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Friends of Baxter State Park is a 501(c)(3) organization working to preserve, support, and enhance the wilderness character of Baxter State Park in the spirit of its founder, Percival P. Baxter.

March 10, 2014

The Honorable Susan Collins  
United States Senate  
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510-1904

Dear Senator Collins:

Over the past decade, Friends of Baxter State Park (FBSP) has carefully monitored the proposal to create a new National Park east of Katahdin. In 2004, we discussed the importance of conserving the lands between Baxter State Park and the East Branch of the Penobscot, including the lands owned by Elliotsville Plantation, Inc. (EPI). Since then, the lands around Katahdin Lake have been permanently protected from misplaced development, but the ultimate fate of other East Branch lands remains uncertain.

In 2011, FBSP was the first conservation organization in Maine to expressly support a feasibility study for the National Park proposed by EPI. We continue to support conservation of the lands east of Baxter State Park, and a sustainable economic future for the Katahdin region.

Lucas St. Clair, President of EPI, has shared with us their evolving vision for how to achieve this with a National Park and National Recreation Area spanning 150,000 acres. Much of this area is already open to the public as the Katahdin Woods & Waters Recreation Area. The details of the National Park and National Recreation Area are very important. They matter to the local residents and visitors who will enjoy the park. They matter to the businesses that will thrive in nearby communities. And, most importantly for our organization, they matter to the wilderness values of Baxter State Park.

Lucas St. Clair understands this, and is listening carefully and respectfully to what communities in the Katahdin region need. He is listening to business owners, snowmobilers, fishermen, hikers, hunters, wilderness advocates, and conservation organizations. He is listening to what Baxter State Park needs in a neighbor.

*The park is to be preserved in its wild state as unspoiled wilderness.*

- Governor Percival Baxter



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Lucas St. Clair and EPI have earned our trust, and the trust of many other individuals, businesses, and organizations in the region. While many details are yet to be worked out, we believe that the needs of Baxter State Park will be carefully considered in the design and creation of Katahdin Woods & Waters National Park and National Recreation Area. A conservation buffer on the border of Baxter State Park has great potential benefit.

Percival Baxter had the vision to spend much of his life protecting the woods and waters around Katahdin at great personal cost. His success is now part of our natural heritage. There are strong parallels with EPI's efforts, and similar potential for truly extraordinary success. We look forward to working with EPI and Maine's congressional delegation to ensure that the proposed National Park and National Recreation Area benefit the wilderness character of Baxter State Park, and the communities of the Katahdin region.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

Aaron Megquier  
Executive Director

Charlie Jacobi  
President

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- Governor Percival Baxter