

To: Sen. Susan Collins  
Sept. 29, 2009

From: Ann K. Williams  
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Attached is the response to Gov. Baldacci's letter asking for a delay of 6-8 mos. for the next Public Hearing re. Condor I & II activities in Western Maine. This response is from the Air National Guard (William Albro) and US Air Force (Lt. Gen. Harry Wyatt), dated 9-10-09.

I respectfully disagree with this assessment:

- (Cover letter): The respondent (Albro) thinks all of the Gov.'s summary were addressed in the DEIS EXCEPT the Fermata report, the Brookings Institute Report and others. This is wrong: the Penobscot Nation (60,000 acres under the fly-way of Condor I & II) were not brought to the table, and there are many other parts of NEPA that were not addressed, or flagrantly avoided. He suggests the hearings will be delayed 'approximately 60 days' so that the 'interested parties' can 'more carefully examine the DEIS'. This suggests the DEIS is acceptable the way it is; the reality is that it is flawed throughout.
- (Main body of letter):
  - Safety issues are very real, despite the cavalier statement of the ANG. The Maine DOT reports that there are 114 based aircraft and 43,340 operations per year in addition to through traffic.
  - Noise will be reduced because of the larger area for low-flying planes. This is specious at best.
  - "Currently, F-15's typical (sic!) fly low level routes in winter months during the day." Does the ANG think that Mainers stay inside around their stoves in the winter?? I don't yet have figures, but 3 major ski areas operate within the boundaries of Condor I & II (Sunday River, Carrabasset Valley and Saddleback, as well as numerous smaller ones. There are many snowmobilers using the 'Snowmobile Highway'. These activities bring many tourists as well as Maine residents who actually enjoy winter. The basic weakness of the ANG argument is the fact that sound is intensified in winter, because of the lack of leaves on the trees and because of the sound waves bouncing off the snow pack.
  - Reiteration of delay of Public Hearings for 'approximately 60 days'.

One of the statements in the NEPA document (copied from Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) Environmental Impact Statement #1502.4) is the call for new technologies which, if applied, could significantly affect the quality of the human environment. The ANG never suggested, as an alternative (required by NEPA) the possibility of using a flight simulator for training ANG pilots. Given the high cost of fuel, the fragile state of the US economy, and the even more fragile state of Maine's economy, I suggest this should have been given careful consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,