

## FAQs: Maine's Marine Economy Initiative

April 2020

**What is the goal of the initiative?** To achieve the shared goal of a vibrant, innovative and resilient marine economy that sustains and grows quality jobs and industries in Maine - transitioning our heritage seafood economy into a modern engine for sustainable economic and job growth.

The effort is driven by industry leaders and committed partners in Maine's marine economy, and modeled after the forestry industry sector-wide initiative, FOR/Maine.

**What is EDA or what is the opportunity?** The federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) supports initiatives that lead to the creation and retention of jobs, increased investment, innovation, workforce development opportunities, and enhanced regional capacity. The focus is to build on regional assets that spur economic growth, investment, job creation, and resiliency including creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities and strengthening Maine's preparedness for economic and severe-weather related disruptions.

**Who is the grant recipient?** The grant is being awarded to MTI and FocusMaine, the co-applicants.

**How much is the grant?** The total project amount is \$2.5M over 3 years, including a \$2.0M contribution from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce, and a match of \$500,000 from project partners. Matching funds will be provided by the co-applicants, MTI and FocusMaine, as well as the Maine Aquaculture Innovation Center and industry partners.

**What are the areas of focus?** Efforts to address vulnerabilities in Maine marine economy include 4 priority areas:

- Marine Resources and Benchmarking: Resource assessment and targets for economic growth and impact.
- Workforce and Talent Development: Current and future workforce needs and an action plan to sustain and grow the workforce.
- Market Development: Opportunities for business expansion and creation, and increasing the competitiveness of Maine's marine economy in broader markets.
- New Opportunities and Emerging Technologies: Innovation on the forefront of the marine economy that increases commercialization, business development, and job creation.

**Who is leading the effort?**

- The effort is led by a steering committee, co-chaired by industry leaders Bill Mook, Mook Sea Farms, and Curt Brown, Ready Seafood.
- Additional members of the Steering Committee include broad representation from industry, project applicants, and other organizations that bring relevant expertise.
- Project management support will be provided through an open and competitive process overseen by MTI, which has a long track record of managing publicly-funded projects with transparency.

**Who can we contact about the effort:**

Brian Whitney (President, Maine Technology Institute): [bwhitney@mainetechnology.org](mailto:bwhitney@mainetechnology.org), 207-582-4790

Kim Hamilton (President, FocusMaine): [KimberlyHamilton@focusmaine.org](mailto:KimberlyHamilton@focusmaine.org), 207-844-0201