



North Country Regional Economic Development Council Announces Demolition of the Lyons Falls Mill Site Underway

Demolition marks a milestone in the redevelopment of the vacant paper mill and paves way for a mixed use, shovel ready business park that will generate private investment and create jobs

The North Country Regional Economic Development Council (NCREDC) today joined with the Lewis County Development Corporation (LCDC), Village of Lyons Falls, and Development Authority of the North Country to kick off the demolition and cleanup work at the Lyons Falls Mill site in Lewis County. The demolition marks a milestone in the redevelopment of the former paper mill, which has been vacant since 2001, into a mixed use, shovel ready business park that will generate private investment and create jobs. The redevelopment project is supported by a \$1.33 million award to the LCDC as part of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's Regional Council initiative.

“Based on the broad public input to establish the North Country’s priorities for economic investment, adaptive reuse and environmental remediation of sites like the Lyons Fall Paper Mill became clear priorities,” said Tony Collins, Co-Chair of the North Country Regional Economic Development Council and President of Clarkson University. “Today’s kick-off advances our vision to create the greenest energy economy in the state and moves forward the capacity of locally generated sustainable energy, responsible agricultural resources and production in biofuels.”

“The future of this important site has been a high priority for the Regional Council from the beginning,” said Garry Douglas, Co-Chair of the North Country Regional Economic Development Council and President of the North Country Chamber of Commerce. “We have been pleased to work with Lewis County on a phased approach, and this is a real milestone toward making this former industrial property ready for new and productive activities in the future. Our thanks to our Lewis County partners for their foresight and determination and to Governor Cuomo for his continued support of our North Country needs and objectives.”

The LCDC, which took ownership of the Lyons Mills site in 2011, is actively engaged in the transformative redevelopment of this site so that it will once again be a productive facility that will create employment and generate economic growth in southern Lewis and northern Oneida

counties. The LCDC will redevelop the 9.4 acre brownfield site in Lyons Falls, starting with the demolition of approximately 12 buildings and ultimately create a mixed-use site with a focus on the green energy industries. The short term economic benefits involve engineering and demolition job creation, while long-term goals include attracting new business that can benefit from the low cost power generated at the adjacent hydroelectric facility.

“The LCDC has been very committed to this project and the goal of bringing a community revitalization project to southern Lewis County,” said Lewis County Development Corporation President Larry Dolhof. “Without the cooperation of New York State, the Village of Lyons Falls and the assistance of the Development Authority and other partners, we would not be able to initiate this work today.”

The redevelopment project was designated a NCREDC priority project and was awarded \$330,000 in Round 1 for the initial phase of redevelopment, which included conducting the environmental survey, engineering, permitting and redevelopment planning, and \$1 million in Round 2 for demolition costs.

“Thanks to the Regional Council initiative, the LCDC has the support it needs to redevelop a site that will attract new investment and job growth in the North Country,” said Empire State Development President, CEO & Commissioner Kenneth Adams. “The Lyons Falls paper mill has a rich history and at one time employed hundreds of workers. We look forward to returning the site to an active place of business that will provide an economic boost to the Village of Lyons Falls and the North Country.”

State Senator Joseph A. Griffo, a member of the Senate's Commerce, Economic Development and Small Business Committee said: “After nearly fifteen years of being dormant, the Mill Site will get more than a face-lift. Its transformation will be a boost to the region and will create potential growth for good-paying jobs for local residents.”

Assemblyman Ken Blankenbush said, “Today’s ribbon cutting is a first step in reclaiming the economic capability of the Lyons Falls mill site. This community asset will once again be a viable economic engine to our area.”

Village of Lyons Falls Mayor Kate Liendecker said, “Seeing the beginning of the demolition and clean up at the mill site is giving our community hope that our village will once again be beautiful. The site is the heart of Lyons Falls and the redevelopment will ensure its return as the centerpiece of the village, as well as spur additional growth. Today is an exciting and momentous occasion for Lyons Falls and for Lewis County.”

Executive Director of the Development Authority James W. Wright said, “The Development Authority is pleased to be able to assist our partners in Lewis County. It is always a rewarding project to reclaim an abandoned industrial/brownfield site and make it available for productive use. The partnership with the NYS Regional Council made it happen.”

Demolition on the site is expected to take twelve weeks, allowing the LCDC to begin to focus on the next phases of clean up at the mill. The initial demolition will provide access to the hydroelectric generation facility owned by Northbrook Lyons Falls. This operating 5 MW plant is surrounded by the decaying mill property and the private company cannot move forward with its expansion plans without completion of this work.

For over 100 years, the Village of Lyons Falls was a vibrant, paper-producing community. Under various owners, the Lyons Falls Pulp & Paper Mill was in operation from 1894-2001. In 2001, the mill was forced to close due to the economic downturn in the paper business. The closure of the mill has had a significant impact on the village's employment base. The Lewis County Development Corporation (LCDC) has been working since 2008 on a development project for the former paper mill and has partnered with SUNY Environmental School of Forestry's (ESF) Center for Brownfield Studies to develop a vision for redevelopment at the mill site.

To learn more about each regional council and their economic development plans, visit www.nyworks.ny.gov. To learn more about the North Country Regional Economic Development Council, visit www.northcountryopenforbusiness.com.