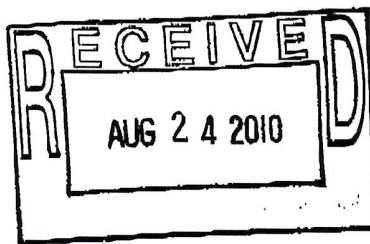




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Camden Select Board  
P. O. Box 1207  
Camden ME 04843

23 August 10

Dear Members of the Select Board:

The Board of Directors of Coastal Mountains Land Trust has closely followed the investigations and discussions of the Camden Energy Committee, with particular attention to the Committee's consideration of the potential of generating electricity by wind turbines installed on Ragged Mountain. As Executive Director, I was directed to attend the Committee meetings and observe the proceedings, inform the Board of Directors about them, and to present the fact that the Board of Directors did not expect to take a position, pro or con, regarding wind generation on Ragged Mountain until such time as a specific project came forward. That has not yet occurred, and the Board continues to have no position regarding a future proposal for wind generation on the mountain.

As part of my attendance at the Energy Committee meetings, for the past year I have encouraged the Committee to have direct, individual discussions with the many owners of land on Ragged Mountain. It seemed to me that this would be worthwhile since the larger scale projects recommended by various wind generation interests cannot be constructed without using more land than is owned by the Town of Camden. These land owner discussions have not occurred.

The Board of Directors has observed that the Energy Committee has largely completed its evaluation of the potential for Ragged Mountain wind generation and sent the subject on to the Select Board, along with a set of recommendations. One of those recommendations concerns raising funds for feasibility studies, initially estimated at \$50,000 to \$75,000. The Board of Directors decided it was important, before such funds were expended, that the Select Board have complete facts about the Land Trust's Ragged Mountain conservation effort and the land that has been conserved or is under contract to be conserved.

At present on Ragged Mountain, the Land Trust has acquired full title to nine parcels and holds one conservation easement, totaling 534 acres. In addition, the Land Trust has recently entered into purchase and sale agreements concerning another property that comprises a substantial portion of the west side of Ragged Mountain, totaling 217 acres. Further, Georges River Land Trust holds a conservation easement on about 25 acres. As you can see from the enclosed map, this array of conserved land covers a considerable portion of Ragged Mountain.

Donations and grants from hundreds of citizens, foundations, and the Land for Maine's Future Program have enabled the Land Trust to complete these real estate transactions.



The funds were provided for a specific purpose: permanent conservation of land on Ragged Mountain and Bald Mountain. The Land Trust is bound to honor those donors and grantors by managing the lands we own in ways consistent with the intention of the donations and grants.

Further, the Land Trust ensures permanent conservation of land it has acquired by placing a "second layer of protection" on the parcels, as recommended under national accreditation standards for land trusts and as required by the Policies of the Land Trust's Board of Directors. The land we own on Ragged Mountain, for instance, has either a Declaration of Trust, ultimately enforced by the Maine Attorney General, or a Project Agreement with the Land for Maine's Future Program if the property was funded by that agency. In summary, both of these documents require that the conserved land be managed in an undeveloped, natural condition, excepting public access improvements.

Given these conditions--the Land Trust's ethical obligations to donors and the second layers of protection--the land owned by the Land Trust on Ragged Mountain cannot be made available for the roads, utility lines, or towers/turbines that are part of wind generation development. The Board of Directors recognizes that this eliminates some potential sites for wind generation development on Ragged Mountain, a fact that should be taken into consideration as decisions are made about how to proceed with feasibility studies of wind generation on this mountain.

It would be worthwhile to restate why the Land Trust has worked so diligently during the past eight years to conserve Ragged Mountain. Ragged Mountain has a wide range of conservation resources and public benefits that are critical to the quality of life offered by the western Penobscot Bay region, and are thereby critical to the economy of the region.

#### Outdoor Recreation Resources:

Ragged Mountain has a long-standing and growing role as a place for outdoor recreation of statewide significance.

- Ragged Mountain Recreation Area - Camden Snow Bowl, a four-season destination for outdoor recreation
- *Gateway to the Mountains*, a multipurpose trail collaboration of the Town of Camden and the Land Trust to amplify the Ragged Mountain Recreation Area
- Georges Highland Path, created and maintained by Georges River Land Trust

#### Scenic Resources:

Ragged Mountain is prominent in the viewscape of western Penobscot Bay and the region from many public vantage points.

- Camden Hills State Park
- Ragged Mountain Recreation Area - Camden Snow Bowl
- Public trails on the Land Trust's Bald Mountain, Ragged Mountain, Beech Hill, and Hatchet Mountain Preserves
- Georges Highland Path
- As the entry point to the "mountains by the sea" from Route 17
- Many others sites throughout the western Penobscot Bay region.

Ecological Resources:

Ragged Mountain has been recognized by many agencies as having a strong suite of special ecological values.

- Buffer of natural land around Mirror Lake, protecting the public water supply for Camden, Rockport, and Rockland
- "Focus Area" and "Large Unfragmented Block" designated in *Beginning with Habitat* by Maine Natural Areas Program
- "Focus Area" designated in the *Maine Wildlife Action Plan* by Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife's
- "Focus Area" designated through a collaborative planning process of Coastal Mountains Land Trust, Camden Hills State Park, The Nature Conservancy, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, and Georges River Land Trust
- Exemplary Natural Communities
- Deer Wintering Area
- State-listed Rare Plants
- Hunting territory for Federally-endangered Peregrine Falcons, presently nesting in Camden Hills State Park (three fledglings produced this year)
- In the coastal migration pattern of bird, bat, and insect species

The Town of Camden's plans for redeveloping the Ragged Mountain Recreation Area into a four-season outdoor recreation facility proposes a \$6.5 million investment. To date, the Land Trust has invested \$4 million in conserving Ragged Mountain and Bald Mountain, and expanding public access to their highly scenic slopes, ridgelines, and summits. To fulfill its goal, conservation of 3,470 acres on these mountains, the Land Trust estimates it will invest at least \$5 million more in future years. These two community investment programs are closely integrated and mutually supporting.

The Board of Directors realizes that generation of electricity by wind is viewed on balance as an environmental positive compared to the currently dominant forms of generation, particularly fossil fuels. The Board of Directors also recognizes that there might be routes of access and sites for towers/turbines on Ragged Mountain that do not involve land conserved at present by the Land Trust. Development of those properties, with the consent of the land owners, might enable some scale of environmental gain that would offset any degradation of the resources listed above. The Board of Directors remains interested in learning more about such possibilities, and should a specific proposal come forth, will determine then if it is a project that the Land Trust could support.

Sincerely,



Scott Dickerson  
Executive Director

Your friend or family member will receive a welcome packet of membership materials. This makes a great holiday, anniversary or

# Round the Mountain Collaboration

