

Craig Zurhorst, Rumford, ME.

I am writing to request that FERC and Brookfield Renewable Partners / Rumford Falls Hydro LLC, for the purposes of non-motorized recreational travel, grant open public access to the land east of, and adjacent to, the Androscoggin River, canal and basin and along the trail/access roadway/easement known locally and variously as the Rumford Falls Access Road, the Power Company Easement, the Rumford Falls Trail, and other names, which runs between Maine Route 108, east of the Rumford Canal, generally southward, and uphill, to its conclusion at South Rumford Road.

I am also requesting that FERC and Brookfield Renewable Partners / Rumford Falls Hydro LLC, grant open public access to the area on the west of the falls and basin, adjacent to US Route 2, for use as a park, a scenic overlook and for non-motorized recreation.

These are both absolutely beautiful areas that once were accessible to the public. It is tragic that they are not able to be used and are currently wasted valuable resources.

The ability to include the Rumford Falls Trail in the area's growing recreational trail system, especially with its ideal 2/3-mile length and gradual climb, would be ideal for many walkers, runners and bikers, whether local or visiting.

The upper Rumford falls and the basin, because of their setting, at the junction of Maine Route 108 and US Route 2, are the centerpieces of the town and, after Niagara Falls, Rumford Falls is the second highest falls east of the Mississippi River.

One of the most beautiful vantage points from which to see the basin, the upper falls, the town of Rumford, a portion of the middle falls and the Swift River Valley is the viewing platform on the west side of the basin and falls.

Locals and tourists alike have been frustrated at the lack of access to this beautiful overlook. I was lucky enough to be able to take in this view on a number of occasions when I worked for the Rumford Mill and when the dam and generating facility were still owned by the mill, but I have often wanted to share this wonderful place with family and friends and have been unable to do so. I know I am not alone in this sentiment. This area was designed to be a public park and it would be the natural "crown" for the western shore of the Androscoggin River that already includes Rumford Public Library, Chisholm Park with its short River Walk Trail and Boivin Park with the Edmund Muskie memorial, the information booth and access to the basin.

If these two distinct but related areas of the Rumford Falls Trail and the overlook and park were open to the public, they would each contribute significantly to the recreational assets and resources the town possesses and is actively developing. In turn, they would assist Rumford in attracting visitors and, perhaps, recruiting individuals, families and businesses to settle in our town and help bolster its economic

revitalization. The potential value of these two areas to both recreational and economic development of Rumford truly can't be overstated.

To facilitate and validate these requests, I recommend commissioning a more thorough and expanded recreational study than the one currently proposed, which I am concerned may not reveal and reflect the needs of the community and the opportunities available to the Town of Rumford.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests and please contact me with any questions you may.

Sincerely

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