

MacNeil, Jami

From: Clement, Jay L CIV USARMY CENAE (US) <Jay.L.Clement@usace.army.mil>
Sent: Tuesday, October 15, 2019 7:50 AM
To: MacNeil, Jami
Subject: FW: Letter of Support

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-----Original Message-----

From: sonya verney [mailto:sonyaverney@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, October 14, 2019 1:20 PM
To: Clement, Jay L CIV USARMY CENAE (US) <Jay.L.Clement@usace.army.mil>
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] Letter of Support

PO Box 311

Newcastle, Maine 04553

October 14, 2018

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing in support of Jeffery Spinney's permit request to replace his existing boat ramp, dock and floats on his property on the Sheepscott River in Alna, Maine. Jeff is requesting to build a new dock system of the same size and scope of what he was allowed to have in his original dock. This will be a privately owned but shared/common use with family friends. Nothing new or extra is being planned in his new permit request only to simply replace what he already had.

It has come to my understanding that several abutting Alna property owners and other neighbors in the Sheepscott Village area of Alna and Newcastle have expressed their grave concerns about allowing this permit to be granted. It appears that their collective opinion is that Mr. Spinney's dock permit request is something not previous allowed on either the Sheepscott or the Dyer Rivers and having the potential to disrupt the quality of life of the river and its residents of the Sheepscott Village area. Unfortunately, many these objections are from residents who are "new" to the village and do not have the history of what life on these two rivers use to be like.

The Sheepscott River has a long and rich history of activity from boat building to brick making in the early days of the village.

As a child, I grew up in a house in the Sheepscott Village, our property was on the Dyer River. Having personal boat docks and using the two rivers for recreational use was a common occurrence growing up going back to my mother's and grandparent's generations. We all spent many days during the summer for years boating, water skiing, swimming, floating and fishing in the two rivers. My grandfather, uncle and several other neighbors all had motor boats, of various sizes and speeds tied up to personal docks along the river's edge. My Great-Great Aunt Selena Verney even had a hot topped paved boat ramp and dock in the back of her house and post office, where we could launch boats, get into our inner tubes to float around or to go swimming from. We also swam from the sandy beach across from the Two Rivers

Farm on the Alna side and from the old Dyer River bridge. The sandy beach has been in existence for many years, though privately-owned neighbors were allowed to use it at any time. Generations of villagers spent endless hours during hot summer days enjoying themselves, sometime loud and boisterously I'm sure. I have a lot of fond memories with my cousins and neighbors enjoying our life along the two rivers.

As time has passed, the Village and its residents have changed, and so has the use of the river. The geography of the rivers has sifted as well, due to both bridges being replaced and sifting the tidal currents. Today, the river isn't being used for recreation like it was in the past. Kayakers are the most prevalent users of the rivers today. Launching their boats at the Dyer's River Bridge behind the Garrison Hill Grange hall. Though there is no public access to these rivers in Sheepscott, the members of the Grange have allowed paddle boaters to use their land to gain access to the river. The course of the river currents makes it a great place for beginners to learn how to paddle and navigate their boats and for experienced boaters to transverse the reversing falls and enjoy the scenic paddling up and down the two rivers.

I find it very discouraging that there are so many objections to Mr. Spinney's dock permit request. There is no evidence that his replacing his boat dock and using it for his family's personal recreational use is going to do any environmental damage the two rivers ecosystems. The Spinney family should be able to enjoy the use of their Sheepscott River front property, as appropriate, to create the great memories many of my family members, cousins and neighbors all have from our years of living in Sheepscott Village.

I trust that you will thoroughly review and consider Mr. Spinney's request to replace his personal dock system on its own merits and not be swayed by those negative opinions voiced by residents who have no history of the two rivers.

Sincerely,

Sonya S. Verney