



USDA Rural Development

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News Release

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USDA RD State Director Waring, NH Congresswoman Kuster to Highlight Clean Energy, Economic Development in Coos County

Site Visits Include White Mountains High School in Whitefield for LED Retrofit, Parker J. Noyes Building in Lancaster for Downtown Revitalization

WHITEFIELD, Feb. 24, 2022 – Today, [USDA Rural Development \(RD\)](#) State Director Sarah Waring is meeting with New Hampshire Congresswoman Ann McLane Kuster to celebrate two innovative economic-development projects in Coos County: [White Mountains High School](#) in Whitefield underwent an LED lighting retrofit that was initiated by students, and the [Parker J. Noyes building](#) in downtown Lancaster is being converted to a mixed-use structure, with six new apartments occupying the upper levels and a community food hub below.

RD helped fund the White Mountains High School lighting project through a \$36,900 [Community Facilities grant](#) and \$70,500 [Economic Impact Initiative Grant \(EIIG\)](#). Other partners and contributors include Eversource, Clean Energy New Hampshire and the White Mountains Regional School District. “During this crucial time in our history, the students, teachers and staff of White Mountains High School are showing us what climate-smart thinking can accomplish,” said Sarah Waring, State Director of USDA Rural Development in New Hampshire. “A two-phase climate action plan to reduce carbon emissions is an example of the innovative projects that USDA Rural Development is so eager to support. When the positive environmental impacts benefit both a community and school by decreasing costs and increasing educational opportunities, that’s what progress in the face of climate change looks like.”

In Lancaster, the Northern Forest Center funded and facilitated the renovation of the historic Parker J. Noyes building into a dual-purpose facility, combining new housing with food storage and distribution through the Taproot Farm and Environmental Education Center (TFEEC). A USDA [Rural Business Development Grant](#) for \$30,000 and two Community Facility grants totaling \$37,490 will purchase new freezers, coolers and equipment for TFEEC’s Root Seller Marketplace, which will occupy the first floor.

“This project exemplifies how a community can co-locate vital services, bring value to a rural economy and address challenges like food security at the same time,” said Waring.

“Congresswoman Kuster and organizations like the Northern Forest Center and Taproot Farm and Environmental Education Center play critical roles in our ability to direct funding where it makes the most difference and the biggest impacts. Communities need organizations to combine their efforts, bringing healthy local food and viable economic and community development to those who need it the most.”

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the leadership of the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate-smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.

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