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The Honorable Chris Sununu

Office of the Governor

The State House

Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Dear Governor Sununu:

I write on behalf of the Forest Society concerning the current opening for the position of Commissioner of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources and the positions currently held by Phil Bryce as Director of the Division of Parks and Recreation and Brad Simpkins as Director of the Division of Forests and Lands. The Forest Society has enjoyed long and strong working partnerships with the Department, particularly with the divisions currently headed by Mr. Bryce and Mr. Simpkins.

Many Granite Staters are not aware that the Forest Society owns 4,000 acres of land on Mount Monadnock (including the summit and much of the trail system) in Jaffrey, Dublin and Marlborough. We lease this land to the Division of Parks and Recreation, and we work closely with Mr. Bryce and his staff to assure that the Park's trails are properly maintained for the 100,000 visitors the Park hosts annually. Many other state parks --- Franconia Notch, Mount Sunapee, Mount Kearsarge, Chesterfield Gorge --- were acquired by or with the help of the Forest Society long before there was a State Parks agency to operate the lands as parks. The continued successful stewardship of these parks today is in no small part due to the efforts of Mr. Bryce and his staff to develop and maintain partnerships with the Forest Society and many other stakeholder groups and volunteers.

We partnered with your father when he was Governor to acquire the 40,000 acre Nash Stream Forest in central Coos County, the largest of more than 200 state forests in the Granite State. We continue to work with Mr. Simpkins to assure that the management of the Nash Stream Forests continues to serve the purposes that inspired its purchase in 1988. We also partner with Mr. Simpkins and his staff on the many issues confronted daily by forest landowners seeking to maintain the health of forests and of forest markets in New Hampshire. We jointly prepared with the Division of Forests and Lands and UNH Cooperative Extension the publication titled *Good Forestry in the Granite State*, recommended voluntary forest management practices for forest land owners statewide. The Forest Society hosts the New Hampshire Tree Farm Program at our Conservation Center in East Concord; as State Forester, Mr. Simpkins serves as one of five cooperating partners in the Tree Farm Program and its work accrediting more than 1600 active tree farms statewide annually. The Forest Society also serves on a variety of working groups at Forests and Lands, including as a working member of the Division's NH Forest Legacy

Committee. Since its inception in 1990, Forest Legacy has permanently conserved more than 200,000 acres of privately owned working forests in New Hampshire so they can remain working forests.

We greatly value these working partnerships, and look forward to doing our part to advance them in the future. We strongly encourage you to nominate Mr. Bryce and Mr. Simpkins to each serve another term in their respective positions. We believe their performance of their respective duties on behalf of the people of New Hampshire has earned each reappointment. Their service, under a new Commissioner, will assure continuity of the partnerships that help sustain our State Parks and State Forests.

Finally, we encourage you to nominate a Commissioner of DNCR who has a strong appreciation for natural resource conservation and public land stewardship. The new commissioner should be a creative thinker who has a rich knowledge of New Hampshire and its history. Part of the New Hampshire Advantage, and part of what attracts new businesses to locate, grow and prosper here, is reliant on the wise use of our forests and other natural resources. Having a department leader in place who recognizes and shares this belief will only strengthen the New Hampshire Advantage.

We thank you for your consideration of these thoughts and recommendations.

Sincerely,

Jane A. Difley
President/Forester
Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests