



Figure 2
The Expanding Concept of Rights

Credit: Roderick Frazier Nash,
The Rights of Nature, p. 7.

The river, for example, is the living symbol of all the life it sustains or nourishes—fish, aquatic insects, water ouzels, otter, fisher, deer, elk, bear, and all other animals, including man, who are dependent on it or who enjoy it for its sight, its sound, or its life. The river as plaintiff speaks for the ecological unit of life that is part of it. Those people who have a meaningful relation to that body of water—whether it be a fisherman, a canoeist, a zoologist, or a logger—must be able to speak for the values which the river represents and which are threatened with destruction.

Sierra Club v. Morton, 405 U.S. 727, 743 (1972) (Douglas, J., dissenting).