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Northern
Maine
Development
Commission

August 26, 2009

David A. Cole, Commissioner
Maine Department of Transportation
10 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Commissioner Cole:

Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) is pleased to offer its strong support for the Transportation Investment Generating Economy Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grant application entitled "Caribou Connector" between Route 1 and Route 161 in Caribou, Maine.

Established in 1967, NMDC is a nonprofit organization that provides regional planning, economic and community development, business loans and packaging, geographic information system services, and small business counseling services to the northern Maine region. NMDC serves 71 communities and 137 unorganized townships throughout Aroostook County and parts of Penobscot, Piscataquis, and Washington counties.

For many decades, the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT), northern Maine communities, and development organizations have been planning for a highway system that connects Interstate 95 in southern Aroostook with the St. John Valley. The Caribou Connector (Segment 4) would be the first segment of a highway to be constructed in Aroostook County. We believe that obtaining TIGER funds will help achieve MaineDOT's and the City's goal of beginning construction in the Spring of 2010.

While we are aware that an entire highway network cannot be constructed in a single year or as a single project, the connector is the beginning of an improved and safer highway system. Completion of this project will allow the region's businesses to be more competitive through the reduction of travel time; will create a safer community as heavy truck traffic will be diverted out of downtown Caribou, and shows that the State of Maine places value on the communities' wishes for an expanded highway system.

Sincerely,

Robert P. Clark
Executive Director



Equal Opportunity Lender/Agency

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