

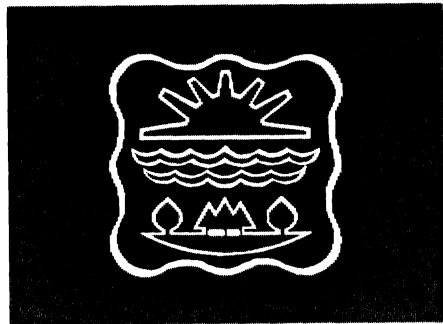
ABENAKI—ST. FRANCIS-SOKOKI BAND



Once spread across upper New England and Quebec, the Abenaki Confederacy included the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot of Maine, the Micmac and Malecite of Maine and New Brunswick, and the Pennacook of Vermont (ENAT, 3-4). Today, the Abenaki are concentrated in Quebec; one band is in Vermont.

The St. Francis-Sokoki Band of the Abenaki Nation, sometimes referred to as the Western Abenaki, lives in the town of Swanton in northern Vermont. *Sokoki* is the native word for the Western Abenaki. Their original name, the Wabanaki, meant “those who live at the sunrise” or “the Easterners”.

On 24 July 1991 the Abenaki nation adopted a tribal flag. The flag has a dark green field recalling the Green Mountains and Vermont’s “green image” with the tribal seal in the center. The brown “shield” of the seal represents deer or beaver hide. It features three symbols, with a red sun at the top. Below it a pair of blue waves denotes the rivers and Lake Champlain. A green grassy patch bears two deciduous and three conifer trees which stand for the lush woodlands of western Vermont. White edging surrounds the symbols and the seal itself.



The tribe has been recognized by other Abenaki bands in Quebec as true Abenaki, and the State of Vermont extended recognition in 1976. However, that recognition was rescinded in 1977 hunters and fishermen protested the tribe’s special hunting and fishing rights. The tribe is currently pursuing federal recognition, adopting its flag as part

of that process. A large painting of the tribal flag appears over the main entrance of the Tribal Office in Swanton. ☞

[Thanks to Sokoki Band member Peter Flood for information on the tribe and its flag.]