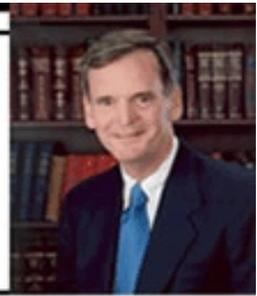

NEWS RELEASE

Judd Gregg

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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GREGG INCLUDES \$2.5 MILLION FOR PILLSBURY-SUNAPEE HIGHLANDS CONSERVATION EASEMENT

WASHINGTON -- U.S. Senator Judd Gregg (R-NH), a member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior, today announced that he has included \$2.53 million in the Fiscal Year 2004 Interior Appropriations bill through the Forest Legacy program for a conservation easement to protect the Pillsbury-Sunapee Highlands, nearly 10,000 acres of woodlands reaching from Mount Monadnock to Mount Sunapee, with stretches abutting both Pillsbury and Sunapee State Parks. The measure, which was passed by the full Senate Committee earlier this afternoon, contains almost \$6.5 million for New Hampshire projects and is now ready for consideration by the full Senate. Earlier this year, Senator Gregg called on the Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior to dramatically increase funding for the Forest Legacy program.

Senator Gregg stated, "The Forest Legacy program is designed to foster cooperation between private landowners and those concerned with protecting the future of environmentally important tracts of land. The continued protection of the Pillsbury-Sunapee Highlands, a significant stretch of forest land, is an outstanding example of just such cooperation. Generations of future Granite Staters using this land for hiking or fishing will be the beneficiaries of the work being done today by the private landowners and community-based organizations with the common goal of making sure the Pillsbury-Sunapee lands can serve as a resource to a variety of groups."

Jane Difley, President of the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, stated, "Once again Senator Gregg has demonstrated his extraordinary commitment to conservation in New Hampshire by securing much needed funding for this project. We're extremely pleased that he was able to find funding for the Pillsbury-Sunapee Forest Legacy Project, which, at nearly 10,000 acres, represents one of southern New Hampshire's largest land conservation initiatives in history. Year-in, year-out we look to Senator Gregg to find a way, even in tight fiscal times, to help make these projects happen. We greatly appreciate his leadership."

The Pillsbury-Sunapee Highlands agreement has helped spur other landowners in the area to commit to protecting an additional 2,500 acres, either through outright land donations or easements. Combined with land already protected in the State Parks, the entire Pillsbury-Sunapee forest area covers 25,000 acres that remain unbroken by development - a critical feature for wildlife habitats. While the landowner will continue to own the land and harvest timber, the easement will prevent development and require that it remain open for public recreation, including hunting, fishing, hiking and snowmobiling.

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