

# MAINE WOODS COALITION

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Incorporated January 4, 2001

July 14, 2015

Ms. Roxanne Quimby  
Mr. Lucas St. Clair  
Elliotsville Plantation, Inc.  
P.O. Box 148  
Portland, ME 04112-0148

Dear Ms. Quimby and Mr. St. Clair:

As leaders of the organizations that have been most active in opposing a national park and national recreation area in the Katahdin Region, we respectfully ask you to abandon your plans and apply your substantial land holdings and financial resources to more realistic and meaningful economic development in the region.

You have spent several years and hundreds of thousands of dollars trying to build support for a national park among people in the Millinocket area. You have hired public relations consultants and outreach coordinators; held public forums; paid for numerous ads, mailings and robo-calls; commissioned polls, and made large donations to environmental and community groups, such as the Friends of Baxter State Park, the Millinocket Trail's End Festival and the Patten Lumbermen's Museum

The Natural Resources Council of Maine (NRCM), a group that has received tens of thousands of dollars from you, even hired people to go door-to-door in Medway and East Millinocket in an effort to garner support for the park.

Despite all your efforts and expenditures, the people of Medway and East Millinocket have now joined the Millinocket Town Council in resoundingly rejecting your plan for a national park. The opposition in these towns is even more striking given the economic devastation the region has experienced with the demise of Great Northern Paper. Yet, as much as the Katahdin Region desperately needs investment and new jobs, the people in the towns that would be most impacted by your plans have told you "no."

Given the intensity of your campaign, it's astounding and condescending that your paid spokesman has simply dismissed the votes as inconsequential, telling the Portland Press Herald, "Big ideas take time, and despite the votes, we see progress in the region," as if the people in these towns simply weren't smart enough to understand your plan for their future.

Well, sometimes big ideas are just plain bad ideas, and voters in Medway and E. Millinocket clearly understand that.

Maine has a proud and longstanding tradition of working forests that support many of the best paying jobs in the state and also are made available for abundant recreational opportunities for Maine people and visitors from around the world. We urge you to become part of this tradition, which runs totally counter to turning over thousands of acres to the federal government.

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The Millinocket area still has one of the best locations for wood manufacturing in the region, including millions of acres of forest land, a vast private road network, hydropower, and rail and highway access. This is a region with incredible assets and huge potential, but unless you end your quest, the prospect of a national park or some other version of federal control, such as a national monument, will hang over the region like a dark cloud, scaring off the investment the regions needs and deserves.

We have copied members of the Maine congressional delegation on this letter, because we hope that they, too, will continue to heed the wishes of the people in the Katahdin Region who have so clearly rejected the notion of federal control of the land in their backyard.

Sen. Susan Collins told the *Bangor Daily News* in April that she would reconsider her opposition to the park only if the “people of the region believe that their future lies in a national park.”

Since they clearly don’t, we hope you will reconsider your plans.

On behalf of our many thousands of members across Maine and the 227 Maine businesses that also came out against the park (<http://www.mainewoodscoalition.org/assets/Business-List.pdf>), we thank you for considering our request. We stand ready to work with you to bring investment and opportunity to the Katahdin Region, as long as the prospect of federal ownership and control of your land holdings is taken off the table.

Sincerely,



Anne Mitchell, Maine Woods Coalition



Patrick Strauch, Maine Forest Products Council



Bob Meyers, Maine Snowmobile Association



David Trahan, Sportsman’s Alliance of Maine

CC: Senator Susan Collins  
Senator Angus King  
Representative Bruce Poliquin  
Representative Chellie Pingree  
Governor Paul LePage