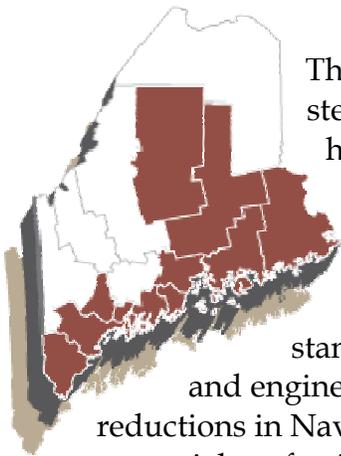


## Coastal Maine – The North Star Alliance



The economy of Coastal Maine stands at a critical crossroads. The steady loss of traditional, resource-based manufacturing industries has eliminated jobs across a broad band of worker skill levels.

This regional decline recently accelerated due to shifting federal defense priorities. The imminent closure of Brunswick Naval Air Station will result in a loss of nearly 5,000 jobs and \$135 million in annual earnings. Nearby, Bath Iron Works, a long-standing defense contractor employing highly skilled ship builders and engineers, recently reduced their workforce by over 1,100 due to reductions in Navy contracts. From shop-floor workers to technical and managerial professionals, opportunities for employment with a good salary and pathways for growth and career development are diminishing for residents of coastal Maine.

Recognizing the realities of this changing regional economy, Governor John Baldacci has established the North Star Alliance. This revolutionary industry-led collaborative synthesizes business, R&D, education, workforce, and economic development resources to re-skill a workforce and launches a new regional economy. Seizing on recent R&D triumphs in composite and advanced material technologies, the North Star Alliance will embark on a multi-faceted approach to leverage these successes across a wide range of industries including boat building, marine and waterfront infrastructure, building products, sporting goods products, ballistic armor, and a multitude of marine-related services and support industries. Referred to as the Four Pillars of Economic Development, this strategy focuses on building capacity and addressing gaps in: 1) Workforce Development, 2) Research and Development, 3) Market Development, and 4) Capitalization and Infrastructure Development. The North Star Alliance will address needs identified by regional industries as critical to their growth and expansion. By utilizing advancements within each of these strategic pillars concurrently and in close coordination, the alliance will achieve dramatic success:

- Workforce Development – In response to industry requirements, the North Star Alliance will develop and deliver just-in-time applied knowledge and skills to an incumbent and new workforce, utilizing faculty jointly sponsored by industry and education and space within Maine’s businesses, secondary schools, adult education centers, community colleges, and university systems.
- Research and Development – The North Star Alliance will identify and prioritize new industry-based research initiatives, leveraging existing R&D resources and increasing Maine’s industry-focused R&D workforce.



- Market Development – The alliance will seize on and expand new market development initiatives within the boat building and composites industries, extending the reach of Maine Brand products into the global economy.
- Capitalization and Infrastructure Development – Under the leadership of the Department of Community and Economic Development, philanthropic and investment partners throughout the state will be convened to develop strategies that will provide capital for: business and industry growth, facility improvement and expansion, and the acquisition of supplies needed for training and manufacturing.

The North Star Alliance centers on three major industry associations: the Maine Composites Alliance, Maine Built Boats Inc, and the Maine Marine Trade Association, jointly representing over 285 companies across a wide range of manufacturing and service industries. Additional members include the University of Maine, the Maine Community College System, the Maine Technology Institute, Eastern Maine Development Corporation, the Maine Community Foundation, local and regional Workforce Investment Boards, the Governor’s Office, and the State Departments of Labor, Economic and Community Development, and Education. Over \$21 million in leveraged resources is brought to this project from these and other partners.

This project will cover Maine’s Coastal Region, emanating from Brunswick, encompassing the coast from Kennebunkport to Calais and extending inland to Lewiston, Greenville, and Orono. The region covers 11 of Maine’s 16 counties.

The industries participating in this project include a vast range of enterprises that make-up or support the Marine Trades and those that utilize advanced composite materials, comprised of: boat building, marine/waterfront infrastructure, marine service and repair, building products, sporting goods, ballistic armor, and more.

