



BANGOR DAILY NEWS

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Developer wants to open biorefinery in Millinocket

by **Christopher Burns**
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Cyclists ride along Penobscot Avenue in downtown Millinocket on July 13, 2023. Credit: Linda Coan O'Kresik / BDN

A developer wants to open a biofinery at the former paper mill site in Millinocket.

Castlerock Biofuels announced Thursday morning that it selected the former Great Northern Paper mill site for a facility where it will produce up to 20 million gallons of biocrude annually. It would be operated by its subsidiary EME Biofuels.

“We are thrilled to bring this project to Millinocket, a community with deep roots in the forestry industry and a strong vision for economic renewal,” John Murphy, CEO of Castlerock Biofuels, said in a statement. “This facility will not only create high-quality jobs but also support sustainable forest management and position Maine as a leader in renewable fuel production.”

Castlerock Biofuels selected the former Great Northern Paper mill campus because of its rail and hydropower access and proximity to working forests, where it can source logging residue.

The biocrude will be sold to large clients like universities and hospitals. Castlerock Biofuels said that the biocrude’s emissions are 92 percent lower than petroleum-based heating oil and natural gas.

Castlerock Biofuels is working to get necessary permits before it begins construction. It hopes to begin production in 2027.

The facility would create up to 150 construction jobs. Once it’s up and running, it would employ 80 full-time workers and support another 92 jobs in the forest products and transportation industries.

Sean Dewitt, president of Our Katahdin, the Millinocket-based nonprofit organization that owns and operates the former mill site, called the biorefinery a “transformative opportunity” for the Katahdin region.

“By locating on our former paper mill site, Castlerock is generating tax revenue and creating jobs onsite and in the woods while honoring our rich forest products legacy and pioneering the next generation of sustainable forest products. It’s a perfect blend of our proud history and our hopeful future,” DeWitt said.

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