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NH'S SOON-TO-BE LARGEST SKI MOUNTAIN, and a GONDOLA to GET THERE

New expert terrain, a proposed fourth peak and a planned lift across the Pemigewasset could reshape how people ski, visit and own property around Loon Mountain.

LINCOLN, NH – Loon Mountain made two announcements this fall, and together they describe a much bigger mountain than the one most skiers know. The first came in September. Black Ridge will add 272 acres of expert, in-bounds glades, with an opening planned for the 2027-28 season. Glade skiing is a completely different animal, and for the skiers who love it, the appeal is easy to explain. Black Ridge will also sit inside the resort's patrolled boundaries, so the adventure comes without the guesswork of heading into the backcountry.

It changes the scale of the place, too. With Black Ridge, Loon grows from 403 skiable acres to 675, an increase of about two-thirds, and becomes New Hampshire's largest ski resort by skiable acreage. On a busy holiday weekend, that extra room counts. Advanced skiers get a whole new area to themselves, which should open up more space on the rest of the mountain.



LINCOLN, NH– Now that RiverWalk at Loon has completed their own West Wing expansion, they now prepare for Loon Mountain's planned expansion project. Loon, RiverWalk Resort and South Peak have partnered on a planned pulse gondola across the Pemigewasset River, a first for New England. It would run from RiverWalk Resort to the expanded South Peak area. In practice, you would walk out of your suite at RiverWalk to the gondola, and hit the slopes.
Photo courtesy of RiverWalk at Loon Mountain

In addition, Loon followed a few weeks later with something even bigger: a proposed fourth peak, just west of the current South Peak expansion, overlooking downtown Lincoln. Where Black Ridge is designed for experts, this one is planned with a much wider range of skiers in mind. The concept includes 280 more skiable acres served by four aerial lifts, terrain for different abilities, and possibly summit dining and sightseeing. That would put skiing right above Main Street, with the option of lunch at the summit, looking back over town.

If both projects move forward, Loon would reach 955 skiable acres, more than double what it is today. At that size, a day at Loon starts to feel less like working through a familiar trail map and more like exploring a mountain you have not figured out yet. For now, the fourth peak is still a proposal. It needs environmental review and approvals, and Loon has not announced an opening date.

For families who come back to Lincoln every winter, more terrain is the obvious headline. It means new parts of the mountain to show the kids and a good excuse to stay an extra day. The change that may matter more day to day, though, is happening at the bottom of the mountain, where Loon and downtown are starting to connect.

Loon, RiverWalk Resort and South Peak have partnered on a planned pulse gondola across the Pemigewasset River, a first for New England. It would run from RiverWalk Resort to the expanded South Peak area near the Timbertown Quad. In practice, you would walk out of your suite at RiverWalk to the gondola, and go skiing without loading anything into the car. When you are done, the resort spa, winery and on-site dining are all right there, along with dinner on Main Street and all the amenities of one of New England's most popular ski towns. For many visitors, the car could stay parked all weekend. Add to that the plans for a walkable South Peak village with dining, shops and activities of its own, right at the base of the mountain, and the area starts to feel like the ideal second-home location for anyone looking for a mountain retreat.

While many die-hard skiers and boarders visit primarily in the winter, the area is a true four-season destination and a Mecca for hiking, mountain biking, fall foliage and almost unlimited scenic views. The vibe of an active outdoor lifestyle is strong, and the town has enough restaurants, breweries and shops to fill the hours in between. Whether it is February or August, there is a long list of reasons to be there, and none of them actually depends on the new terrain.

All this is why the second-home market in the area has exploded in recent years. The "early adopters" who purchased at RiverWalk, or other new developments in the area, may be well positioned to reap the benefits of early investment once the full vision of this premier resort destination becomes a reality. With this much work underway and the possibility of a much larger mountain and base village on the horizon, the opportunity remains for those wanting to secure their dream mountainside retreat before the expansion plans kick into high gear.

Ask people why they keep a place in the mountains, and the first answers are usually small ones: first chair on a powder morning, or après-ski at their favorite local hangout. Keep digging, though, and the answer turns out to be the time they spend together, doing what they love with the people they love. That is how a weekend becomes a tradition, and those traditions are why people seek out places like this. Whether you are a day-tripper or an owner, the next few years in Lincoln are worth watching closely.

Please view, read and share this page at: www.skiernews.com/East2027-Lincoln2.pdf

For more, please listen to the RiverWalk at Loon Mountain podcast episode, easily found via a link on the East Section label at: www.AlwaysUpright.com

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