

Brownfields

Success Story

Franconia Paper Mill – RiverWalk Resort

Lincoln, NH

A new luxury resort in the shadow of Loon Mountain ski area has been constructed on the site of a former paper mill, mirroring the town’s economic transition from a mill town to a center for tourism. Franconia Paper Mill which opened in the 1960s, was a major economic driver for the Town of Lincoln before it closed in the 1980s. The building stood vacant for 30 years before it was demolished in 2009 to make way for new developments. The construction project cost \$50 million and created desperately needed jobs. This included building a 170-unit residential hotel, and commercial space with ski lockers and retail space. The luxury resort with a restaurant, pub, swimming pools, a spa and a winery has made a significant boost to the local economy.

Priming the Property for Redevelopment

Established in 1792, Lincoln’s location and wealth of woodlands along with the possibility of mills being powered by rivers made it the perfect place to expand on the logging industry. Experienced loggers were brought from New Zealand. With the 72-mile East Branch and Lincoln Railroad being New England’s largest logging railroad, the logging business quickly boosted the area’s economy. Franconia Paper Mill operated for many years, but contamination left behind from the blighted former paper mill posed challenges to the town in developing the area. With buildings built in the early 1900s, the old paper mill was in terrible conditions and had dangerous environmental hazards. Contamination included asbestos containing building materials, such as roofing materials, wall panels shingles, caulking, adhesive materials. Lead-based paint was also an environmental concern.

A developer who was motivated to build a luxury resort or hotel purchased the land. The NH Department of Environmental Services Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund program provided an almost \$1 million loan to clean up the contamination. The partnership of the EPA, DES, Grafton County Economic Council, and the private developer succeeded in developing this luxury resort at a cost of \$50 million.

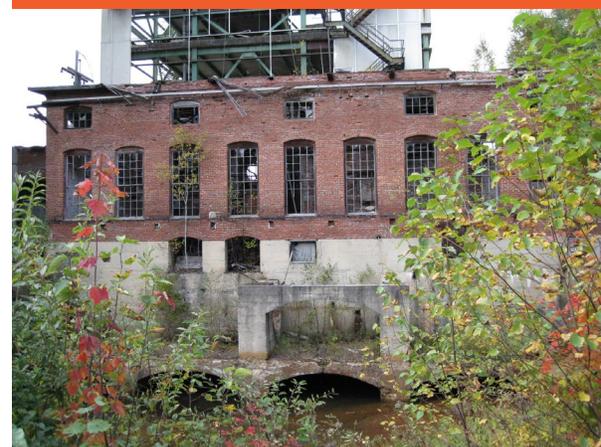


EPA Grant Recipient:
New Hampshire Department of
Environmental Services

Grant Type:
Revolving Loan Fund

Former Use:
Franconia Paper Mill

Current Use:
Luxury Resort





“Traditional financial institutions will not fund environmental remediation, therefore the first step in revitalizing the property was finding funding to remediate. With no traditional financial options available it was vital that NH Brownfields stepped in to help kickoff the project. Without the funding from NH Brownfields this project may not have been built. In addition to the funding itself, NH Brownfields was paramount in collaboration with the developers and NHDES throughout the entire process ensuring all steps along the way met state and federal guidelines for remediation. NH Brownfields was a pleasure to work with.”

Dennis Ducharme, President
RiverWalk Resort at Loon Mountain

Today

The site has been redeveloped into a four-season mountain resort known as RiverWalk Resort at Loon Mountain, creating a long-awaited economic boost in the region, giving new opportunities to people looking to buy condominiums, and increasing the town’s tax base.

The resort’s green features add to the benefits of this project. A fully automated centrally monitored HVAC system increases energy efficiency by maintaining relative temperature and humidity. LED lighting, automatic lights in hallways, and a requirement that key cards be used to activate power also increase energy efficiency.



For more information:

Visit the EPA Brownfields website at www.epa.gov/brownfields or contact Joe Ferrari at 617-918-1105 or Ferrari.joe@epa.gov.