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Alna, ME 04535
cjohnson@tidewater.net

Jami MacNeil
Environmental Specialist III
Bureau of Land Resources
Maine Department of Environmental Protection
28 Tyson Drive
Augusta, ME 04330
By email: Jami.Macneil@Maine.gov

Oct. 2, 2019

Re: NRPA application for a boat ramp and pier, 126 Golden Ridge Road, Alna, ME 04535

Dear Ms. MacNeil,

I write to oppose the application by Jeff Spinney for a Natural Resources Protection Act permit for a boat ramp and pier on the Sheepscot River on tax map R-4, parcel 21A.

I am a resident of 34 Golden Ridge Road in Alna. I have lived there since I purchased my property (tax map R-4, parcel 23A) in 1992. I also own tax map R-4, parcel 24 which I purchased later.

I am very familiar with the stretch of the Sheepscot where this development is proposed. I have paddled the river from Head Tide to Sheepscot Village on multiple occasions. I have watched wildlife along and cross country skied that stretch of the river many times. It is virtually undeveloped along that entire stretch between Dock Road and Sheepscot Village. In the immediate area where the development is proposed, the banks of the river are pristine and wild; just upstream of the proposed development is a publicly owned, entirely undisturbed wetland that contains rare plants, according to data provided by Beginning with Habitat. This stretch of the Sheepscot is a gem of quiet and solitude in the otherwise busy and developed midcoast area. I often marvel that the area feels like we are in the wilds of northern Maine. I have seen a wide variety of wildlife including fishers in that immediate vicinity.

Under the Natural Resources Protection Act, 38Mrs §480-D(1), the applicant is required to show that “the activity will not unreasonably interfere with existing scenic, aesthetic, recreational or navigational uses.” Chapter 315 of the Department’s rules sets forth the state policies for protecting the scenic, aesthetic, recreational and navigational uses of our state.

It is clear under Chap. 315, §10 and under the NRPA application form, Appendix A, § 1(F)(3) that the Sheepscot River is a scenic resource protected under the NRPA. It appears that no visual impact assessment as described in Chap. 315, §7 has been completed. If one had been completed, it certainly would have found that the proposed development would have a significant adverse effect on the scenic and aesthetic uses of that stretch of the Sheepscot and would unreasonably interfere with those uses.

This stretch of river is not suitable for the type of use the applicant is proposing. It is tidal, shallow, and scattered with boulders. I have never seen a motor boat in that area, only canoes and kayaks. A huge

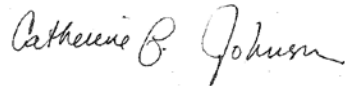
dock, ramp, and pier catering to 25+ motor boats would totally destroy the recreational experience for existing paddlers.

I am aware of additional concerns raised by others who have already commented about other adverse environmental impacts, the negative impacts of increased use of the area, the inappropriate size of the proposed development, and possible commercial use of the site, which should not be allowed under Alna's Shoreland Zoning Ordinance. I share all of those concerns and will not repeat them here.

This application is not for a repair of an existing dock. It is for a dramatically bigger development that would be used by many more people. It will have significantly greater negative impacts than the existing residential dock. A facility of this size and scope is not appropriate in this stretch of the Sheepscot.

Given all the adverse impacts such a development would cause, I urge the Department to deny this permit application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Catherine B. Johnson". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Catherine B. Johnson

Cc: Alna Planning Board, c/o Alna Clerk

Via email: alnaclerk@gmail.com