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October 28, 2009

To the Maine Congressional Delegation:

I am writing on behalf of 'Western Maine Matters' to ask your support in protecting Western Maine from the modifications requested by the Air National Guard (ANG) for the Condor I & II Military Operations Area (MOA).

The ANG 104th Fighter Wing, based at Barnes ANG Base in Westfield, MA, has submitted plans to train their pilots flying F-15's and F-16's over more than 2.5 million acres in Western Maine. Their plans include using the entire area for low overflight awareness training (LOWAT) at 500 ft. above ground level, as well as higher elevations of 7,000 ft. and up above mean sea level, including intercept training from high flights to low. This area encompasses significant portions of Oxford, Franklin, Somerset and Piscataquis counties.

In the affected area, there are:

- 80,000 people.
- 144 miles of the [Appalachian National Scenic Trail](#)
- 1,260 acres of the [White Mountain National Forest](#)
- 3,860 acres of the [Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge](#)
- [Bigelow Preserve Public Reserved Lands](#)
- [Grafton Notch State Park](#)
- [Mount Blue State Park](#)
- [Rangeley Lake State Park](#)
- Six [Wildlife Management Areas](#)
- [Connecticut Lakes Natural Area](#) - run by the fish and game of NH, covering over 14,000 acres
- [High Peaks Region](#) - the State of Maine has designated 59,790 acres of land protected, the remaining 46,344 acres left is being proposed for protection ([click for map .jpg](#))
- Numerous areas protected by local and state Land Trusts
- [Androscoggin River Canoe Trail](#)
- [Northern Forest Canoe Trail](#)
- Penobscot Nation Tribal Lands
- Ski areas reporting approximately one million 'skier visit days' in 2008-'09

There is also a fragile economy that depends heavily on tourism.

As no doubt you know, the ANG has scheduled a Public Hearing in Farmington on Saturday, November 14, from 2-6 p.m. for input into their Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). There will be many representatives from 'Western Maine Matters' in

attendance, and we hope we can count on your support in protecting Western Maine from this adverse infringement on our environment.

If one looks at the structure of the DEIS, one would think that the Air National Guard did indeed follow National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) guidelines by including all the points required. It is the contention of 'Western Maine Matters' that the DEIS content fell short of answering the NEPA-required questions. Many findings that were passed off as either of 'No Significant Impact' or 'No Impact' are, indeed misstatements. In the attached Appendix, I have listed many of the concerns of 'Western Maine Matters'. It is our hope that you will take these issues seriously, and support the citizens and environment of Western Maine.

Thank you very much for your attention to our request that you support 'Western Maine Matters' in our efforts to prevent any further encroachments into the Condor I & II areas in Western Maine by the Massachusetts Air National Guard.

Sincerely Yours,

Ann K. Williams
(for 'Western Maine Matters')