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Making the Seine better for paddlers



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ST. VITAL

Recently, The Winnipeg Foundation requested a photo shoot on the Seine River.

While this seems like a simple request, there are very few easy-to-use public access points on the river — especially when the water is low. Fortunately, we were able to launch our borrowed canoes from a private property on a stretch of river where the water was high due to a downstream blockage.

Almost 20 years ago, City Council approved the Seine River Greenway Study (2000). To support recreational canoeing, the study set a target of one foot of water and a flow rate of 0.28 cubic feet per second (3.5 bathtubs/second). It also identified the need for better public access to the river. In 2000, there were no public docks on the river. Six docks were proposed.

Sadly, the five-year implementation strategy was never completed. A project to create riffles to improve water levels fell apart. One dock was built when the west bank of the river was stabilized near the aqueduct. All that remains today are pieces of rebar protruding from a concrete pad.

Another launch site was created during the construction of the Royalwood Bridge. It is a simple slope of cemented stones that leads to the water's edge. This would be a great location to launch a canoe



Photo courtesy of the Winnipeg Foundation

Save Our Seine is conducting a survey of river users to learn how they use the river, and how improvements can be made to accommodate paddlers.

to paddle north through the Bois-des-Esprits — except for one thing. There is no parking. River users must park west of St. Anne's Road and carry their canoes across the street, over the bridge, and down a steep slope to the river's edge. Needless to say, this is rarely done.

Instead, avid river users have scouted out easier locations along the river to launch their canoes and kayaks.

Save Our Seine is conducting a survey of river users to learn more about how they use the river and what improvements are needed to make it more accessible for paddlers. Visit the SOS Facebook page to tell us how you use the river — and what would make it even better. Scroll back to 2017 to explore Steve's canoeing map.

Michele Kading is a community correspondent for St. Vital and the executive director of Save Our Seine.