



RUMFORD-MEXICO SEWERAGE DISTRICT

SUPERINTENDENT'S 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

To the Honorable Chairman of the Board and Trustee Members:

I am pleased to submit the annual report of the Rumford-Mexico Sewerage District for 2023.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

Board: Shawn Murphy, the alternate trustee representing Rumford, retired in July 2023 but continued voluntarily in office until Mexico found a replacement in Clifford Stewart to replace him with. Clifford's term will expire in July 2026.

Staff: Kevin Prevost achieved Grade IVB Wastewater operator certification and Matthew Desroches obtained Grade IIIB Wastewater operator certification during the year.

DISTRICT FINANCES:

The Board approved the operating budget for 2023 with a 37% increase over 2022 which was required to cover District operating costs, new sludge disposal costs of \$275,000.00 associated with LD 1911 and to Fiscal Sustainability Plan requirements for the fiscal year. The total raised from the three towns was \$1.669 MM for the projected operating expense and debt service. The District has been broadcasting a planned rate increase of 21% per year until 2024 to cover the costs of capital improvements and meet Federal and State Grant requirements for debt service and operating expense. However, to cover our \$1MM/year estimated debt service to begin in December 2026, the following increases are forecast out to 2027 to cover estimated O&M costs plus debt service: 21% in 2025, 17% in 2026 and 4% in 2027. Keep in mind these are estimates based on current interest rates and can change based on market fluctuations and sludge disposal costs. Currently, the District is hauling compost to the Juniper Ridge landfill and those costs are forecast to increase if Casella insists to classify our compost as sludge versus biosolids.

RMSD applied for a \$65K grant from FEMA to replace the emergency generator at the Rumford Point Treatment plant, and was notified December 8, 2023, we were awarded the amount. RMSD also applied for disaster relief funding in the amount greater than \$100K for damages caused by the May 1, 2023, rain event with confirmation expected in early 2024. The District did file an insurance claim resulting from the event which was denied December 1, 2023. In both disaster relief cases the district is responsible for the upfront costs and is reimbursed after the fact.

The Board authorized receipts for septic or other services be applied to the capital reserve fund to create reserves more than \$1 million dollars to cover future debt service. However, due to infrastructure failures in the spring and fall of 2023, roughly \$120K was used to repair #1 Secondary Clarifier, the cleaning of #2 Digester, the repairs of the collection line upstream of the treatment plant adjacent to Riverside Realty, and repairs to the collection system on top of Falls Hill running west. The underground 6" plant water line failed in early November and #2 Secondary Clarifier suffered a mechanical failure on December 1, 2023. The cost of the #2 Secondary Clarifier repair was minimal and the plant water line repair cost is unknown as of this writing. The District suffered a serious diesel fuel spill at the Rumford Point plant due to a faulty float valve the first week of December. Repair and cleanup costs to the District is expected to exceed \$10K but is unknown currently.

CAPITAL UPGRADE:

RMSD is on target with funding initiatives and progress in the upgrade of the 228 River Road facility and the Dix Avenue pump station. Preliminary Engineering has been completed and design engineering was begun and is expected to be completed in late 2024. The expected cost for final design engineering is \$5.526 million dollars whereas the 2022 annual report incorrectly listed it at \$1.4 million dollars which was for conceptual and preliminary engineering.

RMSD is expected to utilize multiple funding sources for this phase of the project and currently utilizes a Bond Anticipation Note (BAN) from Androscoggin Bank as interim financing during this phase. Eventually, the BAN will be consumed by previously awarded loans from ME CWSRF and USDA RD. The Debt Service is anticipated to be in excess of \$1 MM/year for 30 years.

OPERATIONS:

The Treatment Plant experienced eleven (11) permit violations in 2023. 2 permit exceedances were caused by customers of the District and the remaining 9 were the result of storms, equipment failures or laboratory error at the Main Plant and or Rt2 at Rumford Point Plant.

The District continues to experience high Inflow and Infiltration (I/I) flow from the Town of Rumford during rain and snow-melt events. The District was able to identify two manholes in its' collection system at Falls Hill in Rumford where



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local storm water was seeping through the walls of the structures. RMSD repaired these structures but the town of Rumford manhole discharging to the RMSD collection system was reported to have a very large amount of I/I to the Town Manager and Public Works Director. Nine Dragons Paper Company in Rumford was contacted and directed to install flow monitoring on the discharge of its Sanitary system which is forecast to come online December 2023. The District is evaluating all compliance mechanisms regarding community I/I flows and is working with the Town of Rumford to address the issue.

Respectfully submitted this 13th day of December, in the year 2023,

Roland Arsenault

Mr. Roland M. Arsenault, Superintendent