cultural & Historic Preservation Department in its published Map and Gazetteer as one of the few remembered place names in this region.

While *Pumgustuck* has been the clear name through all of recorded history, today the falls have no formal name under local, county, state, or federal protocol. From a non-native governmental perspective the falls are only known informally as First Falls, Grist Mill Falls, Lower Falls, or *Pumgustuck*.

Wabanaki Yarmouth residents and their town allies have come together to seek exposure and acknowledgment on this land and cultural issue in opposition to historical genocide, colonization, and cultural erasure, while recognizing indigenous Wabanaki names for certain places. We ask our neighbors to stand with us in this seemingly small change which will help visitors align their intentions with the land, respect the land and its first inhabitants, and acknowledge the pain of oppression that we now work to repair. We hope to instill hope and positivity in the efforts of working together, and look forward to living together respectfully and aware.

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We write urging the Yarmouth Town Council to initiate a naming process, to name *Pumgustuck*, and for the Town of Yarmouth to accordingly petition the Domestic Names Committee of the United States Board on Geographic Names, part of the United States Geological Survey of the United States Department of the Interior.

Sincerely,

Autumn Jade Fitch, Passamaquoddy, 607 Granite Street, Yarmouth

Ron Nicholas Siviski, Maliseet, Yarmouth Indigenous Awareness Group of the Yarmouth Community Alliance for Racial Equity (YCARE), 32 Newell Road, Yarmouth

Natalie Waloven, Maliseet, 56 Sligo Road, Yarmouth

Dan Waloven, Maliseet, 56 Sligo Road, Yarmouth

Mary Lou Michael, Yarmouth Community Alliance for Racial Equity (YCARE), 45A Salt Marsh Lane, Yarmouth

Dale Shields, Yarmouth Community Alliance for Racial Equity (YCARE), 229 Oakwood Drive, Yarmouth

Robert Greenleaf, Royal River Conservation Trust & Yarmouth Indigenous Awareness Group, 47 Dartmouth Street, Yarmouth

Richard Lewis, Yarmouth Indigenous Awareness Group, 10 Waters Edge Drive, Yarmouth

Karen Massey, Yarmouth Indigenous Awareness Group, 200 Sisquisic Trail, Yarmouth

Marge Titcomb, Yarmouth Indigenous Awareness Group, 18 Portland Street, Yarmouth

Judith Pollock, Yarmouth Indigenous Awareness Group, 36 Tanglewood Lane, Yarmouth

Alan Stearns, Royal River Conservation Trust & Yarmouth Indigenous Awareness Group, 52 North Road, Yarmouth