1865 THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE

To Whom It May Concern:

A team of scientists from the University of Maine is researching the importance of rocky intertidal seaweeds for Maine's birds. We are piecing together connections between the rockweed habitat, insects and other invertebrates living in rockweed, and birds foraging in the intertidal. One of our overarching goals is to provide information to landowners, harvesters, and regulators to help lessen any potential impacts of rockweed harvest on bird populations, should those impacts exist.

For this study it is important that we survey rockweed habitats in many different types of coastlines across the state. We ask if you are willing to assist us in this regard by allowing the graduate students on the project (Elliot Johnston, Hannah Mittelstaedt, and Hannah Webber) to cross your property to access the intertidal. Once there, we will measure the rockweed, remove a few fronds, collect invertebrates, and note birds in the area. At some sites we will install small sensors to study temperature, light, and water movement in the marine environment. At other sites we will leave nothing in the intertidal. The research process will take no more than a few hours.

To fully understand the potential impacts of rockweed harvest on bird populations, we also would like to replicate a rockweed harvest. By measuring bird and invertebrate populations before and after rockweed harvest, we will be able to better understand the changes that take place in these habitats when harvest occurs. There is a strong need for scientific information about these changes. Our information will be shared and used for making natural resource management decisions. We ask for your participation by allowing harvest on your property. Harvesters cut rockweed fronds 16 inches above the base, allowing the seaweed to regrow. Please refer to the FAQ on the back for more details about our research and what harvest entails.

Thank you for your consideration and we hope you are willing to assist us. We would be happy to further discuss our research with you at any point. Our contact information is included in the FAQ. Please return the enclosed research permission form to inform us whether you are willing to grant research and harvest access to your shoreline for this study.

Most Sincerely,

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