

Jami E. MacNeil  
Department of Environmental Protection

Dear Ms. MacNeil,

In the past 200 years, the Sheepscot River has supported many forms of commerce, from brickyards supplying materials for some of Portland and Boston's finest buildings, to lumber and grain for export and local consumption. Each has had its impact on the river's environment. In the past 50 years, private and governmental organizations, such as the NRCM and DEP, have worked to clean up the effluent of the many years of environmental degradation. As of now, with dam removal, pollution abatement, and such, the great rivers of Maine are much improved. That improvement has caused many parts of those rivers to become aesthetically gorgeous and nearly pristine. They have become sanctuaries away from the effluent of an increasing population. Henry David Thoreau said, "In wildness is the preservation of the world."

Encroachment upon that wildness is a major problem. When all the opposing letters have been sent to the BEP and DEP and the Army Corps of Engineers, etc., and have been deemed irrelevant, and when heads have been turned away from human duty to protect the environment, the first dock, the first insult to the wild section of the Sheepscot River will set a precedence. The sanctuary will have been destroyed for all, and forever... many more years than 200.

I will be 76 years old this summer. As I have said before in my letters of opposition, as a teenager, my canoe was one of the only boats on this section of the Sheepscot. There were no motorboats, except the one that Ken Chaney won in a raffle, and that he occasionally used to go down the river, toward the town of Sheepscot and Wiscasset, not north into the shallow parts (where Mr. Spinney's proposed installation would be).

Finally, please recognize the following message to you as valid: Throughout my life, the Sheepscot River has been a guide, a teacher, and a friend. Much of my time, growing up in Alna, was spent in the northern, pristine section, with the lone pair of eagles, the kingfishers, and the forested banks. I have crossed the river on skis over to Dyer Neck, canoed among ice flows in early spring, and wandered on deer trails along the riverbanks for miles upstream. The point is this: The wildness of the river has accompanied me through my Navy and college years and through 35 years of teaching high school science. It helped form my early philosophy for healthy living. I cannot image what my life would have been, were it not for the quiet reflections in the company of so agreeable a partner as the Sheepscot River.

With this letter comes my hope that you may realize the truth of what I am saying and take a long and sober look at the lasting damage ANY human encroachment would have on this unspoiled, faultless section of the river, encroachment that would reduce the chance for any wanderer the undisturbed reflection that I had. Please take the time to examine your sensibilities and realize the threat this project represents.

Thank you so very much for your deeper consideration of this matter.

Very sincerely,

A. McKinne Stires (Kinne)