

Côte-Nord  
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My name is Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. and I reside in Bedford, New York. I have been running rivers around the world since I was a child including first descents in Canada, Venezuela, Columbia and Peru. One of my earliest memories was running the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon with my father in 1965 when I was 11. Other childhood river trips included the Salmon, Snake, Green and Yampa.

Two summers ago I was invited to raft the Magpie River with my three children, ages 17, 15 and 4. Although I had very little knowledge of the river, I knew it had to be impressive because the company I was traveling with, Earth River Expeditions, runs some of the greatest whitewater river trips in the world. I was not disappointed. The scenery on the Magpie was stunning and the rapids were exciting and challenging.

The Magpie is untouched by adverse development for its entire 120 mile length until the small diversionary dam near the St. Lawrence River. The water is so pure you could drink directly from it. It is some of the warmest water of any North American river I have ever been on and people enjoyed swimming. The river has a brook trout fishery that rivals any in the world. The trip was certainly on a par with Idaho's Middle Fork of the Salmon which is run by 20,000 people a year and many consider it to be the best week long rafting trip in the United States.

The Magpie River is an unknown gem and a classic waiting to be discovered that should be enjoyed by future generations of travelers – Canadians and others. Finding a river trip of this caliber is difficult. The economic potential from recreation on this river is untapped and in my view it is enormous and that loss should be seriously considered when assessing the cost versus benefits of hydro development.

My family's experience on the river was so outstanding we are coming back this August to do the river again.

Thank you.

Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.

Senior Attorney, The Natural Resources Defense Council  
President Waterkeeper Alliance  
Vice president Hudson Riverkeeper  
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