



Town of East Millinocket | 53 Main Street, East Millinocket, ME 04430 | (207) 746-3376 | [www.eastmillinocket.org](http://www.eastmillinocket.org)

**Town of East Millinocket, Maine – Application Information Sheet  
USEPA FY26 Brownfields Cleanup Grant Application  
Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-25-07**

- (1) Applicant Identification: Town of East Millinocket, 53 Main Street, East Millinocket, Maine 04430
- (2) Website URL: <https://www.eastmillinocket.org/>
- (3) Funding Requested:  
a. Grant Type: Single Site Cleanup  
b. Federal Funds Requested: \$4,000,000
- (4) Location: a) East Millinocket, b) Penobscot County, and c) Maine
- (5) Property Information: Western & Eastern Main Mill Areas–South, Former Great Northern Paper Mill  
50 Main Street, East Millinocket, ME 04430 (Census Tract 23019031000)
- (6) Contacts:  
a. Project Director:  
Michael Michaud, Town Selectboard Member  
53 Main Street  
East Millinocket, ME 04430-1126  
Telephone: (207)-746-3376  
Email: [selectmen1@eastmillinocket.org](mailto:selectmen1@eastmillinocket.org)
- b. Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official:  
Clint Linscott, Town Selectboard Chair  
53 Main Street  
East Millinocket, ME 04430-1126  
Telephone: (207)-746-3376  
Email: [selectmen2@eastmillinocket.org](mailto:selectmen2@eastmillinocket.org)
- (7) Population: Town of East Millinocket: 1,545



(8) Other Factors:

| <b>Other Factors</b>   | <b>Page #</b>    |
|--|------------------|
| Community population is 15,000 or less.  | <b>1 &amp; 4</b> |
| The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory.  | <b>5</b>         |
| The proposed brownfield site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.  | <b>N/A</b>       |
| Secured firm leveraging commitment ties directly to the project and will facilitate completion of the remediation/reuse; secured resource is identified in the Narrative and substantiated in the attached documentation.  | <b>3</b>         |
| The proposed site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the proposed site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water, or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them). | <b>1 &amp; 5</b> |
| The proposed site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.   | <b>1 &amp; 2</b> |
| The reuse of the proposed cleanup site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.   | <b>2</b>         |
| The reuse of the proposed cleanup site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.   | <b>2</b>         |
| The proposed project will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.   | <b>3 &amp; 5</b> |
| The target area(s) is impacted by a coal-fired power plant that has recently closed (2015 or later) or is closing.   | <b>N/A</b>       |

(9) Releasing Copies of Applications: Not applicable.



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



MELANIE LOYZIM  
COMMISSIONER

January 7, 2026

Town of East Millinocket  
Attn: Michael Michaud  
53 Main Street  
East Millinocket, ME 04430

Dear Michael Michaud:

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection (Department) acknowledges that the Town of East Millinocket, plans to conduct the cleanup of brownfield sites and is applying for an FY26 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields Cleanup Grant.

The Town of East Millinocket has developed an application requesting site-specific federal Brownfields Cleanup funding for the Western Main Mill Area-South & Eastern Main Mill Area-South portions of the former Great Northern Paper site.

The Department affirms that:

- i. The Town of East Millinocket has requested State oversight for the sites;
- ii. The sites are eligible to be overseen by a State program or office; and
- iii. Based upon the environmental site assessments performed to date and information provided by the applicant, the State oversight program concurs that the sites have had a sufficient level of site characterization for the remediation work to begin.

For any questions regarding this letter, please contact Chris Redmond at 207-215-8597.

Sincerely,

Christopher Redmond  
Department Brownfields Coordinator  
Voluntary Response Action Program Manager  
Bureau of Remediation and Waste Management, Division of Remediation  
Maine Department of Environmental Protection

cc: EPA Brownfields Region 1

AUGUSTA  
17 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0017  
(207) 287-7688 FAX: (207) 287-7826

BANGOR  
106 HOGAN ROAD, SUITE 6  
BANGOR, MAINE 04401  
(207) 941-4570 FAX: (207) 941-4584

PORTLAND  
312 CANCO ROAD  
PORTLAND, MAINE 04103  
(207) 822-6300 FAX: (207) 822-6303

PRESQUE ISLE  
1235 CENTRAL DRIVE, SKYWAY PARK  
PRESQUE ISLE, MAINE 04769  
(207) 764-0477 FAX: (207) 760-3143

## ***Narrative / Ranking Criteria***

### **(1) PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION & PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION**

#### **Target Area and Brownfields**

##### **1.a. Overview of Brownfields Challenges and Description of Target Area:**

The Town of East Millinocket (the Town), Penobscot County, Maine (**population 1,545, Census 2020**), is one of three towns that make up the Katahdin Region, and is known for its abundant forests, lakes, and mountains. Our Region's early industrial history dates to the 1900s with paper and wood product manufacturing in remote areas of dense forests, adjacent to power generating rivers.

Unfortunately, the end of that thriving industry decades ago left behind a vast legacy of blighted, underutilized, and derelict Brownfields with many redevelopment challenges. The Town has identified over 15 Brownfields sites in its community. More than half of those Brownfields sites (approximately 10) comprise sites at the **former Great Northern Paper (GNP) Mill, which is the Target Area identified for this cleanup grant and encompasses over 200+ acres along the banks of the Penobscot River.**

In 1906, the GNP Mill was established as one of the region's largest employers (over 1,000 employees in its prime). However, GNP was in major decline in the 1980s and eventually they closed in 2014. This resulted in a devastating economic impact to the community. At closing, the last 212 jobs were lost, and the tax base was negatively impacted. After over 10 years of GNP being idle, East Millinocket has lost property value, experienced population decline, and seen the creation of blight at the mill and downtown along Main Street. In 2020, the Town acquired the defunct former GNP Mill.

The loss of GNP's tax base caused extreme hardship on the Town's budget to maintain basic community needs. Jobs are now sparse and unemployment far exceeds the State average. Vacant businesses on Main Street are boarded up for protection from vandalism. House foreclosures are increasing. The lack of economic diversity coupled with the Town's geographic isolation has crippled the area. The county is extremely rural with a density rate of 44.8 people per square mile. East Millinocket also has a high elderly population (23% of the population is over age 64), which is more vulnerable to contaminants and socio-economic issues. Children, another sensitive population, are extremely vulnerable to mill-related contaminants, which affect their development, creating long-term health problems. East Millinocket's birth rate for the last 12 months according to Towncharts.com was 2% and of those 2%, 100% were unwed teenage mothers. With this cleanup grant, the Town will be able to eliminate the hazards associated with the Priority Brownfields Site (noted below) within the Target Area (former GNP Mill) and prepare the site for planned redevelopment, including new office and storage space to support development of a biomass facility and expansion of existing tenant operations at the mill, as well as progressing towards our goal of improving the health and wellbeing of our residents and providing the community with prospects for new businesses and jobs.

##### **1.b. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s):**

**The Priority Brownfields Site targeted for cleanup within the former GNP Mill Target Area is the Western & Eastern Main Mill Areas-South, 50 Main St., East Millinocket, ME 04430.** Comprising over 14 acres of the GNP Mill property, the priority cleanup site comprises the contiguous southern portions of the Western and Eastern Main Mill Areas, which encompass the Old Boiler House, Old Water Treatment Building, Plant Protection Building, partially demolished Grinder Building, Original Train Shed, Mill Offices, No. 5 & 6 Finishing Room, Hydro-pulper building, a secondary train shed, and the sulphite and groundwood materials and chemical storage silos. **The cleanup site directly abuts the Penobscot River to the south and is located within the 1% annual flood hazard zone.** These original mill buildings are the oldest remaining mill structures at the former GNP Mill and were constructed of brick and masonry in the early 1900s. Paper manufacturing operations occurred within the main mill area until mill operations ceased in 2014, subsequent to which several structures were completely and/or partially demolished, including a portion of the Grinder Room, No. 1-4 Finishing Building, Grinder Roll and Machine Shop Building, No. 1-4 Paper Machine Building, No. 5 & 6 Paper Machine Building, No. 7 Screen Room Building, Sulphite Plant, groundwood silo, and the broke storage silo.

Housekeeping practices and environmental regulations in the heyday of mill operations were not at today's standards and impacts from hazardous chemicals and petroleum products are the result of improper handling and spills of hazardous chemicals, petroleum, and solvents. Prior reports identified hundreds of drums, containers, and large tanks used for storage and transfer of hazardous chemicals for the paper manufacturing operations. As a result, multiple chemical spills were reported at the cleanup site including chlorinated solvents, petroleum, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), caustic and acid wastes, and other paper manufacturing chemicals. The results of previous subsurface investigations completed at the site indicated PCB contamination in soil as deep as 18 to 20 feet at the site. Previous subsurface investigations also identified soil and groundwater contamination consisting of comingled heavy metals, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), petroleum, and semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs) adjacent to the main mill buildings at concentrations above Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MEDEP) Remedial Action Guidelines (RAGs). Hazardous building material surveys (HBMSs) identified extensive amounts of asbestos-containing materials (ACM), lead-based paint (LBP), and universal wastes (UWs). Furthermore, disturbance of soils and redevelopment at the site (main mill area) is currently prohibited under the MEDEP Voluntary Response Action Program (VRAP), without the completion of additional cleanup and remedial actions to facilitate future site redevelopment.

## Narrative / Ranking Criteria

### Revitalization of the Target Area

#### 1.c. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans:

In the Katahdin Region Comprehensive Plan (KRCP, 2020), the Town of East Millinocket states its goals include: *“To create a steady population change rate by increasing efforts to attract younger, higher educated families, all while continuing to provide the much-needed services to assist the Town’s older populations. To be considerate of diversification of the population base by including all ages, races, and cultural heritage. To seek new or expanded job opportunities to entice employment and people back to the Town to work and live. To create a high quality of living that will attract new residents.”* The Town of East Millinocket sees the redevelopment of the GNP Mill as crucial to achieving these goals and has developed a conceptual business and comprehensive plan for the former mill, which includes the assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of the entire mill site in a phased approach. In this regard, **the priority site, consisting of the southern portions of the Western & Eastern Main Mill Areas, is identified as the next phase for cleanup and redevelopment at the former GNP mill.**

The priority site, which includes the Old Boiler and Water Treatment Buildings will be cleaned up and redeveloped to support a **new Biomass Electric Generation Facility, a \$50M+ next-generation clean energy and carbon management facility** to be housed in the adjacent main mill buildings (former Biomass & A-Frame Buildings), just north of Old Boiler Building on the priority cleanup site. **Once operational, it will produce electricity as a renewable energy resource.** The electricity will be used locally and across the Northeast. In addition, **an existing mill tenant, Home Grown Fuels plans to expand their operations to the area encompassing the former paper machine buildings at the priority site, once the site has been cleaned up. This entails another \$1M to \$2M in private investment from Home Grown Fuels to expand their PFAS treatment manufacturing operations at the former GNP Mill.** In conjunction with cleanup/redevelopment, the Town will improve stormwater controls at the priority site, in accordance with a prior Infrastructure Study for the GNP Mill, some of which will be located higher than the floodplain to protect the infrastructure and handle the increased frequencies and intensities of storms due to extreme weather.

The ultimate goals of the Town’s business plan and the 2020 KRCP align with the anticipated Brownfield outcomes following the proposed cleanup activities including creating new high-tech manufacturing business opportunities at the former mill site; reusing and revitalizing existing sound infrastructure; developing cleanup and redevelopment plans that are resilient to extreme weather events with increased storm frequencies/intensities; creating new or expanded higher paying job opportunities; diversifying the economic base; and enticing supporting businesses and employment along with people and new residents back to the Town. **The use of modern technology in the construction of the Biomass facility, clean energy production, and long-term emissions reduction goals also align with state and federal climate, carbon management, and clean energy objectives.**

During the development of the 2020 KRCP, the participating towns actively encouraged participation from their residents. A committee of individuals from each town, representing also the underserved populations, regularly met to collect and review information for the plan and held four public meetings for the public to review and voice support or concerns for the plan. As important, the Town acquired the former GNP mill following an agreement ratified by a 44-0 town meeting vote held May 14, 2020. Through this participation, the community residents have signaled their strong support for the revitalization of the former GNP mill.

#### 1.d. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy:

East Millinocket has underserved populations that suffer from low-income jobs and high unemployment. The cleanup and redevelopment of the priority Brownfields site will return it to productive reuse. Specifically, hazardous building materials will be abated and exposure risks to contaminated soil and groundwater will be mitigated via on-site capping of impacted soils with engineered cover systems/barriers to improve the health of our underserved communities and facilitate reuse of the former main mill buildings and existing infrastructure. **Portions of site are located within the 1% annual flood hazard zone.** In conjunction with the site cleanup and redevelopment, the Town will improve the existing stormwater systems at the site, some of which will be located higher than the floodplain to protect the infrastructure and handle the increased frequencies and intensities of storms due to extreme weather events.

Cleanup will facilitate redevelopment of the site to support the pending development of a new Biomass Facility in the adjacent mill buildings just north of the site (private investment over \$50M), as well as expansion of manufacturing operations for an existing tenant, Home Grown Fuels (\$1M-\$2M investment), for which the Town is negotiating new or extensions to long-term lease agreements. **The construction of the adjacent biomass facility will provide much-needed low-cost green energy** and ensure future resilience to fossil fuels, so that this valuable investment in the community is able to withstand the effects of higher energy costs. **New construction and site development will also incorporate modern energy-efficient building components and utilities, as well as rooftop solar panels.** These developments are anticipated to create dozens of permanent, high-quality, high-paying jobs in operations, maintenance, and technical fields, along with several hundred construction-phase jobs. Beyond direct employment, the project will generate significant secondary economic benefits through supply-chain activity, expansion of local services, long-term employment stability, and expansion of the local tax base, while advancing state and federal goals for environmental remediation, economic revitalization, and **resilience to extreme weather events including increased storm frequencies and intensities.** The development of the Biomass

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facility and expansion of Home Grown Fuels' manufacturing operations in 2027 will create an estimated 25 to 50 new well-paying full-time jobs for the area. In addition, blight resulting from the vacant, abandoned main mill buildings will also be eliminated and will improve facility access for current and future tenants through the construction of new and improved access roads and parking areas. Furthermore, the cleanup and redevelopment of the priority Brownfields site using this cleanup grant will spur further assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of the remaining GNP mill. Ultimately, the cleanup and redevelopment improvements to the priority Brownfields site will increase the property values, create new jobs within walking distance of low-income residents, which will further link residents to commerce and recreation and create a bustling pedestrian atmosphere, and expand the tax base.

### Strategy for Leveraging Resources

#### 1.e. Resources Needed for Site Characterization:

Extensive assessment of the former GNP mill property has been performed, including the proposed cleanup site. However, if supplemental assessment and/or site characterization is necessary during the proposed cleanup actions, the Town will utilize its current FY23 Brownfields Assessment Grant (documentation of this secured source is included in **Attachment A** of the Narrative/Ranking Criteria) or will apply for assessment funding through MEDEP's Brownfields program. Additional assessment funds can also be requested through the EPA's Targeted Brownfields Assessment (TBA) Program, which has previously performed assessments of several study areas at the GNP mill.

#### 1.f. Resources Needed for Site Remediation:

Based on the estimated total cost of cleanup, described in Section 3, the Town anticipates that the EPA funding requested in this application will be enough to complete the remediation of the proposed cleanup site. If costs exceed the cleanup grant award, the Town will apply to the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) or the Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC) Brownfields RLF programs.

#### 1.g. Resources Needed for Site Reuse:

The Old Boiler & Water Treatment Buildings will be redeveloped for office and storage space to support the development of a new biomass facility in the adjacent mill buildings north of the site. The biomass company is dedicated to developing this facility with a proposed investment of \$40M to \$50M. The area encompassing the former paper machine buildings at the site is targeted for a \$1M to \$2M expansion of Home Grown Fuels manufacturing operations, an existing tenant of mill property. In addition, the Town has secured a \$750,000 Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) 2023 Catalyst Grant award, \$5M in Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) in the FY24 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) appropriations bill, through the support of Senators Susan Collins and Angus King, both of which will be used to further support reuse of the cleanup sites and GNP Mill Target Area (documentation of secured sources are included in **Attachment A** of the Narrative/Ranking Criteria). The Town also has another pending \$5M CDS in the FY26 THUD appropriations bill, through the support of Senators Susan Collins and Angus King, which will likely be passed and signed before end of February 2026. Previously, the Town secured THUD CDS awards of \$2.8M and \$1.6M to support reuse of the GNP Mill Target Area. See table below.

| Name of Resource                           | Type of Resource   | Secured or Unsecured?       | Additional Details or Information about the Resource                                    |
|--|--------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| FY23 Brownfields Assessment Grant          | (1.e.) Assessment  | Secured                     | \$103,984.55 in remaining funds (as of 10/1/25)   |
| MEDEP Brownfields Program                  | (1.e.) Assessment  | Unsecured                   | If supplemental assessment is needed  |
| EPA TBA Program                            | (1.e.) Assessment  | Unsecured                   | If supplemental assessment is needed  |
| DECD RLF                                   | (1.f.) Remediation | Unsecured                   | \$500,000 potential cleanup subgrant/loan   |
| EMDC RLF                                   | (1.f.) Remediation | Unsecured                   | \$500,000 potential cleanup subgrant/loan   |
| Private Developer (Biomass Facility)       | (1.g.) Reuse       | Unsecured                   | Est. \$40M to \$50M investment for biomass facility within Old Biomass Building         |
| Home Grown Fuels (PFAS Treatment Facility) | (1.g.) Reuse       | Unsecured                   | Est. \$1M to \$2M investment for biomass facility within Old Biomass Building           |
| NBRC 2023 Catalyst Grant                   | (1.g.) Reuse       | Secured                     | \$750,000 to support reuse/redevelopment  |
| FY24 THUD CDS                              | (1.g.) Reuse       | Secured                     | \$5M to support reuse   |
| FY26 THUD CDS                              | (1.g.) Reuse       | Pending Final Bill Approval | \$5M to support reuse (in addition to previous \$2.8 and \$1.6 million THUD CDS awards) |

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### **1.h. Use of Existing Infrastructure:**

Our Target Area has infrastructure in-place to support our redevelopment strategy. East Millinocket already has a full array of existing and adequate infrastructure (e.g., public water, sewer, electric, high-speed internet, and transportation network), which serve the priority site at the former GNP Mill. Three-phase electric power is also available, and the Town recently upgraded the GNP Mill wastewater treatment facility to replace its previous system. The cleanup of the priority site will help address legacy contamination, remove barriers to reuse, and repurpose legacy infrastructure to assist with redevelopment of the former GNP Mill.

## **(2) COMMUNITY NEED & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

### **Community Need**

#### **2.a. The Community's Need for Funding:**

East Millinocket is a low-income, micro-community with a **population of 1,545 (US Census, 2020)**, qualifying as a **small community** under Brownfields Program standards. Poverty is reflected in the area's employment data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2020. Median household income in East Millinocket is \$44,306, significantly lower than that of Penobscot County (\$66,248) and Maine (\$71,773). Similarly, East Millinocket also has a greater percentage of its population with household incomes below the Federal Poverty Level (18.5%) compared to percentages in Penobscot County (13.5%) and the State as a whole (10.8%). Disparities are even greater for vulnerable school-aged children (ages 5 to 17) and adults aged 60 and older, who are nearly 75% more likely and more than twice as likely, respectively, to be in poverty than their cohorts in the State. Additionally, 43% of the population of East Millinocket is considered low-income (household income below twice the poverty level), a rate nearly two-thirds higher than that of the State of Maine.

From 2013 to 2023, labor force participation in East Millinocket declined 10.6%. In 2023, East Millinocket's unemployment rate was 5.4%, 30% higher than both Penobscot County (4.1%) and the State (3.9%). Redevelopment opportunities, like those proposed by use of the requested USEPA Cleanup Grant funds, are needed to create good paying jobs in this impoverished area.

Job loss has driven population decline in East Millinocket, where the population shrunk by nearly 40% since 1970. In contrast, Penobscot County's population increased by more than 20% over the same period, while Maine's population grew by 6.9%. Population decline, along with decreased labor participation rate and closure of GNP Mill, has contributed to a significant decline in the share of employed people in the manufacturing industry. From 2013 to 2023, East Millinocket's manufacturing employment sustained a decline of 81.5%. East Millinocket has been designated as an Opportunity Zones (OZ). An OZ is an economically distressed communities, defined by Census tract, nominated by governors, and certified by the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury. OZs have experienced a lack of investment for decades. This designation underscores the need for investment in the community.

East Millinocket has proposed a phased redevelopment of former GNP mill to assist in achieving the socioeconomic, health, and welfare goals of its comprehensive plans. The Town, who took over control and ownership of the massive former GNP Mill and is continuing to develop a long-term environmental and economic business plan for this property, does not have additional resources to assess, clean up, and/or redevelop Brownfields. Rural areas with a declining population also face a shrinking workforce, an aging population with an increasing need for health services, and a shrinking tax base, which puts pressure on our local budget to fund essential services. Unfortunately, as a small town with a high proportion of low-income individuals, East Millinocket lacks the capacity to fund environmental assessment, remediation, and reuse. Without this cleanup grant funding, it is feared that the situation in the community will only continue to worsen.

#### **2.b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations:**

In addition to enduring poverty and a declining population, East Millinocket residents bear environmental, health, and welfare burdens. A dense residential, low-income neighborhood, immediately across from the former GNP Mill site, contains many of the most vulnerable populations (low income, children, elderly, no health insurance, disabled, and youth with developmental disabilities) that are negatively impacted by environmental issues and lack of economic opportunity. This cleanup grant will reduce these threats to the welfare of many sensitive populations by implementing the remediation and facilitating projected site reuses, which generate positive outcomes and benefits. This challenging dynamic underscores the need for a Brownfield Cleanup Grant.

Health disparities burden the community. According to data from CDC's PLACES, the countywide prevalence of diabetes and chronic heart disease are, respectively, at the 67<sup>th</sup> and 95<sup>th</sup> percentile nationally. Cancer and asthma rates are also high (CDC's EJI Explorer). These chronic conditions are associated with socioeconomic disadvantages and limited access to preventive care. East Millinocket residents experience a high incidence of disabilities, with nearly one-in-four residents disabled, nearly 50% higher than the State's rate and at the 92<sup>nd</sup> percentile nationally. The cleanup and redevelopment of the priority site will create a healthy environment, attract new businesses, and achieve economic stability in the community. In turn, this will increase jobs, increase property values, reduce poverty, and increase population in our identified Target Area, providing greater economic opportunity for sensitive populations. Further, assessment and cleanup of the sites will prevent exposure to site contaminants and improve health outcomes for the population.

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### 2.c. Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions:

Both, the likelihood that a housing unit contains lead paint, as well as the concentration of lead in the paint that was used, varies directly with the age of the structure. According to the U.S. Census, 68.2% of the Target Area's structures were built prior to 1970, which is before the banning of lead paint in 1978. Lead exposure is particularly associated with damage to the brain and nervous system, impaired growth, and learning and behavioral issues, along with harming cardiovascular health, kidneys, the immune system, the blood system, the reproductive system, and development. Unborn and young children are especially susceptible to the effects of high lead levels, with increased risk for lower IQ scores, impaired academic performance, and behavioral problems. Approximately 22.7% of East Millinocket's population is under 18, underscoring the heightened risks to the community from lead.

Residential energy profiles indicate an unusually high reliance on fuel oil and other delivered fuels for home heating, a pattern that mirrors broader county and state energy characteristics and underscores community vulnerability. Town-level census estimates show that roughly 76.6% of households in East Millinocket depend on fuel oil or kerosene as their primary heating source, far exceeding the rate of Penobscot County (57.2%). Use of these fuels for home heating and cooking can exacerbate asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), particularly in elderly and sensitive populations. As mentioned, the area has a high rate of asthma, relative to the State and U.S., as a whole.

These statistics demonstrate that residents are disproportionately impacted compared to the State and suggest that the higher rates of these health conditions are attributable to exposure to contaminants resulting from Brownfields in the Target Area including the former GNP Mill. This cleanup grant will remediate identified contamination at the priority site to meet MEDEP risk-based cleanup standards and reduce these threats by removing and/or limiting exposure to the contamination at the cleanup site.

### 2.d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations:

As mentioned in Section 2a, the grant and reuse strategy will directly address economic challenges and environmental burdens faced by the community, which has a median income of just 62% of the State's median. With more than 40% of the population living in low-income households, increasing economic opportunity is critical to the community's future. With low incomes, internet access is limited, with East Millinocket ranking at the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile nationally for lack of access, limiting online educational and job opportunities.

**The Penobscot Indian Nation also lies across the Penobscot River from the target area. Given the proximity, the cleanup grant and associated outcome of economic prosperity of East Millinocket would indirectly benefit the Tribe.** The Penobscot Indian Nation's reservation comprises some 200 islands in the Penobscot River, the most populated of which is Indian Island, home to approximately 550 tribal members, with an additional 1,661 tribal members living off reservation, many in close proximity to Indian Island. According to the **Penobscot Indian Nation Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2024 to 2029**, although the proximity to Bangor offers more economic opportunity for the Penobscot, the Tribe has not realized those opportunities and still experiences economic distress, high unemployment, and low educational attainment.

These data show that the population in the target area of East Millinocket, an extremely rural and remote area in the State of Maine, is clearly disproportionately impacted, underserved, and overburdened by both environmental and socioeconomic impacts when compared to other regions of the State and the US.

The proposed cleanup and alignment with reuse strategies for the priority site to support construction of a new biomass facility and expansion of Home Grown Fuels at the GNP Mill Target Area and their anticipated outcomes (new industries/workspaces, job creation, reducing exposure to contamination, and **resilience to extreme weather events**) will help the disproportionately impacted populations. These facilities will minimize or eliminate contact with impacted soil/water/air, **providing storm resiliency near the river flood plain**, and providing economic opportunities/desirable space for investors and businesses. Through the cleanup grant, the Town will prioritize the safety and rights of the region's sensitive populations and recognizes that the fundamental goals of the cleanup/redevelopment are to reduce threats to the identified populations in the target area and provide a safe, clean environment where all residents can thrive.

## Community Engagement

### 2.e. and 2.f. Project Involvement & Project Roles:

| Name of Organization                     | Entity's Mission   | Point of Contact                   | Specific Involvement / Role   |
|--|--|------------------------------------|---|
| East Millinocket Industrials (EMI) Board | Oversee and promote the redevelopment of former GNP Mill | Marie Hernandez, COO<br>[REDACTED] | EMI is undertaking the redevelopment planning efforts at the former GNP mill site and will assist in public outreach and advise on reuse potential and redevelopment planning in the Target Area. |

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| Name of Organization   | Entity's Mission  | Point of Contact  | Specific Involvement / Role   |
|--|---|---|---|
| Katahdin Region Development Board (KRDB)                                   | Promoting resources, community events and engagement within the Katahdin Region.  | Chares Prav, President<br>[REDACTED]  | KRDB will assist with the planning, cleanup, and development of the priority sites. They will also assist with public outreach.   |
| Eastern Maine Community College (EMCC), Rural Development Initiative (RDI) | Transforming the lives and empowering the communities in the Katahdin Region.   | Deb Rountree, Executive Director of Rural Development Initiatives<br><a href="mailto:dvoisine@maine.edu">dvoisine@maine.edu</a> ,<br>207-746-5741 | EMCC's RDI will assist with community outreach, public education, identifying sensitive populations, and connecting residents to job opportunities, job training, higher education, and childcare. Additionally, they will focus on building relationships with local businesses and organizations. |
| Maine Redevelopment Land Bank Authority (MRLBA)                            | Assist local governments and organizations to accelerate the redevelopment of abandoned, environmentally hazardous, and functionally obsolete sites in Maine. | Tuck O'Brien, Executive Director, <a href="mailto:tobrien@maineredevopment.org">tobrien@maineredevopment.org</a> ,<br>207-553-0255                | MRLBA, as a new state entity, will provide supplemental technical assistance or grant funding management to in connection with the proposed cleanup projects and other redevelopment initiatives at the GNP mill.   |

Each of the partner organizations noted above will play important role in the overall decision-making processes associated with the proposed cleanup projects. In addition, the partner organizations and a hired Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP), will serve on our Brownfields Advisory Committee (BAC).

**2.g. Incorporating Community Input:** The Town will use the following tools, which have been successful in past outreach efforts:

- **Websites and Fact Sheets:** East Millinocket's and EMI website will maintain a Brownfields section with postings for public meetings, meeting minutes, project updates, and reports, which will continued to be regularly updated. We will ensure partner community organizations will also have information or links on their websites.
- **Information Repository:** East Millinocket office serves as the location for hard copies of all program-related documents for review by the public.
- **Public Meetings:** Public meetings will be held at key project milestones to communicate the progress of the cleanup project. Meetings will be co-hosted with partner community organizations (COs), noted above, and held outside of normal working hours to increase attendance.
- **Email & Newsletters:** The Town and its project partners will utilize their respective e-mail networks, print and e-newsletters to announce and promote the program, provide regular updates, solicit input, advertise meetings, and disseminate outcomes.
- **Newspaper Releases:** Announcements, press releases and public notices will be published in newspapers.

We consider all input, because these cleanup projects are for the benefit of our community, and will respond to requests/comments using these methods, along with direct written responses, as necessary. Our plan will be documented in a **Community Involvement Plan (CIP)** for the site. A public meeting and 30-day public comment period will be conducted prior to initiating cleanup activities, and the ABCAs will be finalized.

### (3) TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, & MEASURING PROGRESS

#### 3.a. Proposed Cleanup Plan:

Extensive hazardous building materials (ACM, LBP, and UWs) and contaminated soil and fill materials, impacted with hazardous substances (heavy metals, PCBs, SVOCs/PAHs, limited petroleum, and VOCs), have been identified throughout the Site, as further detailed in Section 1.b. Contaminated soils located within 2 feet of the ground surface are regulated by the MEDEP as easily "accessible" by Site occupants and provide the greatest potential risk to future users of the Site. Under the MEDEP Voluntary Response Action Program (VRAP), hazardous building materials will be properly abated and impacted soils will be properly covered/capped to meet MEDEP Remedial Action Guidelines (RAGs) to facilitate commercial and industrial site redevelopment.

The selected cleanup plan includes preparing the Western and Eastern Main Mill Areas-South of the former GNP Mill property for redevelopment. Initially, identified hazardous building materials will be properly abated and disposed off-site (hundreds of square feet (sf) and linear feet of identified ACM-impacted materials including 4 massive boilers with boiler refractory linings, lagging, pipe insulation, duct and tank jacketing and gaskets, floor tile, wall panel adhesive, asbestos-cement components in dozens of electrical panels, window glazing, window/door caulking, roof/curb/penetration flashings, curb flashing sealant, linoleum flooring, black mastic, tar paper, walking mats, roofing material, pipe thermal system insulation (TSI), and TSI material inside multiple negative air machines and HEPA vacuums). Additionally, PCBs detected in caulking and glazing materials, hundreds of square feet of LBP identified on walls, ceilings, and trim materials, along with over 2,500 units of UWs including mercury-containing fluorescent lamps, PCB light ballasts, fire

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extinguishers, emergency lights, thermostats, refrigeration chemicals, and miscellaneous electronics identified throughout the entire main mill buildings will be abated, recycled, and/or disposed of off-site. Several derelict mill structures, including the 2 remaining material and chemical silos, fire protection building, and partially demolished grinder building, over 25,000 sf of buildings, will be abated, cleaned, and decommissioned/demolished to facilitate additional cleanup of contaminated soils beneath and adjacent to the buildings. Lastly, MEDEP-approved engineered cap/barrier systems will be installed over contaminated soils (i.e., engineering controls/barriers on approximately 7 acres of the site) to prevent direct human contact with identified impacted soils. The Town has developed a conceptual business and comprehensive redevelopment plan for mixed commercial and industrial reuse at the former mill. In conjunction with the cleanup/redevelopment, stormwater management and controls will also be implemented at the Site to protect the infrastructure and manage increased frequencies and intensities of storms due to predicted extreme weather events in the future.

The Town will oversee all cleanup activities. The Site has been enrolled in the MEDEP VRAP. The selected Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) will prepare a Community Involvement Plan (CIP), finalize the Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA), and develop a final Remedial Action Plan (RAP) along with cleanup construction bid plans and specifications. The QEP will prepare a Site-Specific Quality Assurance Project Plan (SSQAPP) and will conduct waste disposal sampling and confirmatory sampling, as necessary. The project will implement Green Remediation Principles and Techniques including waste recycling/reuse, reduced energy consumption, and limits on engine idling. Licensed cleanup contractors will be selected who will implement standard industry construction practices to ensure safe conditions and protect the public and our sensitive populations; these measures include dust controls and building/hazard containment systems to contain potentially air-borne hazardous materials and debris during cleanup activities. Waste cleanup materials will be properly disposed of at licensed disposal facilities. Institutional controls (e.g., deed restriction) and an updated Environmental Media Management Plan (EMMP) will be prepared and recorded to ensure that future construction, remediation, utility work, and/or landscaping does not disturb the on-site engineered capping systems. Final cleanup documentation will be prepared and submitted to MEDEP & EPA. MEDEP VRAP will oversee and approve final environmental regulatory closure

### Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs

#### 3.b. – 3.e. Project Implementation, Anticipated Project Schedule, Task/Activity Lead, and Outputs:

|  |
|--|
| <b>Task 1: Cooperative Agreement Oversight</b>   |
| <b>b. Project Implementation:</b><br><i>EPA-funded tasks/activities:</i> Project coordination and oversight; Grant management/cooperative agreement oversight, compliance with technical requirements, ensure protection of human health and the environment; Develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) and select a QEP in accordance with applicable federal procurement regulations; attend two National Brownfields Training Conferences and two Regional Brownfields Conference; prepare performance and financial reports including quarterly reports, Davis-Bacon Act (DBA), Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), and Build America, Buy America (BABA) reporting, and routine updates to ACRES, as required. Town to meet with QEP at least biweekly to track project progress.<br><i>Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out tasks/activities:</i> Portion of Town support will be in-kind for project oversight (time for financial drawdowns from ASAP, maintaining files, planning staff and legal services, procurement of QEP).  |
| <b>c. Anticipated Project Schedule:</b> RFP and selection of the QEP within the first 3 months (1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter) of funding award; Brownfields Advisory Committee (BAC) meetings to be held on a quarterly basis; quarterly reports and ACRES database updates each quarter during the 4-year grant period; and other reporting (DBA, DBE, BABA), as necessary.  |
| <b>d. Task/Activity Lead:</b> The Town will lead all programmatic grant activities. The Town will develop an RFP for QEP selection and establish the BAC. The QEP will prepare quarterly reports, ACRES updates, and any needed DBA, DBE, and BABA reports.  |
| <b>e. Outputs:</b> Competitive RFP and contract for QEP; meeting agendas for biweekly calls with Town and QEP; 16 quarterly reports (one/quarter for four years); and federal financial reports, DBA/DBE/BABA reporting, and ACRES input/updates over 4-year grant period.   |
| <b>Task 2: Community Outreach &amp; Engagement</b>   |
| <b>b. Project Implementation:</b><br><i>EPA-funded tasks/activities:</i> Per our community engagement plan in Section 2.g., the Town and its QEP will develop a CIP for approval by EPA/MEDEP and establish the BAC and meet quarterly. The Town, QEP, and community partners will develop an information repository; notify residents, adjacent landowners, and local community of public meetings and cleanup schedules; hold public meetings to inform, educate, solicit public input, and provide written responses to comments; update the target community regarding cleanup and redevelopment activities; and prepare public outreach materials. Sampling/monitoring data and interpretations of the results will be shared with the community. A 30-day public comment period will be held to solicit input on the draft ABCA prior to finalization. The Town will provide outreach and communication to the public prior to, during, and following the cleanup work, and generate FAQs.<br><i>Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out tasks/activities:</i> Portion of Town support will be in-kind for additional public outreach support and host meetings at the Town's Municipal Building or Katahdin Regional Higher Education Center. Community organizations and partners will also assist with public outreach. |

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**c. Anticipated Project Schedule:** Establish BAC in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the grant and meet quarterly. The 1<sup>st</sup> public meeting will be held for the 30-day public comment period on the draft ABCA and will occur within six months (2<sup>nd</sup> quarter) of the grant award and following preparation of draft cleanup plans and specifications (i.e., to solicit public input on the final draft abatement/cleanup plans). The 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting will be held during on-going contractor abatement/cleanup work (i.e., progress status meetings), and the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting will be held at end of abatement/cleanup. Sampling/monitoring data will be shared during the cleanup (at least once per quarter).

**d. Task/Activity Lead:** The Town and QEP will conduct community outreach and engagement tasks. The BAC and community partners will assist with outreach and engagement.

**e. Outputs:** Establish BAC and meet quarterly (16 meetings total with meeting minutes); information repository; CIP; at least three public outreach meetings and associated informational materials and public meeting documentation (ads, agendas, comments, responses to comments, sign-in sheet); sampling/monitoring reports or fact sheets (at least four, one per quarter during cleanup); four newspaper ads & website or social media posts (at least one per year); FAQs, and a final ABCA.

### Task 3: Site-Specific Cleanup Activities

#### **b. Project Implementation:**

*EPA-funded tasks/activities:* Most of the cleanup grant funds will be used to implement the cleanup plan. Prior to the start of site work, the QEP will prepare a final RAP, design plans and specifications, bidding/contract documents, and cleanup/reuse plans for review and approval by the Town, EPA, and MEDEP; prepare updated cleanup cost estimates, as necessary; pre-bid site visit with potential cleanup contractors; and prepare a SSQAPP for waste disposal characterization sampling and confirmatory sampling, as necessary. The Town and QEP will review contractor bids and select a cleanup contractor. The QEP and selected cleanup contractor will obtain necessary permits. The Town and the QEP will be in communication with the community, BAC, MEDEP, and EPA throughout this phase of work. The selected cleanup contractor will prepare a Health and Safety Plan (HASP) and cleanup work plans with schedules and will perform all required cleanup in accordance with the project plans and specifications.

*Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out tasks/activities:* Portion of Town support will be in-kind for contractor procurement and selection and communications throughout site cleanup activities.

**c. Anticipated Project Schedule:** QEP will prepare project documents and cleanup design within 3- to 6-months of selection (winter 2026/spring 2027). A SSQAPP will be prepared, a cleanup contractor selected, and permits will be obtained at this time. We plan to start cleanup activities in the spring of 2027 and will complete cleanup work by Q1/Q2 2030 (within the 4-year grant period).

**d. Task/Activity Lead:** QEP with Town oversight will prepare final RAP and bid specifications, SSQAPP, and conduct pre-bid site visit. The Town, with assistance from BAC and QEP, will procure and select the cleanup contractor(s). QEP and selected cleanup contractor(s) will obtain final cleanup permits, as necessary, and the contractor(s) will generate a HASP, cleanup work plans/schedules, and perform cleanup work.

**e. Outputs:** Final RAPs, design plans and specifications, bidding documentation, contract with cleanup contractor, SSQAPP, construction/cleanup permits, HASP, work plan, and cleanup in accordance with the ABCA and approved project plans and specifications.

### Task 4: Oversee Site Cleanup

#### **b. Project Implementation:**

*EPA-funded tasks/activities:* Town and QEP will monitor and oversee project progress, public health, and welfare during the proposed cleanup activities; oversee the contractor's cleanup activities; attend up to three project status meetings with BAC; perform the necessary inspections and reporting during and after cleanup to ensure compliance with the plans, specifications, and requirements for regulatory closure; review and approve contractor pay requisitions and DBA/DBE/BABA documentation, as necessary; perform final site inspection; and collect confirmatory samples per SSQAPP. A deed restriction, EMMP Plan for capping systems, and cleanup completion report will be completed for MEDEP approval following the cleanup and EPA grant closeout documentation will be completed at the end of project.

*Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out tasks/activities:* Portion of Town's support (including legal counsel) will be in-kind for cleanup oversight and preparation and filing of the deed restriction and EMMP Plan.

**c. Anticipated Project Schedule:** Cleanup activities to begin spring/summer 2027 and closure reports and documentation will be generated upon completion of the cleanup work (by Q1/Q2 2030). This work will be completed within the 4-year grant period.

**d. Task/Activity Lead:** With direction and assistance from the Town, the QEP will oversee, monitor, and document site cleanup activities. The Town will assist with project oversight and will be in communication with BAC, MEDEP, and EPA team members throughout the cleanup phase of work. The QEP will also prepare project closure reports and assist the Town with grant closeout documentation. The Town, QEP, and legal counsel will prepare and record the deed restriction and EMMP Plan for the on-site engineered capping systems.

**e. Outputs:** Five project status meetings, payment requisitions and DBA/DBE/BABA documentation, confirmatory sampling data, deed restriction, EMMP, Cleanup Completion Report, MEDEP/EPA approval documentation for the cleanup, and grant closeout documentation.

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### 3.f. Cost Estimates:

| Budget Categories         |                 | Task 1:<br>Cooperative<br>Agreement Oversight | Task 2:<br>Community Outreach<br>and Engagement | Task 3:<br>Site-Specific<br>Cleanup Activities | Task 4:<br>Oversee Site<br>Cleanup | Total              |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---|---|--|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Direct Costs              | Personnel*      | \$15,000                                      | \$5,000   | \$7,500  | \$7,500                            | \$35,000           |
|                           | Fringe Benefits | \$0   | \$0   | \$0  | \$0                                | \$0                |
|                           | Travel          | \$7,500                                       | \$0   | \$0  | \$0                                | \$7,500            |
|                           | Equipment       | \$0   | \$0   | \$0  | \$0                                | \$0                |
|                           | Supplies        | \$0   | \$2,500   | \$0  | \$0                                | \$2,500            |
|                           | Contractual     | \$35,000                                      | \$10,000  | \$185,000                                      | \$215,000                          | \$445,000          |
|                           | Construction    | \$0   | \$0   | \$3,510,000                                    | \$0                                | \$3,510,000        |
|                           | Other           | \$0   | \$0   | \$0  | \$0                                | \$0                |
| <b>Total Direct Costs</b> |                 | <b>\$57,500</b>                               | <b>\$17,500</b>                                 | <b>\$3,702,500</b>                             | <b>\$222,500</b>                   | <b>\$4,000,000</b> |
| Indirect Costs            |                 | \$0   | \$0   | \$0  | \$0                                | \$0                |
| <b>Total Budget</b>       |                 | <b>\$57,500</b>                               | <b>\$17,500</b>                                 | <b>\$3,702,500</b>                             | <b>\$222,500</b>                   | <b>\$4,000,000</b> |

\* Note: the Town anticipates it will provide in-kind support for cleanup oversight to provide overall costs savings to the cleanup project to benefit the community. The total administrative costs will not exceed 5% of the total grant award.

**Task 1: Cooperative Agreement Oversight: \$15,000** for Town personnel to oversee the program (300 hours @ \$50/hour); **\$7,500** travel total (\$2,750 airfare, \$2,500 hotel, \$2,250 per diem for one Town staff to attend two EPA National Conferences and two Regional Conferences/Meetings; and **\$35,000** contractual for QEP to assist the Town with cooperative agreement oversight and reporting (280 hours @ \$125/hour average). **Total Task 1 = \$57,500.**

**Task 2: Community Outreach and Engagement: \$5,000** for Town personnel to support community outreach (100 hours @ \$50/hour); **\$2,500** for supplies (five newspaper ads/press releases and five cleanup fact/information sheets @ \$250 each); and **\$10,000** contractual for QEP to assist the Town with public outreach efforts, deliverables, and public meetings (80 hours @ \$125/hour average). **Total Task 2 = \$17,500.**

**Task 3: Site-Specific Cleanup Activities: \$7,500** for Town personnel to facilitate site-specific cleanup activities (150 hours @ \$50/hour); **\$185,000** contractual for QEP to prepare final ABCA, RAP, SSQAPP, final design plans, specifications, bidding documents, procure/select cleanup contractor, final cleanup/reuse plans, permitting submittals and approvals, and project coordination/meetings with BAC, EPA, MEDEP, and contractors (1,480 hours @ \$125/hour average); **\$3,510,000** total estimated cleanup construction costs for (1) decommissioning/removal of four large asbestos-impacted boilers (4 boilers @ \$370,000 per boiler = \$1,480,000), (2) hazardous building materials abatement (removal of ACM, LBP, UWs = \$675,000 lump sum); (3) abatement, cleaning & decommissioning/removal of chemical silos (\$275,000 lump sum), (4) off-site disposal of hazardous wastes containers and construction wastes (\$105,000 lump sum); and (5) installation of engineered cap/cover systems over impacted soil (approximately 7 acres @ \$139,285 per acre = \$975,000). **Detailed Costs Per Unit are based on initial cleanup planning, preliminary ABCA, and QEP/contractor estimates. Total Task 3 = \$3,702,500.**

**Task 4: Oversee Site Cleanup: \$7,500** for Town personnel to oversee the site cleanup activities (150 hours @ \$50/hour) and **\$215,000** contractual for QEP to oversee the cleanup activities, perform necessary project monitoring and documentation, collect and analyze waste disposal and confirmatory samples, attend at least five project status meetings with BAC, and prepare remediation and grant closure reports (1,720 hours @ \$125/hour average). **Total Task 4 = \$222,500.**

**3.g. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results:** At the beginning of the project, the Town and QEP will set realistic milestones and schedules for cleanup work, deliverables, and community engagement events and create an electronic matrix (Microsoft Excel spreadsheet) of tasks, target dates, and financial expenditures. We will meet at least biweekly to track grant/project progress and review the status of site work and deliverables, overall budget, community comments/input, and funds both expended and remaining. Information on the project progress and budget will be recorded in Quarterly ACRES Reports. We will also track ongoing outcomes including reduction of environmental risks; volume of soil and acres of land cleaned up; number of jobs created; amount of leveraged cleanup and redevelopment funds; **meeting one or more of the 5 Pillars of EPA's Powering the Great American Comeback Initiative (e.g., Clean Air, Land, and Water for Every American)**, and other leveraged or environmental & economic outcomes. The outputs and outcomes will be reviewed and revised regularly in conjunction with regional EPA and MEDEP staff to ensure the project is successful.

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### **(4) PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY & PAST PERFORMANCE**

#### **Programmatic Capability**

##### **4.a. - 4.b. Organizational Structure & Description of Key Staff:**

East Millinocket's Board of Selectmen is comprised of five members having experience with town management, economic development, active with a variety of local community boards, business owners, and financial institutions. The Board will be involved with approving expenditures and support programmatic and community engagement efforts. The Board and former Chair, Michael Michaud, has been successfully managing and overseeing all aspects the Town's current FY23 Community-Wide Brownfields Assessment Grant and FY25 Cleanup Grant. The East Millinocket Industrial (EMI) Board, who manages the day-to-day operations and oversight of redevelopment of the GNP site, will also have an active role. EMI Board is currently comprised of five members, which include a former U.S. Congressman and former Town Selectboard Chair, Michael Michaud, former GNP employees with extensive knowledge regarding various aspects of the GNP mill site, and active members of many community boards.

The overall grant will be managed by Michael Michaud, member of the East Millinocket Selectboard, with Denise Gibbs serving as Town Administrator/Treasurer. As Town Administrator, Denise supports the selectmen and oversees administrative tasks, general assistance programs, and other town functions. She currently manages finances for the Brownfields program and will continue to ensure timely fund expenditure and project completion within the 4-year performance period. Additionally, East Millinocket has procedures in place to handle staff transitions smoothly, ensuring continuity and minimizing impacts on the project.

##### **4.c. Acquiring Additional Resources:**

East Millinocket will procure a QEP in accordance with federal procurement requirements, which will include a fair and open competitive bid process and a qualification and cost-based selection process. The Town follows Federal Procurement procedures, when appropriate, and uses a purchase policy to govern day-to-day operations along with the federal procurement requirements for federal funding including EPA Brownfields funding. If additional professional services, such as other engineering, planning, and/or legal services are needed to support this grant, we will procure those services as well through an open and fair competitive selection process in accordance with federal procurement regulations and appropriate micro-purchase procedures and requirements (2 CFR Part 200, 2 CFR Part 1500, 40 CFR Part 33, and as provided in EPA guidance and other applicable state and federal laws). At this time, we do not anticipate needing other significant resources, beyond those noted herein, to assist with the oversight and completion of the cleanup grant.

#### **Past Performance and Accomplishments**

##### **4.d. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant:**

(1) **Accomplishments:** The Town received a \$500,000 FY23 Brownfields Assessment Grant (BF00A01159) and a \$4M FY25 Brownfields Cleanup Grant (4B00A01955). The Town has a successful track record of managing these Brownfields funds. The Town has completed all quarterly reports and updated information in ACRES related to the current grants. The assessments cover 4 sites within the former GNP mill property, 1 site outside the mill area, as well as a mill-wide infrastructure study and Environmental Assessment under the National Environmental Policy Act to support reuse planning of the mill property. The outputs of the grant include three QAPPs, one Hazardous Materials Inventory & Hazardous Building Materials Survey (HBMS), one Phase II ESA & HBMS, two draft ABCAs, infrastructure study, structural study, and cleanup and reuse planning for 2 cleanup proposed sites. Importantly, these grants have provided funding for assessment and cleanup at GNP Mill, positioning the property for additional cleanup and redevelopment made possible by this cleanup grant; therefore, this cleanup grant must be secured to continue our forward progress in the target area.

(2) **Compliance with Grant Requirements:** The Town has successfully completed all required reporting obligations for its current FY23 Assessment Grant and FY25 Cleanup Grant, including quarterly reports and ACRES updates. The Town has complied with the workplans and terms and conditions the current grant and ACRES updating and quarterly reporting for the grant is ongoing. The Town, QEP, and our EPA Project Officer meet periodically to discuss grant compliance and progress. The FY23 Assessment Grant is open with \$103,984.55 in remaining funds (approximately 80% expended as of 10/1/25). Remaining FY23 assessment funds will be spent on cleanup planning and supplemental assessment for ongoing cleanup sites, as necessary, as well as an ongoing infrastructure study of the GNP mill property to support reuse planning, and 1 to 2 Phase I and/or Phase II ESAs within the community. We expect to expend the FY23 remaining funds by end of 2026, well before the end of the grant period, demonstrating the ongoing need for additional assessment and cleanup funds along with our capacity to perform. The FY25 Cleanup Grant was recently initiated in the Fall 2025 (0% expended as of 10/1/25), with most of the cleanup funds to be used for final cleanup planning and proposed eligible cleanup activities for the designated Fuel Storage Area-West and Wood Lot Area-West cleanup sites. The Town procured a QEP and has started final cleanup planning and community outreach activities.

## ***Threshold Criteria for FY26 Cleanup Grants***

### **(1) Applicant Eligibility**

- a. The Town of East Millinocket (Town) is a municipality (General Purpose Unit of Local Government) eligible to apply for Brownfields Cleanup funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields Grant Program.
- b. Not Applicable – The Town of East Millinocket is not a 501(c)(4) entity.

### **(2) Previously Awarded Cleanup Grants**

The proposed cleanup site has not received funding from a previously awarded EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant.

### **(3) Expenditure of Existing Multipurpose Grant Funds**

The Town has not been awarded an EPA Brownfields Multipurpose Grant.

### **(4) Site Ownership**

The Town is the current owner of the proposed cleanup site located within the former Great Northern Paper Mill parcel. The Town acquired the parcel on July 21, 2020, as recorded in the Penobscot County Registry of Deeds in Book 15617, Page 51.

### **(5) Basic Site Information**

- a) Western and Eastern Main Mill Areas – South, Former Great Northern Paper Mill
- b) 50 Main Street, East Millinocket, ME 04430

### **(6) Status and History of Contamination at the Site**

- a) The site is contaminated by hazardous substances (comingled hazardous substances with limited petroleum contamination).
- b) Comprising approximately 14 acres of the former GNP Mill property, the southern portions of the Western and Eastern Main Mill Areas encompass the Old Boiler House, Old Water Treatment Building, Plant Protection Building, remaining portions of the partially demolished Grinder Building, Original Train Shed, Mill Offices, No. 5 & 6 Finishing Room, Hydro-pulper building, a secondary train shed, and the sulphite and groundwood materials and chemical storage silos. The Penobscot River is located immediately to the south of the cleanup site.

Together, the cleanup site for southern portions of the Western and Eastern Main Mill Areas comprises most of the oldest remaining main mill buildings, structures, and operations for the former GNP Mill. These original structures typically consisted of brick buildings, which were constructed in the early 1900s, prior to which, this portion of the mill consisted of undeveloped land. Paper manufacturing operations occurred within this area until mill operations ceased in 2014, subsequent to which several structures were completely and/or partially demolished, including a portion of the Grinder Room in the southern portion of the Western Main Mill Area (a portion of the Grinder Room remains due to an existing electrical cable tray that connects to the adjoining hydroelectric plant), No. 1-4 Finishing Building, Grinder Roll and Machine Shop Building, No. 1-4 Paper Machine Building, No. 5 & 6 Paper Machine Building, No. 7 Screen Room Building, Sulphite Plant, a second groundwood silo, and the broke storage silo in the southern part of the Eastern Main Mill Area. **These area of the proposed cleanup site at the former GNP Mill are currently vacant and cannot be redeveloped without significant cleanup and remedial actions, per requirements of the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MEDEP) VRAP.**

## **Threshold Criteria for FY26 Cleanup Grants**

- c) Previous reports identified various containers of hazardous materials within the Site buildings including drums containing unknown quantities of liquid located in the southwest corner of the oil boiler house, one petroleum aboveground storage tank (AST) observed within the boiler building, and several transformers around the exterior areas of the boiler buildings. Floor drains with significant staining were also observed.

Several chemical spills have been reported and documented at the subject cleanup site including Polychlorinated Biphenyl (PCB) releases and subsequent identified soil contamination that was reported at the No. 5 & 6 Paper Machine and Finishing Buildings. Unidentified black staining appeared to originate on the second floor of the former No. 5 & 6 Finishing Building and was observed on the exterior extending to the ground surface, likely attributed to the reported spill from the transformer in 1981 mentioned above. Chemical staining was also observed throughout many of the remaining main mill buildings and structures. Due to the long history and operational use as a paper mill, undocumented and/or unknown spills may also have occurred at the Site. Based on the age of the buildings and structures, significant amounts of hazardous building materials (e.g., asbestos, lead-based paint, and universal wastes) are present, which need to be properly abated prior to or during future renovation and/or demolition of the site structures for redevelopment. Furthermore, the Old Boiler Building contains 4 large boilers that are impacted with asbestos insulation materials.

- d) Housekeeping practices and environmental regulations were not at today's standards during most of the historical mill operations and impacts from hazardous chemicals and petroleum products within the main mill manufacturing areas are the result of improper handling, spills, and leakage of hazardous chemicals, petroleum, and fuels during the active mill operations. A spill of approximately 600 gallons of Askarel fluid from a transformer at the southeastern corner of the No. 6 Paper Machine building occurred on January 3, 1978. Another spill of approximately 150 gallons of Askarel fluid occurred from a transformer at the northwestern corner of the No. 5 Paper Machine Building on May 14, 1981, the result of an electrical failure.

The results of previous subsurface investigations completed at the site indicated that PCB contamination in soil was found as deep as 18 to 20 feet (approaching the top of bedrock) adjacent to the southeastern corner of the former No. 6 paper machine building and the northwestern corner of the No. 5 paper machine building. At the time of the spills, limited impacted soils were excavated and disposed of off-site; however, residual contaminated soils with PCB concentrations less than 50 parts per million (ppm) were left in place and remain adjacent to these building foundations.

Previous subsurface investigations also identified fill materials ranging in depths from ground surface to over 10 to 15 feet below ground surface in the areas immediately surrounding the old main mill buildings. In addition to PCBs, previous subsurface investigations have identified soil and groundwater impacts including concentrations of comingled heavy metals, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), petroleum, and semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs)/polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) above Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MEDEP) Remedial Action Guidelines (RAGs) adjacent to the former main mill buildings. The identified soil and groundwater contamination are the result of former manufacturing mill operations, handling and storage of hazardous substances/chemicals, documented/undocumented spills, and fill materials utilized to construct the site buildings and mill structures, as well as historical atmospheric deposition associated with the mill's combustion boilers. In accordance with the MEDEP Voluntary Response Action Program (VRAP), disturbance of soils and redevelopment within the main mill area is currently prohibited without the completion of additional cleanup and remedial actions to facilitate future site redevelopment.

The results of hazardous building material surveys (HBMSs) completed for the remaining buildings on the subject site identified asbestos-containing materials including boiler refractory linings, lagging, pipe insulation, duct and tank jacketing and gaskets, floor tile, wall panel adhesive, asbestos-cement components within electrical panels, window glazing, window/door caulking, roof/curb/penetration flashings, curb flashing sealant, linoleum flooring, black mastic, tar paper, walking mats, roofing material, and thermal system insulation (TSI). Presumed positive asbestos include TSI previously marked as positive with a red band in the lower level of the main office building and material inside the negative air machines and the HEPA vacuums within the basement

## ***Threshold Criteria for FY26 Cleanup Grants***

of the plant/fire protection building. Additionally, PCBs were detected in caulking and glazing materials collected throughout the main mill buildings.

A waste inventory of hazardous substances was also completed for the Old Boiler House and the Old Water Treatment Building, which identified additional hazardous substances requiring removal, including oils and potentially containing mercury equipment, among other remaining hazardous chemical containers.

### **(7) Brownfield Site Definition**

The Town affirms that the cleanup site is a) not listed or proposed for listing on the National Priorities List; b) not subject to unilateral administrative orders, court orders, administrative orders on consent, or judicial consent decrees issued to or entered into by parties under CERCLA; and c) not subject to the jurisdiction, custody, or control of the U.S. government.

### **(8) Environmental Assessment Required for Cleanup Grant Application**

Multiple environmental assessments, subsurface investigations (equivalent Phase II ESAs), Hazardous Building Materials Surveys, and remedial action plans, have been completed for the site between 1988 and 2025. Specifically, the following Phase II ESAs or equivalent reports have been prepared for the site:

- Report of PCB Assessment, Cleanup Activities and Groundwater Monitoring, East Millinocket Mill, Stone & Webster Engineering Corporation, March 1991;
- Geology Report for the Mini Site Inspection of the Great Northern Paper, Mill #2, East Millinocket, Maine prepared by Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MEDEP), September 27, 2001;
- Asbestos Renovation/Demolition Impact Survey, Environmental Management Inc. (EMI), 2015;
- PCB Assessment and Remediation Memo, Former Great Northern Paper Company Site, East Millinocket, Tetra Tech, June 6, 2018;
- Hazardous Substances Inventory & Disposal Estimating, Steam Plant and Boiler Buildings, Ransom, April 10, 2020;
- Needs Assessment & Preliminary Scope of Work, Phase II ESA, Priority Development Areas, Former GNP East Millinocket Mill, prepared by Ransom, May 28, 2020;
- Annual Groundwater Monitoring Reports, Former Great Northern Paper Company East Millinocket Operations, Tetra Tech, December 2017, December 2018, December 2019, and December 2020;
- Environmental Media Management Plan (EMMP), Great Northern Paper, East Millinocket, Maine, prepared by Campbell Environmental Group, May 2023; and
- Limited Asbestos, Polychlorinated Biphenyl, Lead Based Paint, and Other Hazardous Materials Survey Report, TRC, June 11, 2025;

### **(9) Site Characterization**

The cleanup site is enrolled in the MEDEP Voluntary Response Action Program (VRAP). Please see the attached letter from MEDEP (***Attachment A*** to Threshold Criteria).

### **(10) Enforcement or Other Actions**

Due to documented spills of PCBs in 1978 and 1981 at the Great Northern Paper Mill site, an Administrative Consent Agreement and Enforcement Order (ACAE) was issued by MEDEP to GNP in August 1988, which included hazardous waste storage violations and PCB contamination identified in the soil. The PCB-impacted soils were subsequently remediated by GNP between July 1989 and January 1991 and a Report of PCB Assessment, Cleanup Activities and Groundwater Monitoring, East Millinocket Mill was completed on behalf of GNP by Stone & Webster

## **Threshold Criteria for FY26 Cleanup Grants**

Engineering Corporation in March 1991. A Consent Agreement and Final Order (CAFO), Great Northern Nekoosa Corporation [**Currently Georgia Pacific**], EPA Docket No. TSCA-I-87-1041, USEPA, dated September 27, 1991, was subsequently issued for the long-term monitoring of groundwater at the site by GNP/Great Northern Nekoosa Corporation [**Currently Georgia Pacific**]. In addition, the MEDEP VRAP issued a No Action Assurance Letter – Certificate of Completion for the PCB Spills, Bark Pile, and Old Construction Fill Area on April 24, 2003.

Through prior business acquisitions of the former paper mill, Georgia Pacific is currently the responsible party for the historical PCB spills in 1978 and 1981 and is responsible for the long-term groundwater monitoring required by the EPA Consent Agreement and Final Order.

The Town of East Millinocket is not a responsible party, and the Town affirms that there are no other known ongoing or anticipated environmental enforcement or other actions related to the site for which Brownfields Grant funding is sought.

### **(11) Sites Requiring a Property-Specific Determination**

Not Applicable. The cleanup site does not require a property-specific determination.

### **(12) Threshold Criteria Related to CERCLA/Petroleum Liability**

The site is co-mingled with hazardous substances and limited petroleum contaminants. However, the predominant contaminants are hazardous substances.

#### **a. Property Ownership Eligibility – Hazardous Substances Sites**

##### **iii. Landowner Protections from CERCLA Liability**

##### **(1) Bona Fide Prospective Purchaser Liability Protection**

###### **(a) Information on the Property Acquisition**

The Town is the current owner of the proposed cleanup site at the GNP Mill. The Town acquired the GNP Mill parcel on July 21, 2020, as recorded in the Penobscot County Registry of Deeds in Book 15617, Page 51. The Town holds fee simple title of the cleanup site as part of the GNP property. The previous owner was Katahdin KI 50 LLC, a Maine limited liability company. The Town has no relationships or affiliations with any prior owners or operators, including Katahdin KI 50 LLC.

###### **(b) Pre-Purchase Inquiry**

On behalf of the Town, Ransom Consulting, LLC (Ransom) completed a Phase I ESA compliant with ASTM E1527-21 and AAI on February 13, 2020. Mr. Eriksen Phenix, CG, and Mr. Peter Sherr, PE, of Ransom performed the Phase I ESA. Mr. Phenix, who had over 15 years of experience at the time of the Phase I ESA report, holds a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree in Environmental Science from The Evergreen State College (1996) and has held a Certified Geologist's license since 2009. Mr. Sherr, who had over 30 years of experience at the time of the Phase I ESA report, holds a B.S. in Chemical Engineering from the University of Maine (1990) and a Professional Engineer's license in Maine. Both Mr. Phenix and Mr. Sherr meet the definition of an environmental professional as defined in §312.10 of 40 CFR 312.

###### **(c) Timing and/or Contribution Towards Hazardous Substances Disposal**

All disposal of hazardous substances at the site occurred before the Town acquired the property. The Town did not cause or contribute to any release of hazardous substances at the site. The Town affirms that it has not, at any time, arranged for the disposal of hazardous substances at the site or transported hazardous substances to the site.

## **Threshold Criteria for FY26 Cleanup Grants**

### **(d) Post-Acquisition Uses**

The Town has not used or operated the cleanup site since acquisition. The site is vacant and unoccupied. The Town has no relationship to the prior users.

### **(e) Continuing Obligations**

The Town is not aware of any continuing releases at the site. The Town has secured the site to prevent any threatened future release and prevent access to previously released hazardous substances. The Town regularly conducts inspections of the site to monitor conditions, and we comply with local and state requirements. The Town affirms its commitment to comply with any land use restrictions and not impede the effectiveness or integrity of any institutional controls; assist and cooperate with those performing the cleanup and provide access to the property; comply with all information requests and administrative subpoenas that have or may have been issued in connection with the property; and provide all legally required notices.

## **(13) Cleanup Authority and Oversight Structure**

- a. The Town will contract with a qualified environmental professional (QEP) to conduct, manage, and oversee the cleanup. The Town will use municipal and federal guidelines for procurement and a qualification and cost-based competitive bid process. The Town will evaluate potential QEPs' knowledge/ability/experience with local Brownfields programs/grants in Maine, EPA requirements, applicable laws/regulations, reuse/cleanup work, redevelopment/financing, and community outreach, with a focus on firms with a proven equitable track record and strong labor practices. Our procurement process will be conducted in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200, 2 CFR Part 1500, 40 CFR Part 33, and as provided in EPA guidance and other applicable state and federal laws. The Town's legal counsel is experienced with Brownfields and environmental regulations and will assist with document review/ consultation. The QEP will be under contract prior to beginning the cleanup activities.

At the beginning of the project, the Town and QEP will set realistic milestones and a schedule for site work, deliverables, and community engagement events. The QEP will be on-site during all site work to document activities and ensure compliance with the cleanup plan and all relevant local, state, and federal regulations. The Town and QEP will meet at least monthly to track grant/project progress and review the status of site work and deliverables, overall budget, community comments/input, and funds expended/remaining. The Town and QEP will continually track, measure, and evaluate the project progress and review conversations with stakeholders (including community members). Information on the project progress and budget will be recorded in Quarterly Reports and in ACRES. We will provide regular updates to EPA and MEDEP.

The site has been enrolled in MEDEP's Voluntary Response Action Program (VRAP). The Town will engage with MEDEP and EPA to ensure that the cleanup is protective of human health and the environment.

- b. The Town may require access to adjacent properties to perform confirmation sampling of soil, groundwater, or air. The Town plans to conduct air monitoring during cleanup. The majority of the properties located adjacent to the site are municipally owned and therefore accessible by the Town and our QEP to conduct the sampling and monitoring. If access to other properties is required for this purpose, the Town and its attorneys will work with the owners to secure access agreements. We will hold discussions with the owners and provide fact sheets and data to convey information about the cleanup and results of the sampling/monitoring. This information will also be provided in public meetings and notices.

## **(14) Community Notification**

### **a. Draft Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives**

As described below, the community was provided with an opportunity to review and comment on the draft Brownfields cleanup application, which included a draft Preliminary Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives

## **Threshold Criteria for FY26 Cleanup Grants**

(ABCA) in accordance with the template provided by EPA for cleanup grant applications. The draft Preliminary ABCA is included in **Attachment B** of this Threshold Criteria).

### **b. Community Notification Ad**

The Town published a community notification ad in the Lincoln News/Katahdin Region News, a local newspaper, on Thursday, January 8, 2026. The ad clearly states that a copy of the grant application, including the draft ABCA is available for public review and comment; how to comment on the draft application; where the draft application is located; and the date, time, and location of the public meeting. A copy of the newspaper ad is included in **Attachment B** of this Threshold Criteria).

### **c. Public Meeting**

The Town held a public meeting to discuss the draft application on January 21, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. at the local Katahdin Higher Education Center, One Dirigo Drive, East Millinocket, Maine. The Town makes all meetings accessible to persons with limited English proficiency and persons with disabilities by advertising the Maine Relay service, which includes TYY. A combined summary of the public comments received, responses to comments, and the meeting notes are attached, in addition to a copy of the meeting sign-in sheet (**Attachment B** of this Threshold Criteria).

### **d. Submission of Community Notification Documents**

The following documents are attached (**Attachment B** of Threshold Criteria):

- Draft ABCAs (dated January 2026)
- Copy of the newspaper ad (published January 8, 2026)
- Summary of Public Comments, Responses, and Meeting Notes from the January 21, 2026 public meeting
- Meeting sign-in sheet from the January 21, 2026 public meeting

## **(15) Contractors and Named Subrecipients**

- **Contractors**: Not applicable.
- **Subrecipients**: Not applicable.

## **Attachments:**

Attachment A - MEDEP Letter (dated January 7, 2026)

Attachment B - Community Notification Documentation