



Information Addendum
Prepared for the Board of Trustees, Kittery Water District
January 14, 2022

The following information is provided to the Trustees of the Kittery Water District as additional background/supporting information in response to a petition filed with the Trustees that will be considered at a public meeting on January 26, 2022. Maine Water is available if the Trustees would like more information, clarification or elaboration.

MEMBERSHIP IN SOUTHERN MAINE REGIONAL WATER COUNCIL

Maine Water is one of seven full members in the Southern Maine Regional Water Council (SMRWC), formed in 2005 in accordance with MRSA Title 35-A Chapter 68. The seven full members are the five public water systems from Portland to Kittery along the coast and the Sanford Water District and the South Berwick Water District. See www.smrwc.org for more information on the Council, its history and its work.

Any “affiliation” between Maine Water and the Kittery Water District is as fellow water utility professionals in Maine and through membership in the SMRWC, both seeking to fulfill the purposes of the SMRWC. As detailed in the SMRWC bylaws;

“The Southern Maine Regional Water Council (the “Council”) is formed pursuant to Chapter 68, Title 35-A of the Maine Revised Statutes, for the purposes set forth in that section, and for the following specific purposes: to promote the common business interests of its member water utilities, including, but not limited to, studying, planning, or coordinating water supply issues among its member utilities in order to improve water supply service to its members’ customers, to develop cooperative programs to reduce expenses for the existing and future customers of its members, and to ensure that the residents of the Southern Maine region have long term supplies of adequate quantities of high quality safe drink water.”

Through the SMRWC, Maine Water shares a common purpose with Kittery Water District to improve water supply service, reduce expenses for our customers and ensure the sustainability of public water systems in Southern Maine. Customers of the SMRWC members should derive great value in the work accomplished through collaboration by the water professionals in southern Maine who volunteer their time to the SMRWC.

WATERSHED PROTECTION

Maine Water has a long track record of protecting Maine's freshwater resources, having placed permanent conservation easements with independent land trusts on over 1,400 acres of watershed land around public water supply sources. We do not develop wetlands. To the contrary, we partner with local land conservation organizations to preserve wetlands and open space.

Here's an example of our conservation work as expressed by the Camden Herald Editorial Board:

Congratulations and thank you to agencies protecting watershed

By The Camden Herald Editorial Board | Oct 11, 2018



Coastal Mountains Land Trust and its partners, including Maine Water Co., deserve congratulations and gratitude from the Midcoast community upon reaching two major milestones recently.

The most important is the completion of a conservation easement permanently protecting 786 acres of land owned by the water company, which will protect our watershed and the water source for many of Knox County's largest municipalities.

This effort was especially impressive because the water company has a filtration system in place that meant it was not strictly required to conserve this land to meet water quality standards. This land could have been targeted for development, but instead, the Maine Water Co. has chosen to make land conservation and the long-term protection of the watershed its greatest priority.

In addition, the land trust has chosen a contractor to begin the first phase of the Round the Mountain Trail, which will increase public access to the land for recreational activities including hiking, mountain biking and snow-shoeing. This is going to contribute to drawing visitors to the area, increasing their access to the natural beauty that Midcoast Maine is known for and provide health benefits to the individuals who take advantage of this trail. The trail will go around Ragged Mountain with access in Rockport and at the Camden Snow Bowl.

These accomplishments are the direct result of years of work and a spirit of collaboration between many groups and individuals, including the Coastal Mountains Land Trust, the water company, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, local municipalities and numerous outdoor recreation groups.

Good work and we look forward to watching as this effort continues.

Our track record continues to this day, as evidenced by the current construction of a new water treatment facility in Biddeford, on the banks of the Saco River. An integral component of that infrastructure investment is the permanent conservation of 250 acres of forest in the Saco River Watershed and working closely with the City of Biddeford to expand the area for the protection of wetlands and animal habitat.

Maine Water is a strong supporter of the Saco River Corridor Commission (SRCC). The Commission regulates land and water uses, protects, and conserves the region's unique and exceptional natural resources, and prevents the detrimental impacts of incompatible development. The commission was established in 1973 by the Maine Legislature, and protects the Saco River and its 1,703 square-mile watershed all the way from the New Hampshire border to the mouth of the Saco River.

The Saco River is one of the most spectacular sources of clean drinking water in our region, and the 2008 Master Plan of the Southern Maine Regional Water Council acknowledges this fact. Maine Water works in conjunction with the SRCC and the Saco Watershed Collaborative to protect the source water of the Saco River, providing technical and financial support for this important work.

There's more, but that's enough to get the point across. Our employees are Maine people, and Maine people are fiercely vigilant about protecting the environment. That's why we are fiercely protective of natural water resources throughout the state, including Mirror Lake, Silver Lake, the Saco River, Grassy Pond, Ferguson Pond, Lower Pond, Upper Pond, the Kennebec River, and all the lands close to these invaluable drinking water resources. The SJW Group backs our conservation efforts 100%. Maine Water is aware of the desire to protect the KWD watershed, and that objective rings very true to us. When it comes to watershed protection, our values are identical.

INVESTMENT IN DRINKING WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Ongoing investments in water systems are critical to ensure water quality and reliable service. It has been our experience that small water utilities often struggle to meet the complex and capital intensive needs of a public water system. Many towns in Maine face pressure to control municipal spending, while faced with drinking water infrastructure in much of the state that is well over 100 years old. According to the most recent report by the American Society of Civil Engineers,

“an estimated two-thirds of Maine residents are served by 158 public drinking water systems. Aging water mains continue to be a serious issue as utilities miss the 1% annual replacement rate, effectively adding 10-50 years to the existing 100-year replacement cycle. This is largely due to project funding needs exceeding the resources available at federal and state-levels.”

Maine Water is a state leader in water infrastructure replacement to improve system reliability and resiliency, having invested more than \$100 million since 2012. (Link: www.youtube.com/watch?v=C4h2TIBtBYE). One significant example, specific to southern Maine is the replacement of the water treatment facility in Biddeford, which was built in 1884, almost 140 years ago, fully exposed in the 100-year flood plain of the Saco River. Where the previous owner had been unable to address the need, Maine Water had the financial resources to move forward with the construction of a new \$60 million state-of-the-art water treatment facility that will serve current and future generations of customers.

SERVING CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITIES

As part of the SJW Group, Maine Water can continue its long history of serving the people and communities of Maine. We are dedicated to serving the nearly 80,000 customers in 21 municipalities across the state. In southern Maine, Maine Water provides public water service to the communities of Biddeford, Saco, Old Orchard Beach, and the Pine Point area of Scarborough. These municipalities benefit from and value our ability to handle the highly regulated, capital intensive complexities of protecting public health and maintaining critical public infrastructure.

As part of the SJW Group, the core of our mission is “...*delivering life sustaining, high quality water and exceptional service while protecting the environment, enhancing our communities ...*” We are an integral part of the communities we serve, actively partnering with local leaders and support community organizations. A recent customer satisfaction survey conducted on our behalf by an independent research firm finds that more than 9 in 10 Maine Water customers are satisfied with the water and service provided by the company.

We are quite proud of the work we have done to ensure that our customers and communities receive high quality water and service. Our mission is clear and we are open and transparent about our work and our company.

We are eager to answer any questions that the Board of Trustees or members of the public may have.