

Hello Nick,

Thank you for your e-mail. Yes, I am happy for you to include my letter in the materials for the meeting.

The recreational use and environmental arguments both make some sense, & it is the balance that is so hard to achieve. However, I have been thinking more about the issue as I read and hear opinions, and would like to add the following thoughts.

For me, being on the executive of the Canoe Club was not only about recreation, but also about education. I saw people who knew nothing but cities learn to respect and enjoy the river and by extension the environment in ways not possible by watching from the bank. You have to go out into it. It is like going into the wild but in miniature. It is just you, your canoe and your paddle in an environment more powerful than yourself. To begin with it is a matter of survival. Eventually as your skills improve, it is learning to be in harmony with the river, not only the water, but also the environment of the river in all its moods. It is a wonderful mental journey, profoundly to be encouraged, and an antidote to the hustle and bustle of the city. This was what the Canoe Club and the river meant to me, and what I tried to encourage in others, especially young people. I believe it to have great value.

I was at meetings around the time of the rebuild in which the competing views drowned out rational discussion. However, if you think that my voice would be valuable at the meeting, I would be glad to speak. I just hope that the meeting is well controlled to allow people to voice their views freely, whatever they are.

Sincerely,

Robin