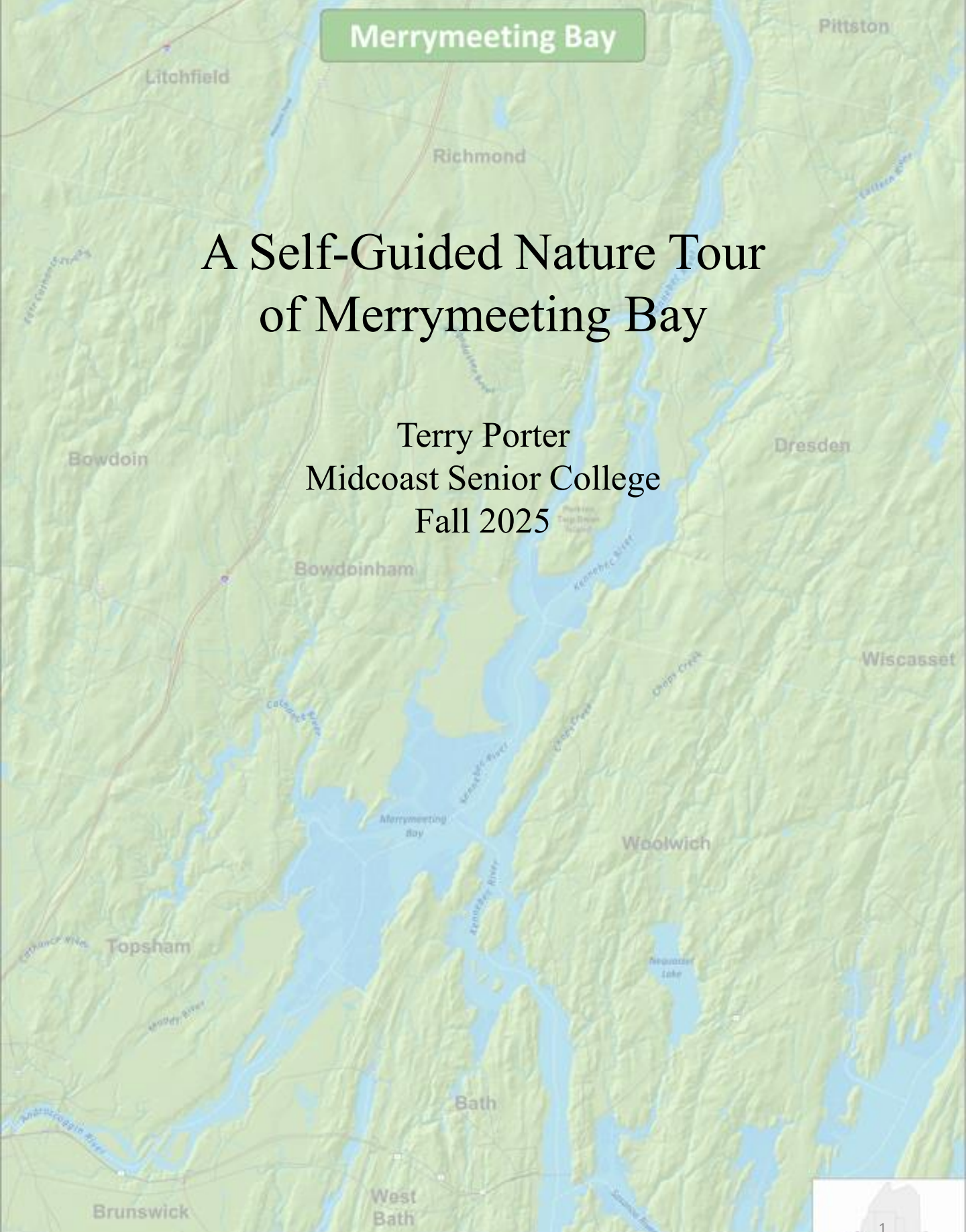


Merrymeeting Bay

A Self-Guided Nature Tour of Merrymeeting Bay

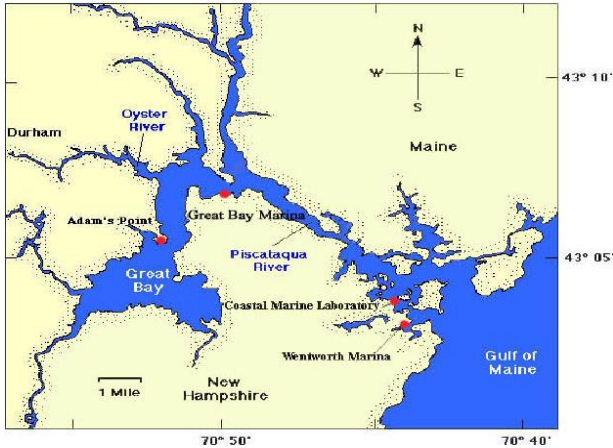
Terry Porter
Midcoast Senior College
Fall 2025



Today's Agenda

- “Great Bays”
- More Hydrology of Merrymeeting Bay
- Early Peoples at Merrymeeting Bay
- Fish
- Walk: Dresden Falls Archaic Preserve
- Bonus Walks:
 - Pownalborough Court House
 - Green Point Preserve

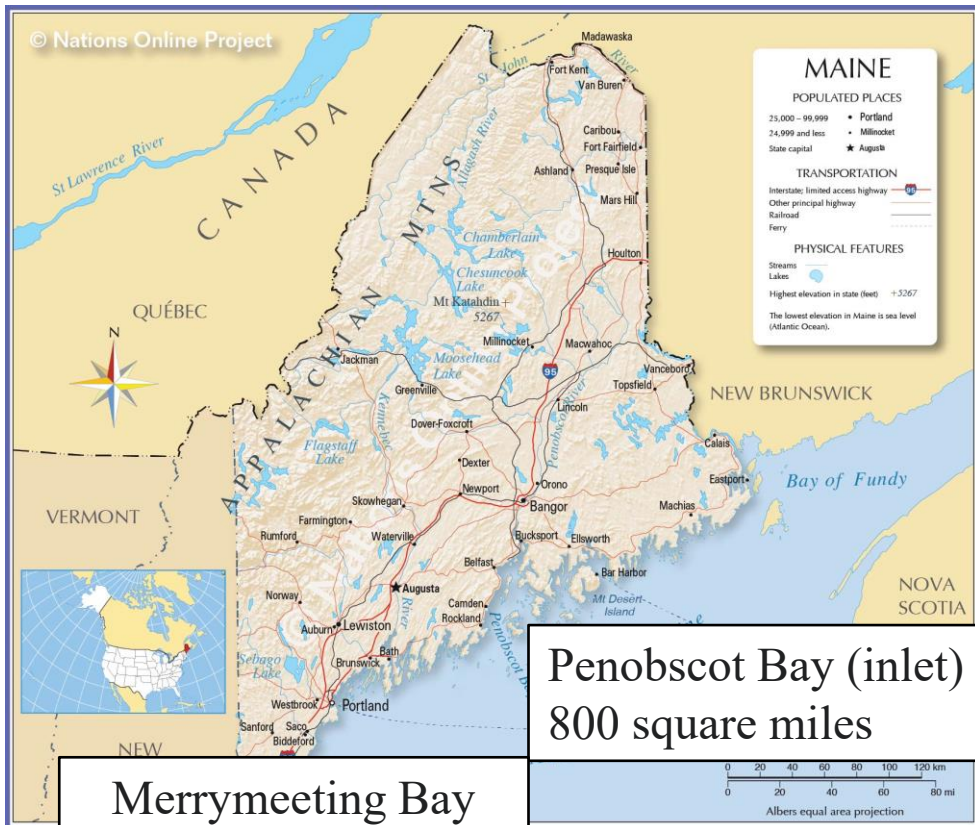
Maine's Four Great Bays



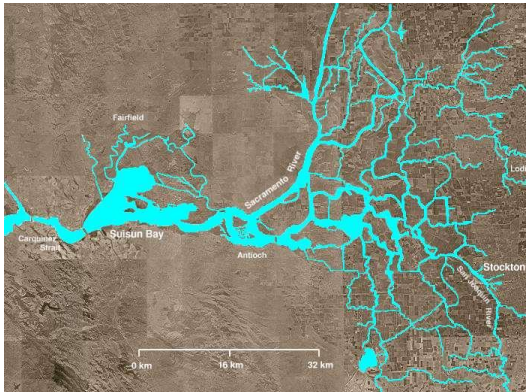
Great Bay – Fore River
(Portland)
9.4 square miles



Passamaquoddy Bay -
St. Croix River - Bay of Fundy inlet
(US-Canada)
3,600 square miles



The World's Four Great Inland Bays



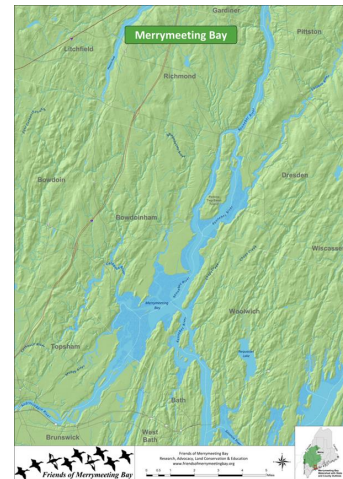
Sacramento—San Joaquin
River Delta, California



Tigris and Euphrates Rivers,
Iraq



Ganges—Brahmaputra-
Meghna Delta, Bangladesh



Merrymeeting Bay, Maine

Merrymeeting Bay Salinity

- Surface waters in the Gulf of Maine are 34 parts per thousand salt.
- In the Atlantic Ocean beyond Georges Banks the salinity is 36 parts per thousand salt.
- Freshwater from rivers has a salinity value of 0.5 ppt or less.

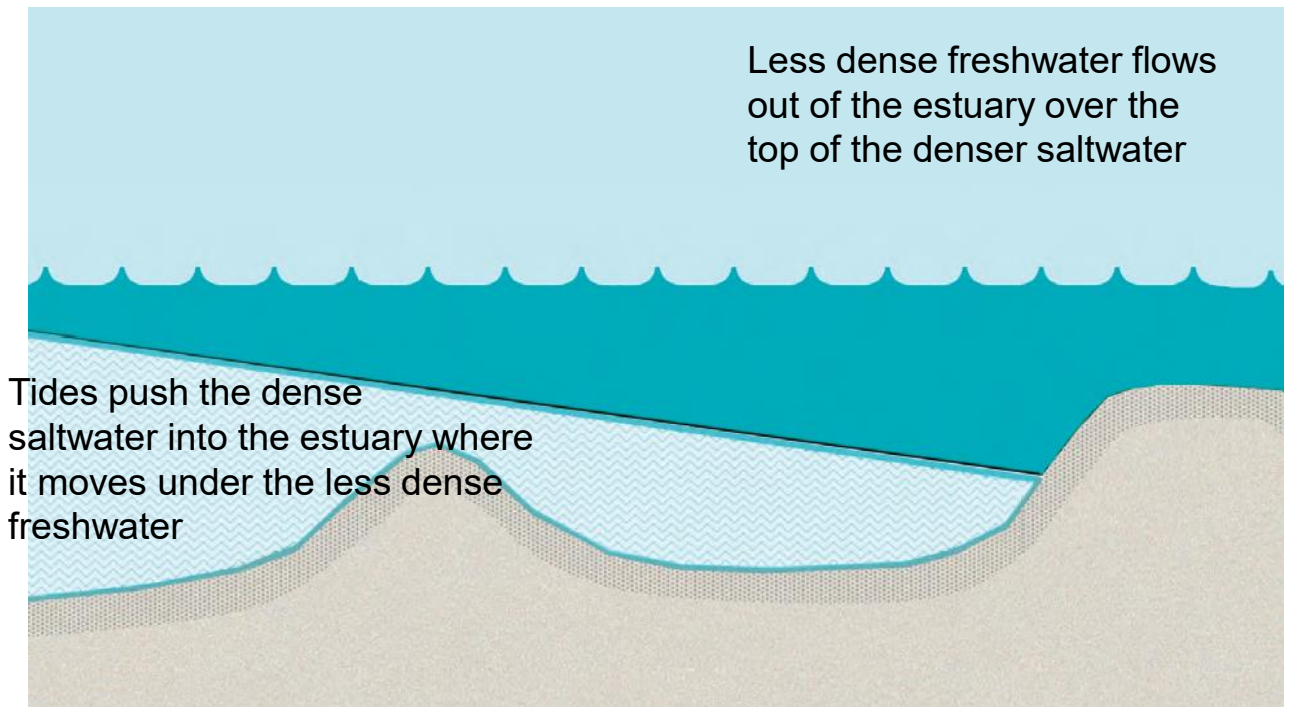


Merrymeeting Bay average overall water salinity does not exceed .5 parts per thousand, about the same as river water.

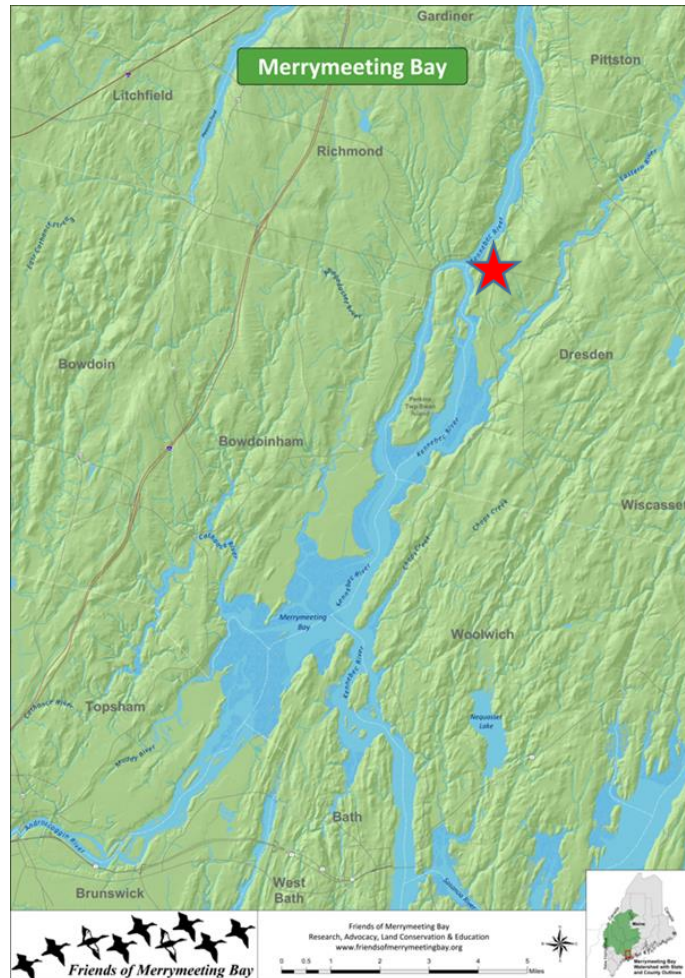
Composition of Merrymeeting Bay

- Rivers contribute ~95% of water in the Bay.
- The Kennebec River contributes the most water.
- The Androscoggin River contributes the most sediment.
- Salinity in the Bay is highly variable, by season, location, tides, river volumes, etc.

The Chops Create a Classic “Salt Wedge”



First Peoples at Merrymeeting Bay

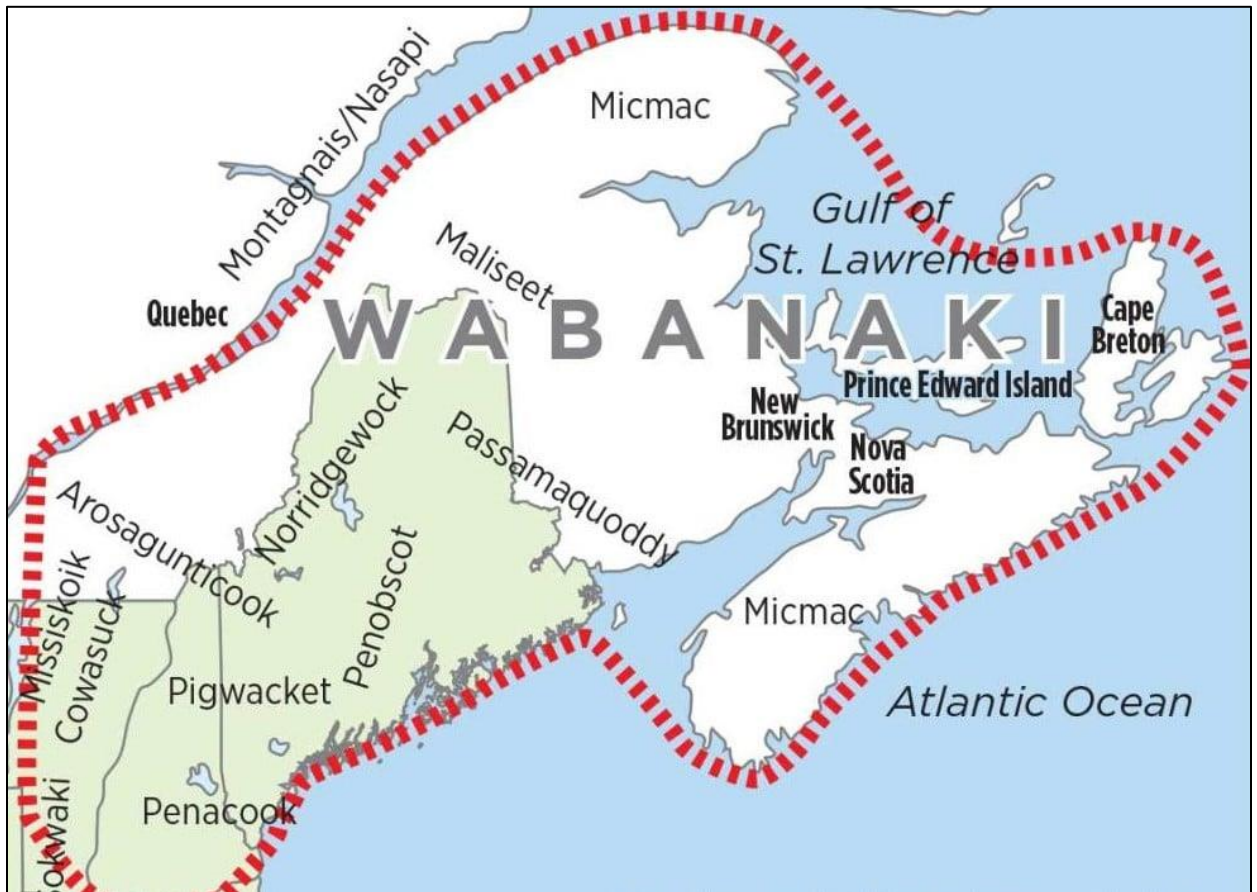


Wabanaki Occupation Site

Dresden Falls Archaic Preserve



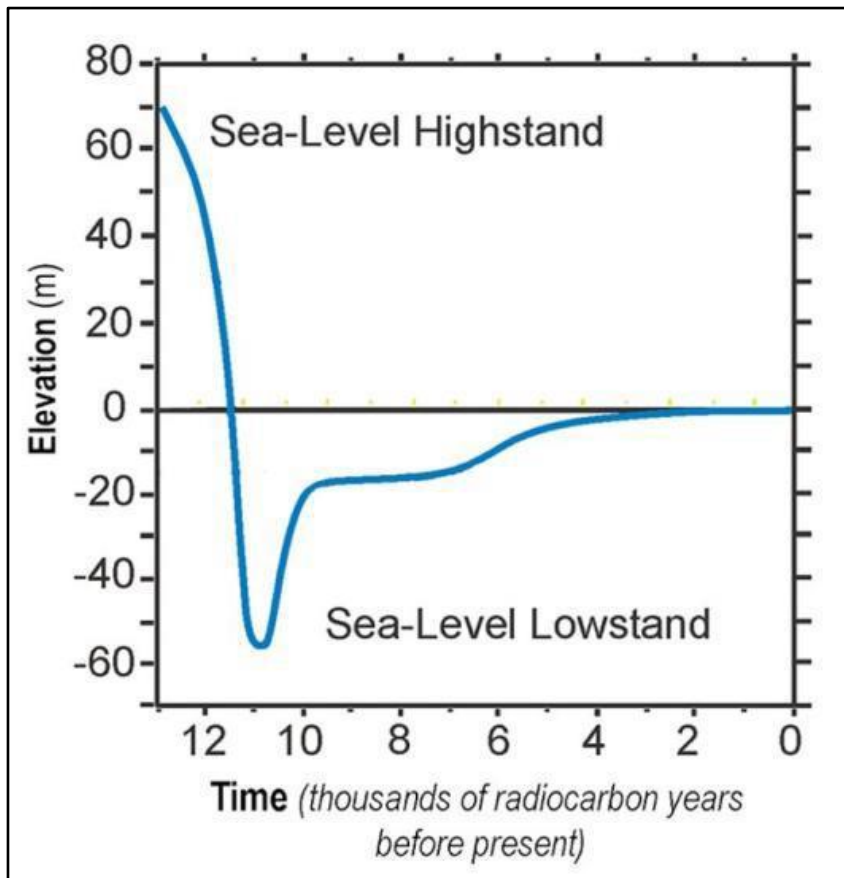
Northeastern Wabanaki Peoples



TRIBES:

- Maliseet
- Passamaquoddy
- Micmac
- Penobscot
- Abenaki (not federally recognized)

Evolving Geology in Archaic Period



Early Peoples' Food Sources

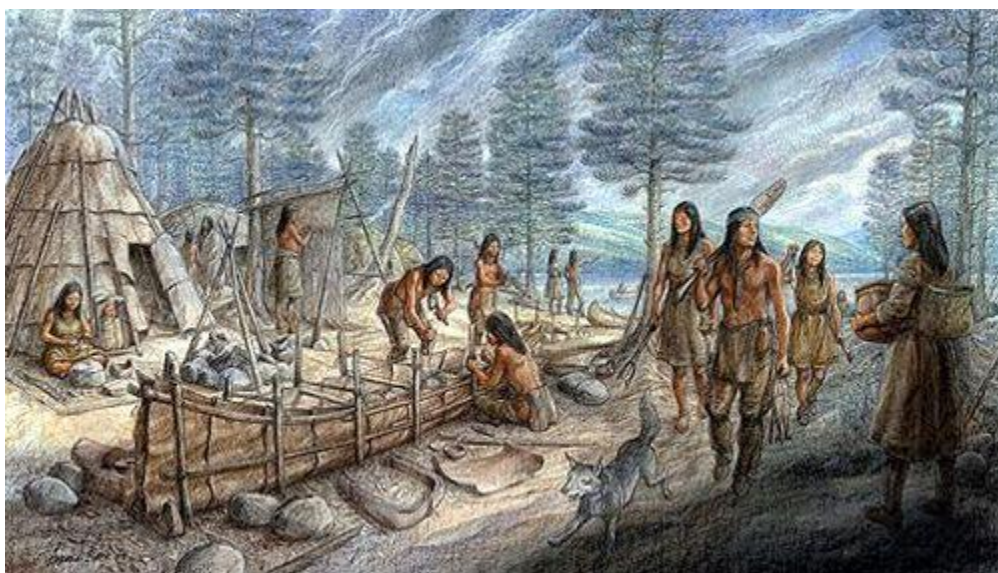
Timeline

- 12,000 years before present (YBP): Glaciers withdrew
- 8,000 – 5,000 YBP: warming climate
- 3,000 YBP
- 500 YBP

Wabanaki Activities

- Seasonal camps: hunted caribou, mammoths, rabbit, walrus, seals, seabirds.
- Deer, moose, seals; Fishing using plummets, weirs and spears.
- Dugout canoes; ceramics technology; beginnings of growing corn, squash, beans.
- European contact.

Archaic Period Peoples in Maine



Archeological Dig in Upper Field



[9000 Years Ago in Dresden](#)

(watch on your own, ~1 hr)

Fish Weir Designs

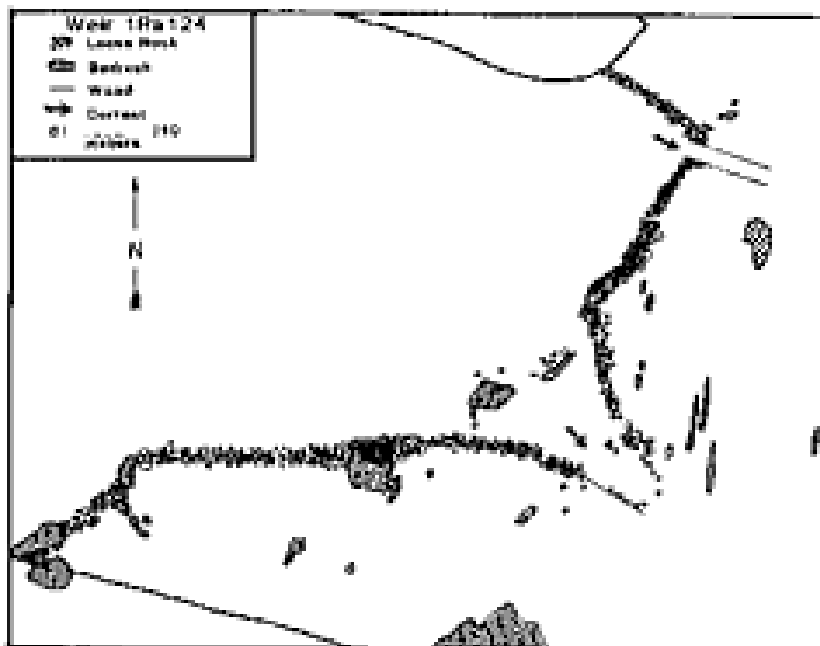
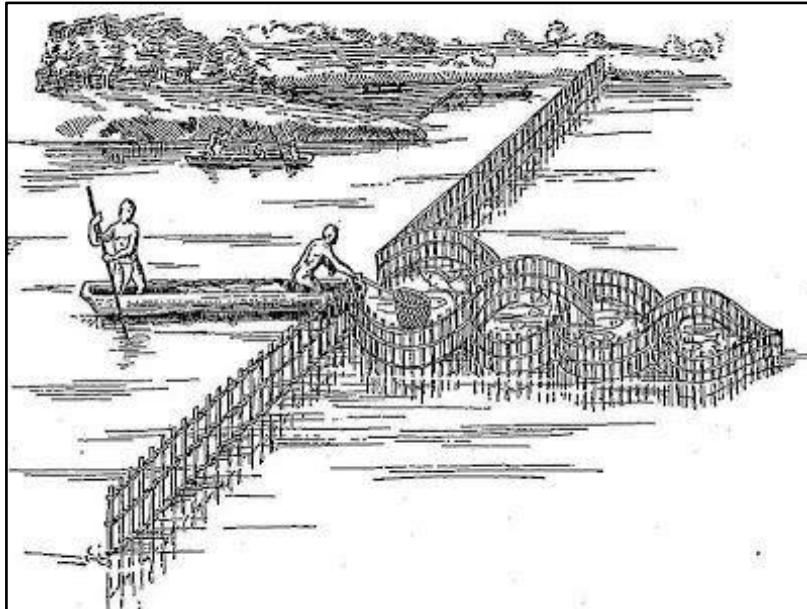


Figure 7

Remnants of a Fish Weir on the Sebastacook River

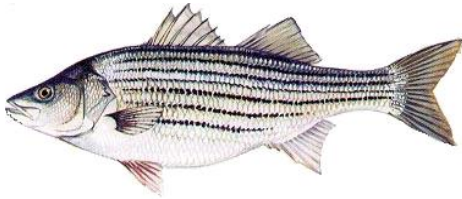


Archeology of Wabanaki Sites

- [Maine State Museum](#), Augusta (closed for renovations)
 - [**Arthur Speiss lecture on 13,000 years of](#) Maine Native American Life
- Abbe Museum, Bar Harbor
 - The Abbe Museum's collections focus on contemporary and historic Native American art, artifacts, and objects from Maine and the Northeast, totaling over 70,000 items.
 - [People of the First Light Core Exhibit](#)



Some Anadromous Fish of MMB



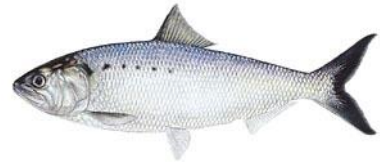
Striped bass *Morone saxatilis*



Alewife *Alosa pseudoharengus*



Atlantic salmon *Salmo salar*



American shad *Alosa sapidissima*



Sea-run brook trout
Salvelinus fontinalis



Rainbow smelt *Osmerus mordax*



Blueback herring
Alosa aestivalis

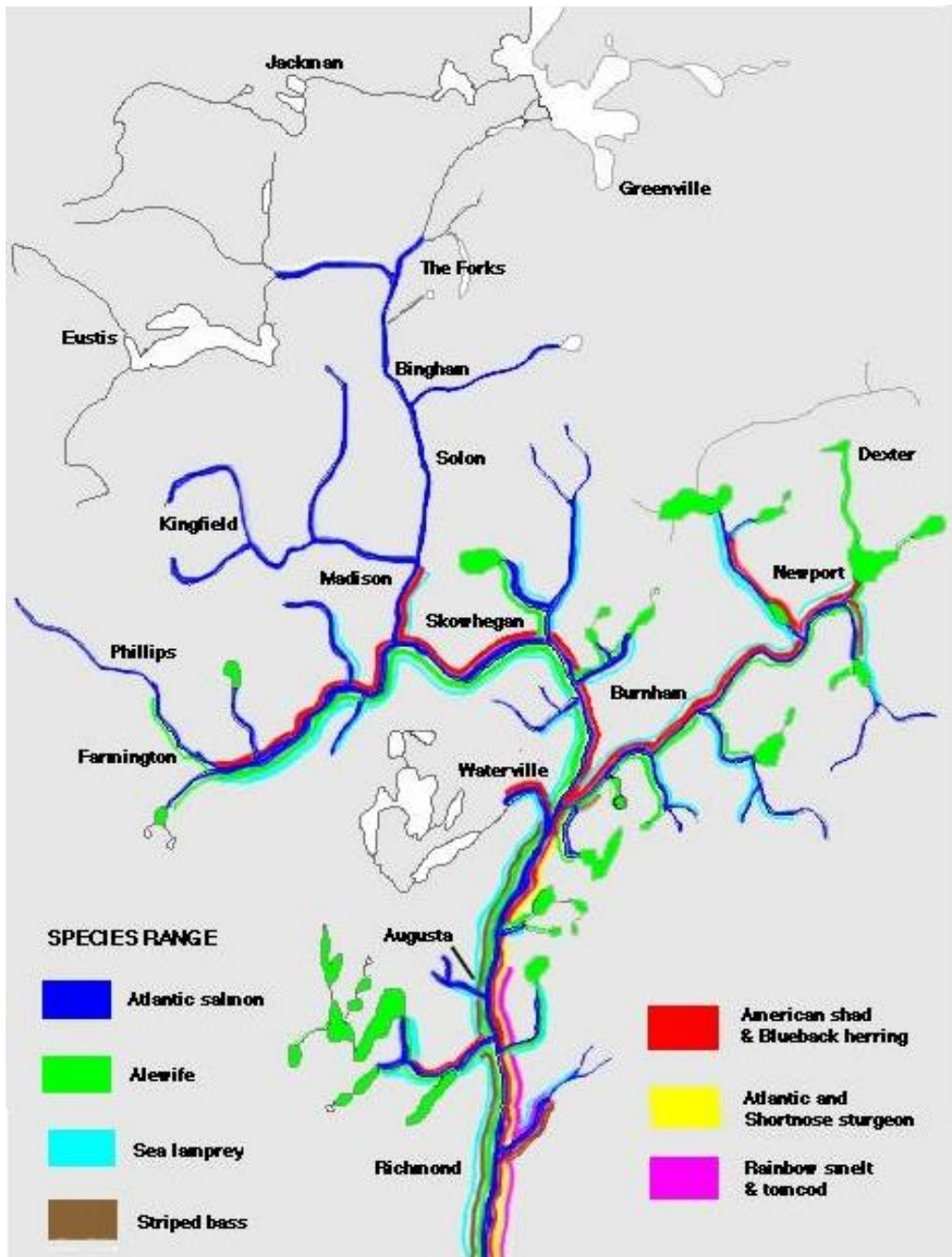


Atlantic tomcod
Microgadus tomcod



American eel *Anguilla rostrata*

Anadromous Fish of the Kennebec River



[Alewife migration - 2017 YouTube](#)

Bonus Walk 1: Pownalborough Court House Trails

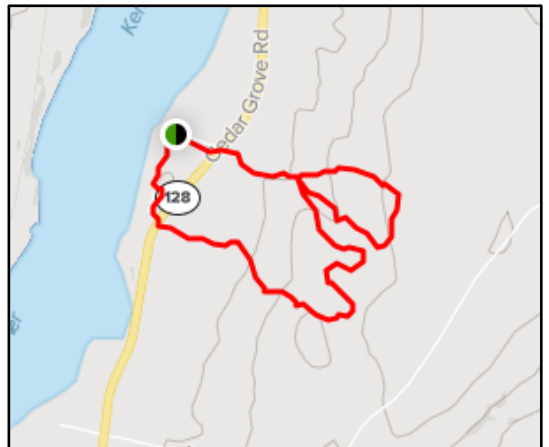


MUSEUM
23 Court House Rd
Dresden, ME 04342

HOURS
•Sat, Sun, & Mon:
10:00 am – 4:00 pm



Trails



Bonus Walk 2:

Green Point Wildlife Mgmt Area



- A flat, easy walk through old fields and an orchard. Approx. 1 mile.
- Brings you to a pine grove at the upper reaches of Merrymeeting Bay.
- Excellent walking, birding, wildlife viewing.