

**TESTIMONY OF NANCY DYER GRAY  
REGARDING ZP 707  
PLUM CREEK PETITION FOR REZONING  
MOOSEHEAD REGION**

**PRESENTED TO THE  
MAINE LAND USE REGULATION COMMISSION**

August 21, 2007

My name is Nancy Dyer Gray.

I am the Innkeeper and co-owner of the Harraseeket Inn in Freeport, Maine and The Inn at Mystic in Mystic Connecticut. Please refer to the enclosed resume.

I am familiar with the Greenville-Jackman area. I spent nine years of my life working for my parents at Birch Island Lodge in Holeb, Maine, which is eighteen miles west of Jackman. I have had fifty years experience in the tourism business.

I have looked carefully at what Plum Creek wants to do and have been following the entire process with great interest and growing fear that what we have in the Maine Woods will be destroyed if the wrong decision is made.

In preparing my testimony, I have used the 2000 US census report, the Highlights/ Executive Summary for 2006 Visitor Study Fact Sheet from the Maine Tourism Office, research from the Natural Resources Council of Maine, and various articles researched on the internet regarding Plum Creek's business dealings in other states.

First I need to tell you that I am speaking for myself and not for any of my past or present associations. Fifty years in this business in this State that I was born in and love have taught me much. I can sympathize with the angst that Percival Baxter must have felt all those years when he could not convince the State of Maine to buy Mt. Katahdin and finally picked it up piece by piece himself, giving it to the State later on with strong covenants to protect it forever. If he were here now hearing how his beloved Maine Woods could be changed, I am sure he too would be testifying against this proposal.

I believe that this Plum Creek project will be a disaster for the State of Maine. It will impact the lives of PEOPLE who come to live here or to visit because it IS a northern wilderness forest and where they want to be, of ANIMALS, (think of the cars, trucks, four wheelers, snowmobiles, miles of new of roads, and loss of habitat), of BIRDS (think habitat, dogs, cats, kids, too many people, too many motorized trails), of FISH (think fish hogs, fast boats, water skiers), and of the TOURISM INDUSTRY (including all the service businesses and employees making part of their living from that industry). It will change the reputation of the State of Maine forever.

Maine has a mystique that fascinates and endears people to the point where they want to see it, breath the air, look at the woods, waters, wildlife and know that, yes,

somewhere there is still a place that has all these beautiful things and they CAN get there. Sightseeing, wilderness areas, natural environment, lakes and rivers are at the top of the list of reasons why people visit Maine according to the Highlights/ Executive Summary for 2006 Visitor Study Fact Sheet.

Some people retire here. Some bring businesses here. Some visit only once. Some come many times every year. All of which enhances the many businesses they pass along the way coming and going. Restaurants, gas stations, shopping malls, liquor stores, L.L. Bean, hotels, motels, inns, campgrounds all use services from local companies to make this all work. That business multiplier dollar is not counted when we talk about why tourism employs more workers and brings in the largest income into the state.

Carving this area up into another Country Club-like enclave will transform one of the most famous inland attractions the state has even though some visitors never actually visit Moosehead Lake. You can see the depth of this attraction to Maine's wildness in the parking lot of L.L. Bean. A man comes out of the store with a bag, opens his car trunk, takes off his shirt, takes the new shirt out of the bag and puts it on with a happy, contented smile on his face. What he is really doing is assimilating all the things about Maine, Moosehead, L.L. Bean and Mt. Katahdin that he loves and all the wonderful stories he has heard for years that he believes. It is almost a religion and it is real. We hear it daily at the Harraseeket Inn.

Along with Baxter State Park, the Moosehead Lake area is one of the two most valuable inland treasures Maine has. Henry David Thoreau helped make it famous and we still read his books and dream. This land of logging has been classified as forestry oriented since rules were made and was sold by to S.D Warren to Scott Paper which sold to Sappi, which then sold it to Plum Creek in 1998.

Nine hundred five thousand acres (905,000) of land for less than \$200.00 an acre for the purposes of timber management. Plum Creek was certified as a Sustainable Forest Initiative practicing company. In 2006 the Natural Resources Council of Maine had to invoke Maine's Freedom of Information Law to discover that Plum Creek had broken the State Forestry laws at least eighteen times (those were the ones they were caught at) and has been fined fifty seven thousand dollars (\$57,000.00) during the nine years they have owned the property.

That's a very inexpensive six thousand three hundred thirty three dollar (\$6,333.00) a year tap on the wrist for a company that makes hundreds of millions annually. A very cheap cost of doing business thanks to the State of Maine. These are far more violations and fines than any other timber company has even come close to earning while owning the same property. None of this would have been made public if a public interest organization had not used a State law to access the records. Why did we not know these laws were being broken as it happened? Why was it kept a secret? If I got fined for driving without a license or letting my dog run loose it would be in the newspaper next week.

Instead of being penalized in a meaningful way for breaking state law, on January 24, 2002, Plum Creek's First Roach Pond 89-lot development project was approved by LURC. It was the largest subdivision proposal that had ever gone before LURC. The lots sold at prices ranging from \$65,000.00 to \$125,000.00. Luke Muzzy was the exclusive real estate agent. Luke Muzzy now works for Plum Creek. Not surprisingly, many other real estate agents in Maine have started drooling for a chance to get rich carving up more of the Moosehead region. But is the kind of business we want short-term windfall profits for a few real estate brokers while causing long-term damage to the beautiful landscapes that attract people to our state?

Plum Creek wasted no time in beginning to woo people in the Moosehead region with money for needs like the hospital in Greenville, low income housing, etc. Organizations and clubs like the Sportsmen's Alliance of Maine, the Maine Snowmobile Association, and others have been given donations to buy their support.

So here we are faced with a request to build 2300 living accommodations over more than 20,000 acres, which is about the equivalent of a new town or maybe two surrounding Greenville. According to the 2000 census report, Greenville had a population of 1,633 people living in 730 households with a total work force of 764, an unemployment rate of 6.2% and a poverty status listing of 12.9%. There were 390 women working, representing 52% of the total work force, and the median income per household was \$30,366. The reason LURC is being pressured to do this is to relieve the poverty in this area caused by the shrinking forestry economy or so Plum Creek would have you believe. The promises of big jobs and a better economy are their call to arms. A quick perusal of the 489 cities and towns listed on the same 2000 census shows that there are 171 other towns and cities in Maine WITH a higher poverty rate than Greenville. In other words, more than a third (34.96%) of the towns and cities in Maine have a higher poverty rate than Greenville. What are we planning to do for them? Forty-five towns and cities have a poverty rate of 20% or higher. What is Plum Creek planning to do for them or better yet what are we going to do for them?

The individuals who will be able to afford these types of homes overlooking and thereby destroying the peace and privacy of the wilderness will probably not come from Greenville and not many Mainers will be able to afford what it will cost to buy and build there. Three RV Parks might give some of us a chance. Then there is employee housing, gas stations, shops, food stores, restaurants, power lines, septic tanks, draining downhill into the streams and ponds, large and small (in spite of reports of inadequate soils to support this kind of drainage), some mining possibilities, two resort type properties of undetermined size with at least one golf club and countless miles of gated or ungated roads.

Why would anyone want to go into town in Greenville when they can shop at the resorts, new food stores and boutiques? Will any of the property taxes go to Greenville? Who pays to maintain the roads, street lights, sewer systems, if there are any, possible school needs, health emergency issues, fire fighters and all the rest of the issues that cost money in an unorganized territory? Is it the county, the State?

The answer might turn out to be..... we do, the rest of us, all of us. It will put a tremendous burden on the town of Greenville where the people are used to helping in all and any kind of emergency type situation for any neighbor within a hundred miles.

When the lots are sold, the buildings are finished and the roads are built, which may take over fifteen years, the big money influx will be gone. Real estate companies will have made their money. The big construction companies will have made their money. The Plum Creek employees that are left will still be making their money as they are now.

If you are not one those being paid by Plum Creek in some way, don't look for big money from the jobs that will come from opening and closing people's summer homes, or cleaning their houses, plowing their roads, fixing their washing machines, installing the latest LCD TV. There will be part time jobs in the two resorts or hotels including wait staff, housekeeping, dishwashing, maintenance and yard work if that is the kind of job you are looking for. However, if you are running an existing sporting camp, cabins, lodge or inn within sixty miles of the place be prepared to lose some of your customers who will no longer be interested in coming to an over developed area. Never mind that you, and your family before you, have put your heart, soul and life's savings into your business. You don't count.

Looking further south, you have to understand that the mystique of Moosehead and Katahdin as magnificent wild places have been essential to the reputation of Maine over the last hundred and fifty years. The urge to come here will fade as more of the wonderful things folks dream about seeing disappear, which they will if the precedent of this oversized development is allowed. Animals, fish, birds, plants -- treasures of the woods that cannot take the crowded environment -- will move, if they survive at all, to less populated safety.

Learning that Plum Creek intends to develop a portion of the wildlife sanctuary in Somerset County between Route 6/15 east to Moosehead Lake in the Masterman Farm Road area (on the west side of the lake from Greenville) into part of this high-end housing was stunning news. Is this possible? How can the State of Maine allow this to happen? I have always thought that once you achieved the status of wildlife preserve, the wildlife was safe.

Many PEOPLE are watching from the sidelines waiting to see what LURC allows because Plum Creek's plan has already cracked open the door to anyone with ideas of similar bent. No one in this room will live to see the damage that has been done for it will probably take fifty or seventy five years or more for the reality of what has been lost to sink in. But the burden and the blame for the loss will be ours.

The road is long from Kittery to Moosehead and the thousands that travel it stop at many local places on the way to eat, sleep, get gas, explore some other interesting places, drop the kids off at camp, shop at L.L. Bean, or whatever. Keep in mind the thousands of trades people who make their living from Kittery to Greenville servicing

all the hotels, motels, camps, tent grounds, restaurants from the banker to the plumber, the folks who mow the lawn, plow the snow, the printer, accountants, car and truck dealers. Innumerable trades people will be hurt by the slow erosion of business caused by the drop in visitors to Maine the whole length of that highway. Those incomes will decrease. The tax receipts will decrease. The tourism industry is the largest industry in Maine. What we are looking at here is not ecotourism...quite the opposite. We are endangering the future of tourism in Maine. Forever. There will be no turning back.

I don't know a soul who would not enjoy the opportunity to be able to buy land for \$200.00 an acre and make tens or hundreds of millions of dollars on it. Plum Creek bought this land knowing it was zoned for forestry practices and planned to repeat the process they had developed with resorts in Washington State at Suncadia and Swan Valley in Montana. Sappi could have done that, S.D. Warren could have done that, Scott Paper could have done that, but they didn't. By contrast, Plum Creek is turning our wildlands into a commodity by cutting it into pieces that can be sold as a consumer product.

They got an 89-lot development on First Roach Pond, which was a very generous gift from LURC. That is more than they deserved. Carbon credits will soon be an important income for forestland left standing. Please do not let this priceless area be destroyed. Please protect our great State and our largest industry, which is TOURISM. Please, JUST SAY NO to Plum Creek's Moosehead plan.

# NANCY DYER GRAY

Born & raised in South Portland, Maine  
Graduate South Portland High School, 1951  
Graduate of Tufts Forsyth, 1953, AS, RDH, CHA

Organizations over the years include:

Member, Co-Chairman, Chairman  
Gloucester, Massachusetts Conservation Commission

Gloucester Economic Development Commission

Board of Directors, Essex County Greenbelt

Board of Directors, Mystic Chamber of Commerce

Advisory Committee, Mystic Seaport Museum

President, New England Innkeepers Association, 1989

President, Maine Innkeepers Association, 2002

Chairman, Resort Committee, American Hotel and Lodging Association,  
2002

Rotary International, Paul Harris Fellow, 2002

Chairman of Board, Maine Innkeepers Association, 2003

Board of Directors, Maine Innkeepers Association, current

Member Corporate Conservation Council, The Nature Conservancy,  
current

Advisory Board, Penobscot River Restoration Project, current

Maine Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC), current

Co-owner & Innkeeper, 1970-2007  
Harraseeket Inn, Freeport, ME  
Inn at Mystic, Mystic, CT

State of Maine  
CUMBERLAND, ss

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_ 8/28/07 \_\_\_\_\_

/s/Nancy Dyer Gray \_\_\_\_\_ personally appeared before me and, after taking the oath,  
swore that the above statements are true.

\_\_\_\_\_/s/Heather Adams \_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public/Attorney