

**TESTIMONY OF JOHN MATHIEU  
REGARDING ZP 707  
PLUM CREEK PETITION FOR REZONING  
MOOSEHEAD REGION**

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

August 29, 2007

**INTRODUCTION**

I am a Maine native with a strong bond to the Moosehead region. My ancestors settled close to this region, in Quebec, over 300 years ago. Though I have had many opportunities to move away, I have always wanted to stay in Maine.

Currently, I am the manager of a technical outdoor clothing store, PATAGONIA, located in Freeport, Maine. I have been working for PATAGONIA for 12 years. My job involves working with thousands of customers a year who enjoy outdoor pursuits, so I hear a lot of opinions about what is happening to our woods and waters throughout Maine and beyond.

I am also an active outdoors person who is well traveled in all areas of Maine. My personal interests include hiking, backpacking, canoeing, and nordic skiing. I am proud to have been the first person from New England to win the National Masters Canoe Championships. I have paddled a number of times in the Moosehead region.

**CONCERNS WITH PLUM CREEK'S MOOSEHEAD PROPOSAL**

I am deeply concerned with the Plum Creek proposal for rezoning over 20,000 acres for development in the Moosehead region. I would prefer to see, instead, sustainable development concentrated in gateway communities, not trophy homes on pristine shorelines and mountainsides. Moosehead and the other lakes in ponds nearby are a treasure that should not be restricted to only those who can afford to own property there.

I live on the coast of Maine. For many years, I have paddled on the Kennebec River more than 100 times per year. Every year, I see more development springing up on the river. There was a time, as little as 15 years ago, when the views from my canoe on the Kennebec were not that different from what the Native Americans saw before we became a state. But all that is changing. My experience with development in such a beautiful place as the coast of Maine brings to mind several thoughts, which I believe have merit for comparison with the Plum Creek plan for the Moosehead region:

1. Development can be irreversible. Once it starts, the area will never have the same look or feel.

2. I am not against development. However, certain areas of ecological significance should be left alone and preserved in their natural condition, not only for wildlife and natural values, but also to help promote eco-tourism. Maine has one of the smallest proportions of publicly owned, protected lands. The most promising economic future for the Moosehead region is not scattered development, but more protected lands as an attraction for nature-based tourism.

3. Development that is sprawled, as opposed to concentrated in service center communities, leads to habitat destruction. It also strains the natural resources of the region, making them less sustainable. The coast of Maine has been overdeveloped in places, destroying much habitat, straining the natural resources, limiting public access, and creating a scenario where only the very wealthy can live in certain areas. We can still avoid that fate for much of the Moosehead region.

## **CONCLUSION**

As the manager of a high volume outdoor clothing store that relies on beautiful, wild places as an important part of our marketing strategy, and as someone who uses the outdoors extensively in my native state of Maine, I urge LURC to recognize the ecological significance of the Moosehead area. I urge the Commission to not allow approval of the Plum Creek proposal.

Development of this magnitude spread across the landscape is contrary to conservation efforts in one of the most beautiful areas of our state. Much of this land should be protected and preserved, not developed and exploited.

# John D. Mathieu

8 Cobb Road  
Bath, ME 04530-2108  
Work Phone (Patagonia): 207.865.0506  
Home Phone: 207.442.7869  
Email: [john.Mathieu@patagonia.com](mailto:john.Mathieu@patagonia.com)

## Education

M.B.A. – Southern New Hampshire University, 1997, 3.75 G.P.A.  
B.S. - University of Maine (Orono) 1981 3.1 G.P.A. (with distinction)  
Received Ski Scholarship, 3-time NCAA qualifier

## Professional experience

### **Patagonia Freeport Outlet** (1995 – present)

Store manager since 2004. Responsible for operation of high-volume store with 24 employees.

### **Patagonia Acting Regional Manager** (2006)

### **Patagonia Grassroots Marketing** (1999 - 2004)

Attended events representing Patagonia across the U.S.

### **Patagonia Outlet Buyer** (2001)

### **Patagonia Market Research Analyst** (1998)

### **Other experiences** within company:

Grassroots Tools Conference (2000)

Conservacion Patagonia, Chile (2006)

## Other activities

Freeport Merchants Marketing Board (appointed position, 2003 – present)

Freeport Merchants Association Board (2004 – present)

National Masters Canoe Champion, Pennsylvania (1998, 2007)

Molokai Crossing, Master class, top-three finish, Hawaii (1993, 2005)  
(premier national outrigger canoe race)

Cross-country Ski Championships, Masters, top-three finish, Michigan (2004)

State of Maine  
Cumberland,  
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Dated: \_\_\_\_\_ 8/30/07 \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_/s/Jasmine L. Scribner \_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public/Attorney