

Alan Stearns
Deputy Director, Bureau of Parks & Lands
Maine Department of Conservation
22 State House Station
Harlow Building
Augusta, ME 04333-0022

Dear Alan,

The undersigned supporters of the High Peaks Alliance, a local citizens group working for multiple-use public recreation access to working forestlands in Franklin County's High Peaks area, strongly support the Rangeley High Peaks (Phase I) Forest Legacy application. We understand this application seeks funding for three land tracts in the Rangeley/High Peaks region, totaling 13,446 acres.

We are all very familiar with Parcels A and B located in the heart of the High Peaks backcountry. We hike, ride, snowshoe, ski, hunt, and fish in this area on a regular basis. Some of us have lived adjacent to Parcel B for many years, and some of us guide professionally in this area.

The High Peaks Alliance has discussed the need for designated backcountry snowmobile and ATV crossings from Madrid to Caribou Pond while respecting the primitive hiking experience of the Appalachian Trail. Conservation of Parcel A could provide a very good means of accomplishing this regionally significant improvement.

Conservation of Parcel B will protect the Kennebec headwaters containing Atlantic salmon, brook and brown trout. It also contains the existing regionally significant ITS snowmobile connection between Madrid and Rangeley. This same route could serve a similar ATV connector if adjacent landowner permissions are secured. We expect new non-motorised trails as well.

We are working to connect the high Peaks Communities by various backcountry trails which this conservation activity would help make possible.

If Parcels A and B are not conserved, all of us fear the loss of traditional recreation access as the area fragments into developed lots. With conservation, both parcels can contribute much more to the economic revitalization of the High Peaks area as a world class nature tourism destination.

Yours truly, *Michael Ferguson*

Lloyd Griscom, Phillips
Blueberry Farm

Lloyd Griscom
Betsy Squibb, Madrid
Maine Guide

Betsy Squibb
Bud Godsoe, Madrid
Bud Godsoe

Linda Haines, Farmington
ATV club ex-president

Daniel C. Whitten
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Linda Haines

Roger Lambert, Strong
Master Maine Guide

Roger Lambert

Milt Baston, Strong
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Chris Beach, Wilton
Professor Unity College

Chris Beach

Mike Ferguson
Rev-It-Up Sportshop

(above)