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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Northern Border Regional Commission Announces 2021 Regional Forest Economy Partnership Grant Round

The Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) is pleased to announce the 2021 Regional Forest Economy Partnership (RFEP) grant application opportunity. Eligible organizations, which include nonprofit and governmental entities (state, local & Indian tribes), will be able to access grant application details (available via NBRC's website, [nbrc.gov](http://nbrc.gov)) beginning today, July 12<sup>th</sup>. Total funding available for the program is \$4 Million, with a maximum award of \$1 Million, and a minimum award of \$250,000.

Potential applicants must express interest through Letters of Interest, which must be submitted by September 10<sup>th</sup> at 5PM. Letters of Interest will be evaluated by a 9-member Advisory Board, consisting of representatives from each of the four NBRC states. The Advisory Board will determine which applicants will be invited to submit a full application, which will be due November 12<sup>th</sup>, with anticipation of awards in January, 2022.

The program will span two funding threads, which may or may not be considered mutually exclusive for purposes of a proposal:

1. New technology and innovations that seek to find new uses for forest products and evolve traditional forest economy business models into those that can create sustainable future commercial markets and opportunities. This category includes research & development at Higher Education institutions, and/or entities such as the Northeastern States Research Cooperative (NSRC), or State, Regional or municipal-based research divisions and departments.

**Examples include, but are not limited to:**

- Production of wood-based heating products
  - Production of "Mass Timber" products (e.g., Cross-laminated timber)
  - Existing industry upgrades or transitions to more sustainable forest products
2. Workforce re-training and development for the purpose of building the skills needed for forest industry businesses.

**Examples include but are not limited to:**

- Establish training and re-training programs to support workforce development
- Coordination of collaborative efforts to identify strategic opportunities for economic investment supporting the redevelopment for former mill sites and communities

- Development of targeted workforce programs to support identified employers' needs for a skilled workforce

"This year's RFEP will build on past investments to encourage continued innovation in the forest-based industry," said NBRC Executive Director Rich Grogan. He added, "Our region is full of great ideas and new approaches that we are eager to support."

For those considering applications in 2021, please contact NBRC Program Director Andrea Smith, and the NBRC Program Managers in the State(s) where the proposed project will take place. Both will be happy to assist you as you develop your projects and applications:

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***About the Northern Border Regional Commission ([www.nbrc.gov](http://www.nbrc.gov))***

*Created in 2008, the Northern Border Regional Commission is a federal-state partnership whose mission is to help alleviate economic distress and encourage private sector job creation in Maine, New Hampshire, New York, and Vermont. In its twelve-year history, the Commission has awarded 287 grants amounting to more than \$72 Million across the four states through its primary Economic & Infrastructure Development (EID) grant program and other special initiatives.*