

Appendix C : Sample Respondent Comments

Sample I

I live on the river in Sidney. When our kids were young, we would lull them to sleep paddling the impoundment. The water quality then was better than the Hallowell quarry, but when my wife swam in it, she would smell like a dog and felt she couldn't get clean. We always scrubbed when we came up from the river. I caught smallmouth bass on worms and lures. I ran a five-horse boat up to six mile falls and down to Augusta... very few times because of boredom.

When word came of the dam's removal, I was anxious and perturbed. Sidney and Vassalboro didn't seem to exist for the planners, and we weren't contacted until late in the process. I didn't know if I would have a narrow river with muck and alders instead of an impoundment you could have sailed on.

I did buy a striper fly rod, and was there in the early fall with the first stripers at Seven Mile Island. 7:15-8:00 am my first morning yielded 4 schoolie-plus stripers and a large smallmouth. Birds, coons, fox, deer galore ever since, with a different eagle pair every 2-3 miles. The river smells good and runs clear. When the dog goes in, she doesn't stink. 2-4 times a season we canoe/kayak with family and guests to Augusta. Some six or so kids have caught their first fish and seen their eagle with us.

And I am a born again fly fisherman, at peace on the water.

Sample II

Before the dam was removed, the section of river between Waterville and Gardiner had two very good but distinctly different fisheries. Below the dam we had excellent striped bass fishing from May through October. In April/May and

Nov/Dec we caught sea run browns and salmon (I have pictures of fish over 30 inches) and always smallmouth bass.

The section from Sidney to Waterville had great brown trout and smallmouth bass fishing. It was common to see 20 plus fishermen in the evening in Waterville fishing the rise.

All of that has changed with the dam removal. I seldom hear of anyone catching a brown. The prime striper fishery has moved up river to Waterville. [It is] difficult to guide clients in Waterville because it is not fishable from a boat the same as Augusta was.

I mostly guide clients for smallmouth now in the Sidney to Gardiner section because it is the most dependable fishery.

For years we saw and caught salmon in Augusta and striped bass most of the summer. The parking lot at the mill site would be filled with cars each evening and the boat launch was full of trailers. You will not see a car at the mill site now and only a few of us still launch to fish in Augusta.

I have heard that there is a lot of activity now in Waterville. I would anticipate that when the dam is breached there, the fish and the fishermen will move on just as they have in Augusta.

There is more use of the river now but it is mostly canoes and kayaks floating the river. Not much income for guides or merchants.

Also, as an observation, I did not see as many blueback herring and alewives in the river this year. If this is the case it is not a good indicator for the future.

In case it is not clear, the removal of the dam in Augusta has had a negative impact on my recreational fishing and on my income as a guide on this section of the river.

Sample III

I spend most of my time striper fishing south of the Bath Bridge. I found stripers to be more plentiful in 2005 but were much smaller than past years. My hope is these fish will return in 2006 with a few more pounds added.

Sample IV

I believe that the quality of striped bass fishing in the Kennebec has gotten worse in the ten years that I have fished it. Specifically in the size of the fish. It is a fantastic place to fish for stripers but until there is coastal, multi state cooperation on limiting the harvest of "keeper" bass, the Kennebec and the state of Maine will never come close to seeing what could be the best striper fishing anywhere. In my opinion, this is the key. The quantity and quality of the fish that show up in the river is dependant on what happens down stream. I support CCA Maine in their efforts to promote a quality fishery, but they need Federal help.

P.S. I have spent thousands of dollars fishing the Kennebec for stripes in the last 10 years. Next year is the first time in ten years that myself and fishing partners are not going to return. We are going to fish Cape Cod; the reason, better fishing.

Sample V

Your question asks what is the most I would pay for a saltwater license. I answered \$50.00, but I know that this would never be accepted by Maine saltwater fishermen/women; at least not in the near future.

However, I believe I'm not alone in saying that I would happily pay more to support good saltwater fishing management – and you might consider some form of salt license that makes it simple for supporters like me to contribute more money to that effort.