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February 5, 2009

Ian A. Bowles, Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Attn: Elizabeth Sorenson, ACEC Program
Department of Conservation and Recreation
251 Causeway Street, Suite 700
Boston, MA 02114

RE: Upper Housatonic River ACEC

Dear Secretary Bowles,


We write to reiterate our support for the creation of the Upper Housatonic ACEC as proposed by the nominators. The Lenox Board of Selectmen, the Lenox Planning Board and the Lenox Conservation Commission all voted in favor of supporting this new designation.

We have spent a considerable amount of time reviewing the proposal and analyzing its merits. The rich array of natural resources contained within the proposed boundaries is well documented. The advantages of having the ACEC designation are important to us. The creation of a stewardship committee, active management of the area, and the potential for raising the bar for the PCB clean-up efforts, are just a few of the important reasons that lead us to urge you to establish this new ACEC.

We also have had lengthy discussions about our needs for economic development and whether the proposed boundary lines of the ACEC should be altered to avoid an unwanted impediment. Eco-tourism is thriving here and depends on the natural resources contained within the ACEC. Thus, the added protection the designation affords is an important part of our economic strategy. As supported by the experiences in other communities, we have come to the conclusion that well thought out projects that are proposed in the new ACEC should be able to successfully navigate the regulatory review process with little, if any, added time and effort. Therefore, we endorse keeping the boundaries as originally proposed.

We thank you for your careful consideration of the Upper Housatonic River ACEC and we look forward to a positive determination.

Sincerely,


Stephen Pavlosky
Chairman, Board of Selectmen


Roscoe Sandlin
Clerk, Board of Selectmen