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My name is Eric Hertz and I am the president of Earth River Expeditions a New York based expedition company that runs rafting trips throughout the world. Earth River has pioneered commercial rafting on a number of classic rivers, including Patagonia Chile's Futaleufu, Peru's Colca through the deepest canyon on earth, China's 2 mile deep Great Bend of the Yangtze and Tibet's Culturally exotic Upper Yangtze. Before we choose a destination for our trips there are a number of important criteria that a river must meet in terms of scenery, solitude, whitewater, wildlife and or culture.

For 15 years Earth River has been running Quebec's Magpie because of its outstanding whitewater, scenery and wilderness aspects. Finding a navigable whitewater river of such high caliber anywhere in the world is rare. The Magpie compares favorably with North America's greatest classic river trips including; Idaho's Middle Fork of the Salmon and Selway, Alaska's Alsek, British Columbia's Chilko-Chilkotin and the Northwest Territories South Fork of the Nahanni.

Only 600 miles north of one of world's largest metropolitan areas, the Magpie is without doubt the finest multi-day wilderness rafting expedition east of the Rocky Mountains in North America. The river below Magpie Lake for the first few days is wild and beautiful, reminiscent of rivers in Siberia like the Katun in the Altai Mountains. It is not until the Magpie drops off the Laurentian Plateau in the final kilometers that the river becomes truly world class in terms of whitewater and scenery. The most spectacular camp, best rapids and most dramatic falls and scenery all take place in these final kilometers. This spectacular section of the Magpie is why people are willing to travel from as far away as Texas, California and England to experience it.

Regretfully the current dam being proposed would flood the lower reaches of our trip including a dramatic 10 meter falls and the rivers most impressive class 5 rapid as well as the smooth walled glaciated canyon below. This is the last day of our trip and in terms of scenery and whitewater it is the highlight. The class 5 rapid immediately below the falls is as thrilling and challenging as anything we run anywhere in the world. Without this lower canyon, falls and rapid it would not be the same trip. It is one of the pieces of the puzzle that makes the Magpie such a dramatic rafting destination.

Left unaltered, in its natural state, and with the right publicity, the Magpie could bring a tremendous amount of tourism and economic benefit to the local community.

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