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February 3, 2022
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Northern Border Regional Commission Announces Latest Regional Forest Economy Partnership Awards

The Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) approved \$1 Million in new awards to 2 projects on January 13, 2022, as part of the Regional Forest Economy Partnership (RFEP). The organizations receiving these awards are:

- **University of Maine – \$361,651 (ME):** Launch of a knowledge center at the University of Maine to purchase equipment to support fiber thermoforming with wood fiber.
- **Town of Lincoln – \$638,349 (ME):** Construction of the Lincoln Lakes Innovation Center, a workforce development center which aims to produce a skilled and versatile workforce for the forest industry.

The RFEP program was created to focus on innovative regional approaches to address the decline in forest-based economies. The funds for this program, and all NBRC programs, are available thanks to the support of the Congressional Delegations of all four NBRC states: Maine, New Hampshire, New York, and Vermont.

The application process for the RFEP program began in summer, 2021, with a review of Letters of Interest by an external Advisory Board, leading to requests for full applications in fall, 2021. Applications were scored on a range of variables, including their regional scope, potential for transformative change, and ability to implement.

“The NBRC is excited to work with this year’s awardees in the State of Maine,” said NBRC Executive Director, Rich Grogan. He added: “These projects are emblematic of the innovative approaches we hope to continue to fund in this sector.”

The RFEP program will continue in 2022, and the NBRC anticipates making additional awards in New Hampshire, New York, and Vermont. Please refer to the NBRC’s website, www.nbrc.gov, for additional announcements about the RFEP program, and other funding opportunities.

About the Northern Border Regional Commission (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 thirteen-year history, including these new awards, the commission has awarded 331 grants, amounting to more than \$90.6 million in direct investment and \$296 million in additional leveraged investments, across the four states through its primary State Economic & Infrastructure Development (SEID) grant program and other special initiatives.