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Subject Watershed to Well Newsletter

Greetings!

Welcome to the 2023 edition of Watershed to Well. Since 1986, RCAP Solutions has been proud to bring this newsletter to our constituents, providing educational resources on important rural, environmental and community issues. As always, we appreciate your feedback on this publication and welcome your input on anything regarding RCAP Solutions and our services.

[For our contact information click here.](#)

Above Photo: Lago Dos Bocas Dam, taken by Edwin Vazquez-Asencio, Solid Waste Specialist for Puerto Rico.

"This dam is a part of one of the most important water reservoirs in Puerto Rico," explained Edwin. "It was built in 1942 as a water supply for the north coast, but also as a hydroelectrical plant. Unfortunately, the power production was abandoned for the use of fossil fuels. I hope we can get the power production back and reduce the carbon footprint in Puerto Rico."

Coalition Supports "An Act Promoting Drinking Water Quality for All"

Presenting Testimony. Amie Shei, Ph.D. President & CEO of The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts and Brian Scales, President & CEO of RCAP Solutions present testimony in favor of "An Act Promoting Drinking Water Quality for All" this week at the MA State House.

MA Drinking Water Quality Poll

Results Presentation. From left: Jenna Day, Director of Development; Senator Jamie Eldridge; Dr. Amie Shei, President & CEO at The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts; Representative Dan Sena; Bob Durand, President at Durand & Anastas Environmental Strategies; Brian Scales, President & CEO; and Madison Wellman, Coalition Manager.

The Coalition for Safe Drinking Water led by RCAP Solutions and [The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts](#), support "An Act Promoting Drinking Water Quality for All" (bill numbers S.482 and H.902), which aims to provide protections for households who rely on private wells for their drinking water. This bill would enable the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) to develop a set of health-based regulations which would provide statewide water quality standards for private drinking water wells and offer financial resources for homeowners who discover contaminants in their well water.

Brian Scales, our President & CEO, testified in-front of the Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources this week in support of "An Act Promoting Drinking Water Quality for All" (S.482/H.902) – filed by Senator Jamie Eldridge, State Representative Dan Sena, and Representative Smitty Pignatelli.

There is strong support among homeowners:

[Check out our video featuring more information and hear from homeowners who support this bill.](#)

Poll Finds Strong Support for Efforts to Improve Quality and Safety of Private Well Drinking Water:

A new public opinion survey released last week by the MassINC Polling Group finds **broad support among Massachusetts residents for strengthening drinking water protections for private wells to ensure safety and quality.** The survey was sponsored by The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts as part of its Private Well Program to Protect Public Health led by grantee RCAP Solutions.

[Click here for more information.](#)

[For more information about the Coalition, please click here.](#)

[For more information about the Private Well Program to Protect Public Health, or to request a water test, click here.](#)

Agua4All Splashes Into Scranton PA Schools, Ensuring Safe Drinking Water Access

The Agua4All program funds bottle filling stations in schools to deliver clean drinking water, provide reusable bottles for students and staff use to encourage water consumption, reduce disposable plastic bottle waste, and provide student and community education on water quality issues and healthy beverage choices.

RCAP Solutions gathered at Isaac Tripp Elementary #49 to celebrate the installation of twenty water bottle filling stations throughout the Scranton School District, provide students with reusable water bottles to help them stay hydrated, and to teach them about water quality issues and healthy beverage choices.

In collaboration with the Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP) and made possible thanks to The

Chris Long Foundation's Waterboys initiative and Liquid I.V., the Agua4All program increases access to clean drinking water by installing water filling stations in schools and communities that need it the most!

We highly appreciate all speakers, school staff, students, and other attendees (including Congressman Matt Cartwright's office) who gathered with enthusiasm for safe drinking water access in schools!

[Check out our video detailing how Agua4All helped provide clean water to this Scranton, PA school.](#)

Case Study - Municipality of Comerío, Puerto Rico's Recycling Program Re-Opens

"RCAP helped us to obtain the permit to use the recycling plant and to improve work safety measures."

-Franco Barranco, President, Green Force Corporation

After the impact of hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, the high volume of debris and waste stressed the limited capacity of Comerío's municipality to deal with the issue. They depend on a small Transfer Station (TS) for the management of the materials and waste to be disposed. A Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) with noticeable challenges was part of the strategy but ended with the closing of the program in 2019, adding significant pressure to their TS and increasing the cost of operation to running over capacity. The process to reopen the MRF and reduce waste and operational costs required an operator with technical knowledge of materials but also facilities, development, and permits.

The new operator was established as a non-profit organization, separate from the municipality, and would work on the existing facilities. New permits were required, and the regulators requested protocols for noise and contamination controls, and the information to support the actions to be taken. The operator's limited capacity and the lack of information on the part of the regulators made this task difficult and the permit

was denied.

[Read the full testimonial here.](#)

Testimonial - Wells River Village, Vermont

Thanks to funding from the United States Department of Health and Human Services, RCAP Solutions has been working with the community to build capacity, maintain compliance with regulations, and to find additional funding for further system improvements, so that the village can continue to supply clean drinking water to its residents.

Wells River is a small, rural village in northern Vermont, located along the Connecticut River and directly next to the neighboring state of New Hampshire. The community has a population of approximately 400 residents.

Wells River recently completed a \$3.4 million water system improvement project, which included a new manganese treatment system, a new water storage tank, and replacement of some of the water piping. This was the community's first major investment into its water infrastructure since the original construction during the 1890s.

To celebrate this tried-and-true work, we were joined by Dr. Lanique Howard, Director of the Office of Community Services, who participated in a walking tour of the village and engaged with representatives from the community to discuss the project and potential further investments.

[Watch the full testimonial here.](#)

RCAP Solutions Offers A Wide Array of Community & Environmental Workshops

Our wide array of training topics include: Asset Management, Drinking Water Compliance, Safety and Security, System Operations,

Principles of Effective Utility Management, Basics of Math and Chemistry for Operators, Decentralized Wastewater Management, Private Well and Septic System Basics.

RCAP Solutions' Community & Environmental workshops and trainings cover a wide-range of topics to support small, rural communities. We also offer workshops on broader issues related to economic and community development. We offer both in-person and online classes.

Online Tools and Resources:

Our "**RCDI Hub**" (Rural Community Development Initiative), provided by USDA Rural Development is available for communities to explore and download training videos, documents, and other associated data designed for educational purposes. [To access the RCDI Training Hub, click here.](#)

RCAP's **Managerial & Financial Hub** is a one-stop shop for small water systems. The hub contains information about RCAP's upcoming finance and management trainings. In addition, there are links to resources on finance and management topics from RCAP, EPA, and other leading organizations. And drinking water systems can also request free technical assistance from RCAP's network of on-the-ground experts at the bottom of the page.

[To access the Managerial & Financial Hub, click here.](#)

[For more information on our workshops and trainings, click here.](#)

We had an incredible year, with a wide range of meetings and activity, allowing our teams to advocate for underserved communities on the national, state and local levels. Some examples include:

Jenna Day, Director of Development, testified in July in front of the U.S. Senate Agriculture Subcommittee on Rural Development and Energy! Jenna represented the Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP) network and discussed how RCAP continues to help communities apply for and leverage critical federal funding. She noted, *"RCAP's funding application assistance and other related tasks helped communities in the Northeast and U.S. Caribbean receive 57 funding awards in FY22 alone, resulting in over \$88M in grants and low-interest loans. In this period our RCAP partners across the country leveraged approximately \$400 million in infrastructure funding."* We thank Senator Peter Welch and Senator Tommy Tuberville for hosting this important discussion.

[Watch the recording here.](#)

Our President & CEO, Brian Scales, was at The White House in June representing RCAP Solutions as the Biden-Harris Administration announced over \$40 billion in funding to connect everyone in America to affordable, reliable, high-speed internet! The Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) grant program was created through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and will be administered by the U.S. Department of Commerce throughout every state and territory. Many rural communities do not readily have access to stable internet. This historic investment in broadband infrastructure is essential for rural economic development. The internet is not just for email, it plays a key role in e-commerce, distance learning, telemedicine, banking, insurance, government, travel, recreation, and more.

[For more information, click here.](#)

In May, Our President & CEO, Brian Scales, is in Washington, D.C. with our national affiliate, the Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP), discussing this year's Agriculture Improvement Act, commonly referred to as the "Farm Bill". We appreciate Congressman Jim McGovern's

staff for meeting with us to discuss this bill, in addition to other historic infrastructure investments for rural America.

Pictured (from left): Ted Stiger, Chief External Affairs & Policy Officer at RCAP; Brian Scales, President & CEO at RCAP Solutions; Jennifer Chandler, Chief of Staff for Congressman Jim McGovern; and Maranda Saling, Government Affairs & Policy Manager at RCAP.

[More information on the farm bill here.](#)

In May, we were delighted to host "**Lunch with Legislators**" at our headquarters office. During this informational briefing with the Central Massachusetts delegation, we discussed our safe housing, homelessness prevention, and clean water programs. We were thrilled to be joined by so many legislators, legislative staff, and local government officials to engage in a conversation about the issues facing families throughout Central Massachusetts and talk about how RCAP Solutions can help.

[Watch the recording here.](#)

RCAP Solutions Recognized by USDA Southern New England Region

This summer, our Community & Environmental Resources team in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island was recognized by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development for their outstanding work supporting rural communities in the Southern New England (SNE) region. Representatives from our team accepted Certificates of Appreciation from the USDA and participated in a working lunch where they handed out TUMS, Krazy Glue, and Band-Aids in recognition of the work that often requires creative solutions, and discussed ongoing water/wastewater system improvement projects and upcoming training events. Our team is grateful to work in partnership with this amazing USDA/RD SNE group!

Pictured (from left): Jim Starbard, Regional Director (MA/CT/RI); Joseph Delbove, Loan Specialist at USDA Rural Development; Liz Gariepy, Deputy State Director (MA/CT/RI) at USDA Rural Development; Scott Soares, State Director (MA/CT/RI) at USDA Rural Development; Jennifer Lerch, Director Business & Community Programs at USDA Rural Development; Matt Cassidy, Connecticut State Manager; and Jenna Day, Director of Development.

Rollinsford, NH Water & Sewer District Featured for RCAP National Celebration

As part of their 50th Anniversary Celebration, the Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP), hired videographer and documentarian Tim Frakes to take a deep dive into infrastructure challenges and success stories across rural America. He worked with each of the six regional organizations to document these great stories, and we were pleased to highlight our work with the Rollinsford Water and Sewer District in New Hampshire. This small town faced challenges due to arsenic and lead contamination in its water and long-deferred maintenance. RCAP Solutions provided board training, technical assistance, and GIS mapping to bring the town into compliance and give it a full picture of its infrastructure.

[See the full video here.](#)

Team Member Updates

Day

Loht

Bowden

Cianfrani

Forsha

Jonhson

Gardner

Scadova-Vose

Sims

Singh

Harris

RCAP Solutions had several changes to the Community Resources team in the past year:

Jenna Day was named Director of Development; Ms. Day joined RCAP Solutions in 2018. With over two decades of working in community and economic development, she brings a diverse skill set that includes building individual and community capacity and supporting the progress and sustainability of rural communities. Before her promotion she was the Director of Community & Environmental Resources responsible for grants and contract compliance.

Mark Johnson was named Director of Community and Environmental Resources; Mr. Johnson joined RCAP Solutions in 2015. He has over twenty years of experience in the drinking water profession. Prior to this role, Mark provided training and technical assistance to small water and wastewater systems as the Vermont State Lead and also served two years as Deputy Director. Mark has experience working on drinking water and stormwater projects, water treatment, sustainable water system operation, and source water protection.

Seth Loht was named Deputy Director of Community and Environmental Resources; Mr. Loht joined RCAP Solutions in 2015 and works on a variety of specialized mapping projects and provides overall Community & Environmental Resources team support for the field staff. Prior to this role, he served as GIS Manager and has over twenty years of mapping and data management experience and working with communities of all sizes.

[Full bios for Jenna, Mark, and Seth can be found here.](#)

New Hires:

Jamie Bowden, ME Community Specialist; Mr. Bowden's experience includes both drinking water and wastewater operations, regulations compliance, and facility and employee safety.

Ray Cianfrani, NJ State Manager; Mr. Cianfrani's vast expertise includes over three decades of experience in managing public works, water, and sewer department operations.

Amy Lee Forsha, PA State Manager; Ms. Forsha brings over 17 years of municipal management, small water, wastewater, and MS4 stormwater system operations and regulatory compliance, budgeting, mapping, and project management.

Kevin Gardner, RI Community Specialist; Mr. Gardner's experience includes industrial operations and inspections of commercial facilities to ensure compliance with wastewater discharge permits and pretreatment requirements.

Dan Harris, MA Community Specialist; Mr. Harris' diverse experience includes environmental consulting in soil and groundwater remediation, air and stormwater monitoring, and geotechnical investigations, teaching courses in soil science, geology, and sustainability, and as a licensed drinking water operator for small community water systems.

Brian Scadova-Vose, NH Community Specialist; Mr. Scadova-Vose has a proven track record of providing quality technical assistance to small water and wastewater systems, GIS mapping, and training operators and boards on compliance and technical, managerial, and financial subjects.

Becky Sims, NY Community Specialist; Ms. Sims' work with municipalities as a Public Health Sanitarian and an elected Councilperson includes experience ensuring regulatory compliance for water and wastewater systems and

leveraging funds for environmental improvement projects.

[State services and full staff listings and bios can be found here.](#)

Departures:

Sukh Singh, PA State Lead; Ms. Singh joined the organization in 1994 as a technical assistance provider, helping countless underserved communities address technical, financial, and managerial issues and leveraging millions of dollars for rural systems. Through her diligent advocacy work, she helped to build the RCAP brand with elected officials in Washington, D.C. and the many congressional district offices throughout Pennsylvania. She provided customized training to thousands of operators and board members during her career and served as a supportive resource for many of her teammates across the northeast and Caribbean. As the Director of Education & Training she worked to build the organization's diverse curriculum, which has grown to support community needs throughout our region offering environmental education for the water and wastewater sector, housing workshops, and trainings for small business owners. In recognition of her tireless work, she was inducted into the RCAP National Hall of Fame in 2014. We thank her for her service and wish her the best of luck as she pursues new endeavors.

Join Our Team!

We're asking our staff why
RCAP Solutions is their
employer of choice!

[Click here to meet John
Kiernan, State Manager
for Vermont, who
discusses his work, job
satisfaction, and passion
for serving rural and
underserved populations.](#)

Our team is growing and
we're in search of talented
individuals who have a
passion for serving
individuals, families, and
their communities. We
have a variety of positions
available in community
and environmental
resources, housing, and
our corporate office.

**To view our diverse
array of available**

positions in the
Northeast and
Caribbean, please visit:
<https://www.rcapsolutions.org/careers/>

Changemakers Wanted for Volunteer Opportunities!

Thoughtful, strategic, dynamic, innovative, professional... Do any of these attributes describe you?

We seek energetic leaders, representing New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico or the U.S. Virgin Islands, with a wide range of expertise who want to change the world and empower communities to thrive.

For more information on our board and committee opportunities, please visit:
<https://www.rcapsolutions.org/board-volunteers/>

RCAP is an equal opportunity provider and employer and does not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities.

RCAP Solutions mission is to foster personal and public self-reliance and improve the quality of life for individuals, families and the communities in which they live.

[Click here for more information about RCAP Solutions.](#)

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