Judith Roe Presque Isle, Maine LD 736

I am submitting testimony as a private citizen. I am an Associate professor of Biology at the University of Maine at Presque Isle. I have worked on a project and taken several student groups on trips in Deboullie Public Lands. The Public Lands in Maine are important to our science departments at the university because they provide an opportunity for students to engage in scientific research as part of a research team. They are exposed to the collaborative approaches we take in studying complex natural systems, such as the unique habitats found in ecological reserves. It also provides students, both undergraduates and high school students, with new experiences in the Northern Maine Woods as part of a group exploring the natural resources of Maine. In particular, I have conducted research on the unique rock glaciers found in Deboullie Public Lands. The unusual boulder piles at the bottom of several cliffs in the area have a unique air flow system that maintains ice below the rocks throughout the summer. This cool and humid environment provides a habitat that favors the growth of thick lichen and fern mats with other special plants as well. These are fragile sites that need further exploration and protection, and further study in light of climate change. Every natural area has the potential to contain a unique undescribed microhabitat such as the rock glaciers that merit further study. I have been very impressed and grateful that these areas have been so well managed by the state agencies. They are highly accessible and it is clear that immense care is taken in managing the lands for all stakeholders. Sincerely.