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September 19, 2008

Friends of Wachusett Mountain  
P.O. Box 301  
Princeton, MA 01541

Dear Friends of Wachusett Mountain,

The Friends of Wachusett Mountain (FWM) has provided opportunities for students at Mount Wachusett Community College in the Department of Natural Resources that were unique and rewarding for several of my students over the past 2 years. I have had 2 students in as many years fulfill our practicum experience working in conjunction with FWM. In our region there are not many opportunities for students to gain experience in field biology, data collection and analysis, and interpretation at the undergraduate level. There is also a lack of support for these types of programs for undergraduate students at many institutions. Through our partnership with FWM and their enthusiastic volunteers (some that are professional biologists), our students are able to gain meaningful and rewarding experiences. The current achievements include important quantified inventories of the local fauna and how their populations fluctuate over time. These data may be particularly important to monitor over the long-term, especially as the climate fluctuates. Our students now have more experience to put on their resume, have made networking contacts through FWM, and have a sense of achievement. Pursuing additional funding to build upon the existing biological monitoring projects is a worthwhile endeavor that I will continue to support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Thomas J. Montagno'.

Thomas J. Montagno, Ph.D.  
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*Start near...Go far*

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