



Preserving our past . . . Working for Rumford's future

June 8, 2020

I am the President of EnvisionRumford, a non-profit organization whose goal and mission are to promote the improvement of the Town of Rumford. EnvisionRumford is a downtown networking partner in the Maine Street Program administered by the Maine Development Foundation ("MDF") and works closely with MDF to advance our community. We would like to convey our hopes to the Commission that the Rumford Falls Trail and the Viewing Area at the upper development of the Rumford Falls power plant property be re-opened to the public. EnvisionRumford and the downtown merchants and businesses are united in their interest to reopen the Rumford Falls viewing area and trail.

Historically, these properties were open to the public and were part of the development of the power plant over 100 years ago. The areas known as the Falls Trail and the Viewing Area were incorporated as recreational spaces as part of the transformation of Rumford from an agrarian community to an industrial force in the early 1900s. Hugh Chisholm, who is truly responsible for this transformation, planned comprehensively to include recreational areas and opportunities for Rumford's citizens. Parks were very important in Chisholm's plans for the development of Rumford. Chisholm included recreational areas specifically in his plans for the Rumford power plant. Over the course of more than a century, the public enjoyed using these areas despite multiple changes of ownership in the Rumford Paper Mill, which controlled the Rumford Falls Power Co. as its wholly owned subsidiary. Under Hugh Chisholm's plans, the Falls Trail and Viewing Area were developed and maintained by the Rumford Falls Power Co. After the current owner, Brookfield, took over the Rumford Falls power plant, it closed off these areas to the public, defeating the intentions and aspirations of Rumford Falls power plant's creator.

The Falls Trail and the Viewing Area are important to the citizens of the Town of Rumford and having these historically accessible recreational areas removed from the inventory of assets of outdoor recreation has been devastating to citizens and visitors alike.

Our volunteer organization strongly supports re-opening these areas to the public again and hope that FERC will provide further encouragement to Brookfield to re-open them.

Respectfully submitted,

JENNIFER F. KRECKEL
President, EnvisionRumford