

Peter Wright, Rumford, ME.

While this project is critical to the local economy on many different levels, I feel compelled to state that I believe it is the obligation of Rumford Falls Hydro to reopen the recreation trails in and around the falls and its adjacent property. Allowing Rumford Falls Hydro to profit from the use of a natural resource is acceptable so long as the organization invests back in the community in a manner that will support the growth, vitality and over health of the citizens in the region. This responsibility and obligation has been overlooked for a number of years and it is time to change.

There are countless clinical studies that undisputedly support access to outdoor recreation such as recreation trails improves the overall health of the surround community that has access to those areas. Rumford Falls Hydro has numerous recreation trails in and around the falls project that are extremely valuable to the advancement of health in the region. The 2018 Community Health Needs assessment (CHNA) has identified the needs for access to recreations trails. The Rumford region has spoken loudly and clearly that it has a desire to increase its activity and movement to improve health. Opening the trails would be of minimal investment and risk to Rumford Falls Hydro and yet would have an exponential positive health impacts. It is with these facts in mind that I as President of Rumford Hospital, Rumford Community Home and senior executive of Central Maine Healthcare respectfully request that this commission make the relicensing of Rumford Falls Hydro contingent of the reopening and unlimited access to these trails.

I would be happy to speak with you in more detail should that be beneficial for your evaluation. Thank you for taking the time to read my comments.

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