

**Remarks by Cathy Johnson, recipient of NRCM's
2020 Conservation Leadership Award for Lifetime Achievement**

October 22, 2020

Thank you, Pete.

I am honored but also humbled by this award because I know, and all of you know, that everything that NRCM works on is a huge team effort – a team where everyone is important.

It's a team that includes both colleagues outside and inside the organization.

So, I'd like to share this award and thank:

- Colleagues in sister advocacy organizations, including, among others, Maine Audubon, Appalachian Mountain Club, The Wilderness Society, National Parks Conservation Association, Trout Unlimited, and the Maine Wilderness Guides Organization. We lived through endless meetings, hearings, task forces and carpools together, occasionally having some M&Ms and fun along the way. Thank you.
- Thanks to the generation that came before me, those who blazed the trail and provided the inspiration and vision for protecting the North Woods, including:
 - Jon Lund, who, at 91, is still backpacking, hiking and fishing in the North Woods;
 - Bill Townsend, sadly no longer with us, activist and life-long good troublemaker in the service of the North Woods; and
 - Bob Kimber, author and North Woods explorer extraordinaire.

You have all inspired me.

- Last, but certainly not least, my thanks to the entire NRCM family:
 - Including the members and donors who provided the financial support, including my paycheck, for all the work we've done these last 30 years. We can't do it without you;
 - Thanks to the activists who never failed to respond to our endless requests to write letters, make phone calls, travel across the state to attend countless meetings and hearings, and who were willing to stand up in front of often unsympathetic decision makers and speak up for protection of the North Woods;
 - And most of all thank you to my colleagues on staff who were there every step of the way and who make it all happen, every single day. We had lots of stress and hard work, but also some really fun times, trying to outwit Plum Creek, creating a new National Monument, and dozens of other campaigns. A special call out to Leisa Hodgkins and Beth Comeau, NRCM's technology gurus, who

guided me from a memory typewriter in 1990 to 21st century technology, with unsurpassed good humor.

I didn't grow up loving Maine's North Woods. To my knowledge, my parents never hiked, camped, or paddled a day in their lives! But my college roommate had a poster on our dorm room wall with a Maine Woods photo by Eliot Porter and Thoreau's quote: "In Wildness is the Preservation of the World."

That has been the guide star for my life and I hope that it can provide a guide star for all of you who I trust will continue to make "good trouble" to protect Maine's North Woods.

Thank you very much for this honor.