



DATE: March 15, 2022

Mr. David Lew

Regional Administrator

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Region I

2100 Renaissance Blvd., Suite 100

King of Prussia, PA 19406-2713

Dr. David Cash

Regional Administrator

Environmental Protection Agency Region 1

5 Post Office Square - Suite 100

Boston, MA 02109-3912

Re: Potential Discharge of Radioactive Water from HOLTEC/ Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station

Dear Administrators Lew and Cash,

As Chairwoman of the Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe, I write to you today to express our opposition to Holtec Internationals plan to dump nearly a million gallons of nuclear waste into Cape Cod Bay – into the waters that sustain us and provide our Tribal community with sustenance.

Indigenous people and tribal communities throughout North America remain on the frontline of efforts to oppose projects that will be destructive to the natural world – our Mother Earth. We know that we have an inherent connection and a responsibility to protect our natural world. That connection and commitment is deeply rooted in an enduring need to protect the land, water, and wildlife. The lands that have sustained us for thousands of years.

As we have stated repeatedly, we also are very aware that the homeland of tribal nations in the US are among those communities that are most likely to be targeted for projects that are disastrous for the environment, and that have multiple destructive impacts on Indigenous people's lives. The Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe knows this because we have been at the ground zero of colonial resource extraction and have witnessed repeated assaults on our environment for over 400 years. Yet, laws and policies give us as Indigenous people the right to be consulted and to speak out when human activities harm our ancestral lands, our culture and heritage. Under these state and federal laws, Indigenous peoples have rights. Something very often ignored.

We call upon you to acknowledge the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which was endorsed by the U.S. State Department in 2010. As Indigenous people have an inherent human right – (Article 32 #2) which states ALL Indigenous people have a right to good faith consultation and cooperation prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands, territories, and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water, or other resources. This is just one example of one of forty-six articles in the document. As a distinct and continual Tribal community - - and one of the few remaining historic Tribes in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts today, we ask you to educate yourselves on these laws and policies.

Plymouth is the original homeland of the Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe, and our Tribal citizens still live here amongst you today. We call this place home and have hunted, fished, and gathered for thousands of years on these lands, and we rely heavily on the land and water in and around Cape Cod Bay for sustenance, survival and to preserve our rights to food sovereignty.

The dumping of toxic waste into the waters that sustain us could have a grave impact on not only our lifeways, but all of yours. This waste could harm our shellfish and travel for miles on the backs of our finned fish. We consume these gifts from the sea and feed them to our children. To us there is no level of waste released, referenced via scientific means that can be considered safe and protective of the environment and people.

To us, land, water, and wildlife that we co-exist with are our relatives and are alive and sacred. Most importantly, we know that we have a primary responsibility to our tribal youth to ensure that they, and their children, inherit a planet that has been nurtured by us. We need to heal the earth and end environmental exploitation and destruction, not support it. Please don't poison our bay!

Sincerely,

Melissa Ferretti

Melissa (Harding) Ferretti

Chairlady/President

Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe

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herringpondtrib.org