



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

Jay Clement
Senior Project Leader
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
442 Civic Center Drive, Suite 350
Augusta, ME 04330
Via email: jay.l.clement@usace.army.mil

January 8, 2020

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

Dear Ms. MacNeil and Mr. Clement,

I am writing to oppose the amended application by Mr. 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 for the following reasons.

Inconsistent with NRPA standards

As previously stated in my October 5, 2019 letter to Maine DEP, the Sheepscot River is a Maine treasure of national significance. Any permit within this resource must meet all NRPA permitting standards relative to this designation including no net loss of the river's functions and values. Furthermore, the preamble to Chapter 310 of the NRPA discourages even minor changes to our most precious wetland resources stating:

“The Legislature has also found that the cumulative effect of frequent minor alterations and occasional major alterations of these resources poses a substantial threat to the environment and economy of the State and its quality of life.”

Specifically, the applicant has not met the NRPA standards for 1) avoiding unreasonable adverse impacts and 2) minimizing alterations. The amended application actually *increases* the size of the structure's impact (dock width increases from 4' to 5' and access adds 5' to reach relocated piers), continues to change the type of use (from personal use to a commercial structure for a private club without substantiating club's existence, type of use or membership) and changes the use from a temporary seasonal structure to a permanent one which will result in permanently altering the shoreline of the river (e.g. proposed permanent piers and launch).

Clean Water. Thriving Communities. Land for All.

290 US Route One, PO Box 439, Edgecomb, ME 04556-0439
(207) 389-5150
midcoastconservancy.org



We understand the project is being considered a new project for permitting purposes by the Maine DEP. We continue to support allowing replacement of the original project recognizing the fact that there has not been a dock at this site in over a year or more. However, there continues to be controversy over exactly what was the size of the “original” ramp and dock (see paragraph below). In addition, there are significant issues regarding the proposed change in use from private to commercial club use including the need to create a permanent structure where one did not previously exist in order to accommodate anticipated increased traffic from the club members and motorized boats within a uniquely quiet and wild part of the Sheepscot River.

The 2003 plans and permit application by Mr. Spinney for a ramp and dock to the Town of Alna were not provided by the applicant. Absent this documentation, it is not possible to ascertain how the project can meet NRPA avoidance and minimizing standards. To be permitted, the project should have impacts that are equal to or less damaging to the river than the original project. It appears that structures at this site may have been actually increasing in size from the original project without proper documentation or permitting. I urge you to deny the project unless the original size of the 2003 project can be determined. This information is required to determine whether or not the applicant has met NRPA’s avoidance and “minimal alteration” standards (NRPA Chapter 310. Sections 5 A and 5 B).

Incomplete or Inaccurate Information Provided

The amended application provides information on the presence of current docks in order to depict the current uses of the river are consistent with his proposed commercial use. However, this information is inconsistent with detailed information provided by Mr. Ed Pentaleri in his December 11, 2019 letter to Maine DEP. I urge you to reconcile this discrepancy.

Other shortcomings include the need to determine how the access road within the shoreland zone will be maintained or upgraded to accommodate increased use and the need for an accurate functional assessment of the intertidal area by a professional wetland scientist.

We urge the Maine Dept. of Environmental Protection to be part of protecting the tremendous investment made on the Sheepscot River by Federal, State and municipal authorities along with many others including The Nature Conservancy, Atlantic Salmon Federation and of course Midcoast Conservancy. Together, these agencies and organizations have invested millions of dollars towards restoring and protecting this incredible river and as such the current application should be denied as currently proposed. A boat ramp for personal use only with a smaller, more appropriately sized float system is better suited for this location.

Sincerely,



Jody Jones
Executive Director

