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May 18, 2023

Ken Gallager
Office of Planning and Development
Department of Business and Economic Affairs
100 North Main St. – Suite 100
Concord, NH 03301

Re: Proposed name changes to Mt. Washington and the Baker River as presented to the Council on Resources and Development on May 11, 2023

Dear Mr. Gallager;

I am writing this letter in opposition to the proposed name changes to Mt. Washington and the Baker River. The proposed changes could prevent or significantly delay the provisioning of emergency services to those locations because of potential confusion, lack of familiarity, or pronunciation during stressful, life-safety situations.

As the Director of the Division of Emergency Services and Communications (New Hampshire 911), our Division has consistently educated the public across the state that location is the most important piece of information that our 911 call-takers need. Our mission, to locate, communicate and connect people in an emergency with the help they need is centered around our ability to quickly verify the location of a caller in need.

Changing the name of Mt. Washington, (where we already have a high incidence of emergency response) the highest peak in the Northeastern United States at 6,288.2 ft and the most topographically prominent mountain east of the Mississippi River and part of the Presidential Range in the White Mountains to Mt. Agiocochook; and changing the name of the Baker River to the Asquamchumauke River, have the potential to significantly delay emergency services due to pronunciation and confusion during two-way communication.

The need for location information for emergencies as well as for search and rescue communications across many entities is paramount to an emergency response. With these proposed changes, existing printed maps and charts for emergency response, hiking, recreation, aviation and USGS topography would be rendered inaccurate. Mount Washington is a geographic landmark for travelers of all modalities to include all its related Mount Washington affiliations (Observatory, Auto Road, Cog Railway, Mount Washington Hotel, home of the most extreme weather etc.) and is known worldwide.

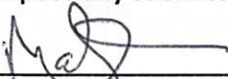
The Baker River has additional "Baker" branches and many historical connections. The Pemigewasset and Baker River are the core rivers of the Pemi-Baker Region which is a popular water recreation area. Many businesses and landmarks have Baker in their business names as well. In-state and out of state recreational users will likely have

difficulty communicating their locations in emergencies as will emergency communications personnel pronouncing or deciphering the proposed new name of the river.

New Hampshire is known for its rural attractions and many folks enjoy taking part in the outdoors. Our statewide First Responders and Emergency Services are ready to deploy whenever and wherever needed. Their successful response is predicated and reliant upon our ability to obtain critical location information in the first few seconds of a 911 call. Anything that impedes our ability to obtain and verify location could cause a significant delay in rendering life-safety services in situations where seconds count. Changing the names of these two geographic locations has the potential to do just that, which is why we oppose the proposed name changes.

Thank you for your consideration, and please let me know if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,



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