

**Garrett Conover, North Woods Way, LLC**  
**Willimantic, ME**

I'm a partner in North Woods Ways, a year-round guide service offering five-day to two-week wilderness canoe and snowshoe trips. North Woods Ways is just one of many entrepreneurship operating in the job-stressed northern part of the state. While individually, we may not be significant, collectively we are one of the primary engines within the tourism industry.

Our guests typically come to Maine as a destination to experience relatively pristine areas. Multiplier economies ripple widely from such activity. Our guests are here longer than the average tourist, many come repeatedly over the years, and the farther they come, the more likely they are to extend their stay to sample other Maine attractions. Of those who drive to Maine, few traverse the gauntlet of retailers from Kittery to Freeport without stopping. Several have purchased seasonal homes, or retired here.

There is however a catch to these points. Remote Recreation businesses are completely dependent on large-scale wild areas which will not exist without careful legislative attention. Our industry is not extractive and is thus sustainable, but it is dependent on undeveloped habitats which are in danger of being diminished, or vanishing.

There are plenty of competing interests, and some are mutually exclusive. Landscape scale damage through unsustainable forestry is ruinous to all. Total loss through inappropriate siting, or scale, of development projects benefit few. Even among guides there are incompatibilities. Motorized sports enthusiasts need dedicated regions for their interests, and quiet self propelled travelers need theirs. Preserving portions of a resource for the most stakeholders is exceedingly complex and involves conflict. But it is possible, and essential, to diversify sustainable opportunities. It will require all parties to be civil, cooperative, and imaginative. A tall order not often in evidence, yet many organizations and individuals are committed to joining any such efforts as needs arise. It is essential that this administration be likewise committed.

Thank you.