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Cooperatively promoting the environmentally sound recycling of biosolids and other residuals

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Selectmen

Town of Gilmanton
P. O. Box 550
Gilmanton, NH 03237

November 29, 2016

Re: Biosolids information provided in Gilmanton

Dear Chair McWhinnie and Members of the Board,

During the past six months, we have made it a priority to provide information and take feedback from Gilmanton leaders and residents regarding the use of biosolids on several farms in Gilmanton. We undertook this effort because of ongoing concerns expressed by at least some Gilmanton residents. While some of those concerns – such as malodors – are legitimate and worthy of mitigation efforts, others indicate some misunderstanding of biosolids treatment and management.

Therefore, after the March Town Meeting voting, at which residents rejected a petitioned warrant article restricting biosolids (for the second time in five years), we offered to work with the Town on providing further information and addressing any continuing concerns in an open process that was not hindered by any impending vote or other action.

I was invited by Selectman Bishop to attend a biosolids committee meeting, which I did on Saturday, May 21st, at the Academy building. In addition to Mr. Bishop and me, that meeting was attended by two citizens concerned about biosolids and another member of the committee. We had good discussion, and it was agreed to offer further opportunities for residents to learn more about biosolids and provide their feedback.

On Friday, July 29th, I arranged a tour of the Concord wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) and a demonstration of how biosolids are land applied in Gilmanton. Again, Mr. Bishop provided local leadership in helping with arrangements and publicity. The tour was attended by one concerned citizen/neighbor and another member of the biosolids committee who is a college educator. Staff of the WWTF kindly guided us through the wastewater and biosolids treatment processes, answering numerous questions. We then drove to a field site on the south side of Gilmanton where staff of Resource Management, Inc. (RMI) explained the regulatory requirements and field practices that go into the actual land application of biosolids. Those attending this tour expressed appreciation for all the information presented. And we expressed our appreciation for their input and feedback.

Most recently, on November 17th, we provided a "Biosolids Information Open House" at the Old Town Hall. This informal information-sharing opportunity was a chance for town officials and residents to stop by after work or after



supper to learn as much as they wanted. A half-dozen residents attended, and we enjoyed good discussions with them. One of the Gilmanton farmers using biosolids was there for the whole time, willing to provide his perspective and listen to feedback.

Each of these events was publicized in local newspapers and through the town office. I sent emails to the Selectmen, Planning Board, and Conservation Commission. Unfortunately, I never received any acknowledgement or participation from any town official other than Mr. Bishop and town office staff.

I have enjoyed spending time in Gilmanton and meeting those few who attended our information events. I had hoped that there would be more participation from town officials but I can appreciate that everyone is busy and perhaps not as interested or concerned about biosolids management. The Planning Board and Conservation Commission have dealt with this topic in the past, and perhaps see no need to explore it further.

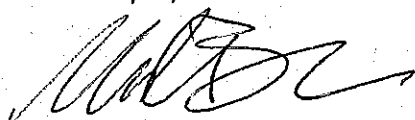
Through the past six months, I have had good conversations with several concerned citizens. I learned from them their particular concerns and have relayed those concerns to the company managing biosolids in Gilmanton (RMI). They are aware and open to such input. I have repeatedly offered to help RMI and the neighbors of the farms work out how they can all get along as biosolids are used. I encourage continued communications between these people, to advance mutual understanding and to find further ways to improve the program.

In the end, there is no legitimate reason for farmers to stop using biosolids in accordance with regulations and best practices; it is their legal choice. Biosolids fertilizer improves their soils, crops, and crop yields in a cost-effective manner while helping farmers to maintain local open space. It is one useful tool in their soil management toolbox. It seems that, in Gilmanton, there are a few people who will continue to be opposed to biosolids use. They may continue to advocate for local restrictions. But, having learned more about the situation in Gilmanton, I will continue to urge these people to work out the conflict at the neighborhood level and not impose their perspective on the whole town.

I hope that your Board, other town leaders, and most Gilmanton residents recognize that biosolids management is a necessary part of wastewater treatment. Use of carefully treated and tested biosolids is a common practice throughout New Hampshire and around the continent. Most biosolids nationwide are land applied. While biosolids use can create malodors and other nuisances – just like other farming practices occasionally do – their recycling is a benefit not only to local soils, but to society as a whole. We at NEBRA are committed to advancing best management practices. We pressure our members to take steps to mitigate nuisances and go above and beyond regulations. We believe they generally do a good job of this, and, in recent years, we have seen very few conflicts between biosolids management programs and neighbors throughout this region.

In closing, I want to express thanks to the Town for support in our efforts to share information about biosolids. Thanks especially to Marshall Bishop for his help. And we greatly appreciate the help of town office staff, including Heath Carpenter, Heidi Duval, and Paul Branscombe.

Thank you,



Ned Beecher

cc. Planning Board
Conservation Commission
Paul Branscombe, Town Administrator
Resource Management, Inc.
Concord Hall Street WWTF

WHAT IS SOIL? & WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?



THE FOUNDATION OF ALL LIFE ON EARTH IS HEALTHY SOIL

SOIL is

FOOD SHELTER WATER

25% WATER

25% AIR

45% MINERAL PARTICLES

5% ORGANIC MATTER

PROVIDE HABITATS FOR SOIL MICROBES TO KEEP THE ECOSYSTEM RUNNING SMOOTHLY

"Essentially, all life depends upon the soil... There can be no life without soil and no soil without life; they have evolved together."

Charles E. Kellogg, USDA Yearbook of Agriculture, 1938

Each year the world loses an estimated

83 BILLION TONS OF HEALTHY SOIL

Soil is being lost at **10 to 40x**

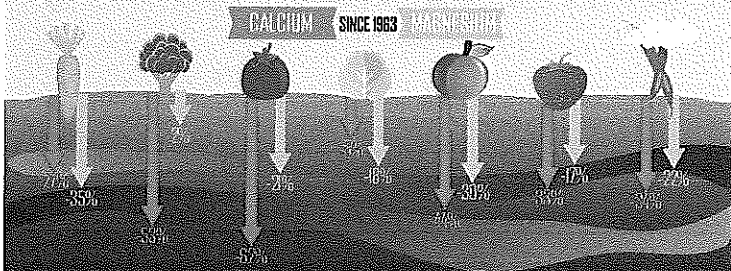
THE RATE AT WHICH IT CAN BE NATURALLY REPLENISHED

Globally, about 40% OF THE SOIL USED FOR AGRICULTURE has been classified as degraded or seriously degraded.

40%

AT THE CURRENT RATE WE ONLY HAVE ABOUT 50 YEARS OF HEALTHY TOPSOIL LEFT

DOES UNHEALTHY SOIL = UNHEALTHY PRODUCE?
DECLINE OF MINERAL CONTENT IN SELECT PRODUCE



WE BUILD HEALTHY SOIL

Resource Management Inc. 888-536-8998 • HOLDERNESS, NH • RMIrecycles.com

WHAT KEEPS SOIL HEALTHY?

HEALTHY SOIL IS THE FOUNDATION OF ALL LIFE ON EARTH. That's why we at RMI are so passionate about helping farmers protect it.

BIOSOLIDS are nutrient-rich soil amendments high in organic matter & micro-nutrients essential for hardy plant growth!

NOURISH THE SOIL

THAT RETAINS VITAL NUTRIENTS.

BIOSOLIDS are held to stringent environmental regulatory standards by both the EPA and individual state regulations.

IMPROVE SOIL TEXTURE, STIMULATE SOIL LIFE, & IMPROVE YOUR SOIL'S LONG TERM FERTILITY.

WHY BIOSOLIDS are awesome!

- Help keep soil healthy
- Increase crop production
- Naturally recycling nutrients
- Makes farmers happy!

Heart & Soil IS A COMPLETE PLANT FOOD
BIOSOLIDS FERTILIZER CONTAINING THEIR ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS
CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL FOR PLANT LIFE

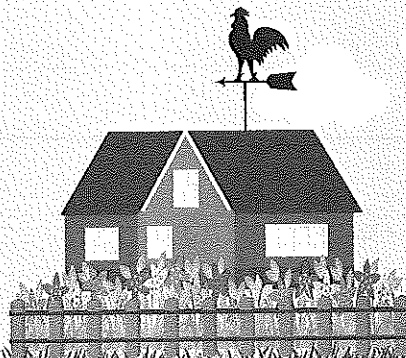
LONG TERM DEMONSTRATION PLOTS SHOW THAT BIOSOLIDS CAN INCREASE CROP PRODUCTION



WE BUILD HEALTHY SOIL

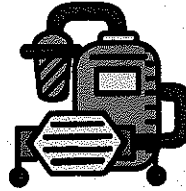
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BENEFITS OF CLEAN WATER & WHY IT'S SO IMPORTANT



Wastewater is transported from your home to a **WATER RESOURCE RECOVERY FACILITY**

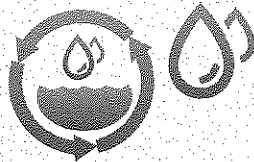
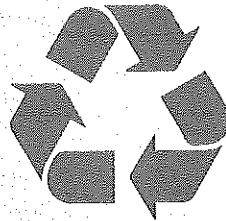
Solids are separated from water through **ADVANCED FILTRATION**



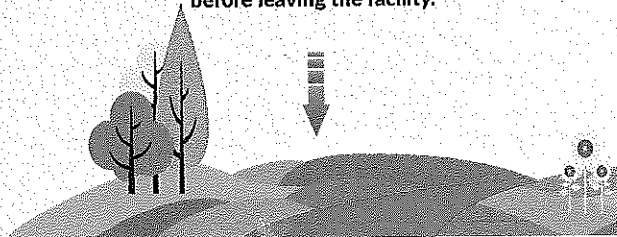
WATER is sent through clarifiers and natural biological treatment that consumes organic matter and cleans the water.



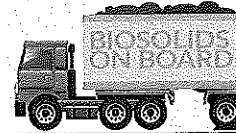
SOLIDS and organic matter are treated to capture nutrients and tested for quality.



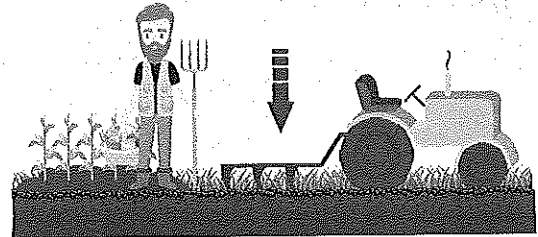
The **RECLAIMED WATER** is disinfected before leaving the facility.



The water is recycled safely into our lakes, rivers and oceans.



Solids are dewatered to create **BIOSOLIDS**, a beneficial and **NUTRIENT RICH SOIL** amendment.



BIOSOLIDS are applied to **FARM** fields as a natural source of nutrients essential for healthy soil & plants.

BENEFITS OF BIOSOLIDS

- Helps keep soil healthy
- Makes farmers happy
- Increases crop production
- Naturally recycling nutrients
- Biosolids recycling is sustainable