

# BUSINESS

**Beverages** Moosehead Breweries cuts 18 positions, AB InBev loses Budweiser appeal **B4**

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## Powering up a corridor

**Generation** Irving Oil Limited exploring energy transmission to New England

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TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL

SAINT JOHN – Irving Oil Limited has another major energy project in its sights.

The Saint John-based company is already studying the possibility of building a second oil refinery – known as the Eider Rock project – in addition to its existing facility on the Port City's east side.

Now the company is eyeing a power plant that would export electricity powered by wind and natural gas to

the United States.

The company made the announcement at a press conference Wednesday that was attended by Premier Shawn Graham, Energy Minister Jack Keir and Maine Gov. John Baldacci.

The politicians joined Jeff Matthews, Irving Oil's director of business development, as the province and state announced they are exploring the development of a northeast energy corridor.

The corridor would connect the neighbouring jurisdictions and allow for the delivery of diverse energy

products to the United States in a reliable, economical and environmentally efficient fashion.

"The concept of the northeast energy corridor we are studying would provide secure and reliable access for electricity, from renewable power including wind, tidal and natural gas-fired co-generation, petroleum products from our refinery and natural gas from our region's supply points," Matthews said.

"The first phase ... would consist of a 1,200- to 1,500-megawatt electrical transmission capacity, wind genera-

tion and a natural gas-fired co-generation plant that allows us to unlock the wind generation potential in our region."

Matthews said it was far too early to talk about timelines, project cost or number of jobs that could be created by the project.

"We'll have a better sense as we continue along in our feasibility work and our preliminary engineering and planning process," he said. "It's still a bit premature."

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'The corridor would be a big piece of the energy hub,' said Jeff Matthews, Irving Oil Limited's director of business development, during the northeast energy corridor announcement. 'It would help solve the transmission challenge, unlock wind power projects and create new jobs. It would help us better control our economic and environmental future.'

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# Project was announced in Saint John and Maine

## GENERATION ← B1

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Matthews said the proposed corridor is far from a *fait accompli*.

"I cannot stress enough that there are many hurdles ahead of us. Nothing is for certain," he said.

"The fact we are taking this step should not be misinterpreted as indicating that this initiative, or even that Eider Rock, is a sure thing. There remain many challenges facing any major energy initiative in this region, including labour availability, infrastructure, capital costs, the uncertain economy and global competition.

"But today we are committing ... We will seriously explore the possibility of developing the energy corridor."

Graham and Baldacci signed a memorandum of understanding to work together to find ways to secure energy supply for their jurisdictions shortly after Graham was elected premier in 2006.

Both men were enthusiastic in their support of the project, which was announced at an early-morning press conference in Saint John and a later gathering in Augusta, Maine.

"The proposed energy corridor will help accelerate the development and deployment of clean, renewable and greenhouse-gas-free electricity generation resources in both New Brunswick and Maine, as well as help address and support the overall North American energy security agenda," Graham said.

"Great potential exists for Maine and New Brunswick to grow and share clean, renewable energy," Baldacci said. "For the full potential to be realized, regional transmission capacity must expand. Exploring the potential for private investment in the northeast energy corridor is a vital next step to realizing our shared goals of achieving energy independence, having access to reliable and affordable energy, and reducing carbon emissions

on both sides of the border."

Matthews said the project would be a crucial component in the region's development as an energy hub.

"The corridor would be a big piece of the energy hub," he said. "It would help solve the transmission challenge, unlock wind power projects and create new jobs. It would help us better control our economic and environmental future."

Matthews said that over the next few weeks and months they will continue to explore the development – including feasibility work and preliminary engineering.

"As with Eider Rock, we will consult with our governments and our communities on both sides of our shared border."

The leaders said they expect further details to be available when the New England governors and Atlantic premiers meet in Saint John in the fall.

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