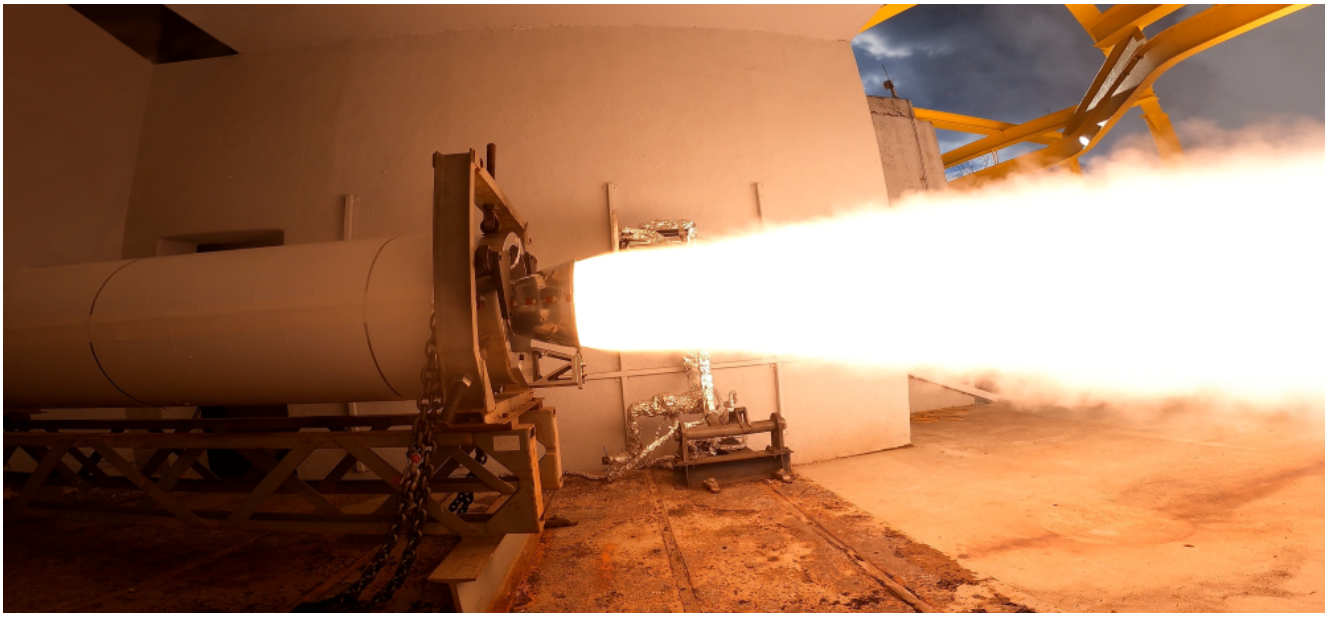
US Navy Selects Northrop Grumman for Second Stage Solid Rocket Motor Program



The second stage solid rocket motor completes a static fire test on November 21, 2025 in Elkton, Maryland. (Photo Credit: Northrop Grumman)
From Northrop Gruman, Jan. 7, 2026

ELKTON, Md. – Jan. 7, 2026 – Northrop Grumman Corporation (NYSE: NOC) was awarded a $94.3 million contract by the U.S. Navy to develop and qualify a new 21-inch diameter second-stage solid rocket motor (SSRM) for the Navy's extended-range missile programs to deter and defeat fast-moving air, surface and hypersonic threats.

- The SSRM is a low-risk, rapidly developed design that enables the Navy to quickly and cost-effectively field an extended-range hypersonic defense capability.

- The high-performance 21" diameter rocket motor is engineered to significantly extend range and speed

across various missions, including air warfare, surface warfare, land strike, and ballistic missile defense.

- The Navy has expressed interest for potential deployment of Northrop Grumman’s extended range propulsion technology across various platforms.

- Continued design and low-rate initial production of 60 units for testing and delivery will take place at Northrop Grumman’s Propulsion Innovation Center in Elkton, Md.

Expert:

Gordon LoPresti, senior director, propulsion systems and control, Northrop Grumman: “Being chosen by the U.S. Navy is an honor and a testament to our rapid development capabilities, production capacity and leadership in advanced propulsion solutions. The successful development and demonstration of our SSRM in just 10 months showcases our unique, affordable, and versatile extended-range capabilities that will equip the U.S. Navy to excel in its defense and deterrence missions. We are eager and prepared to rapidly qualify and produce these motors in quantities to meet the needs of the US.”

Details:

As the nation’s preeminent propulsion provider, Northrop Grumman continues to invest in facilities, capacity, and technologies, to ensure the ability to produce advanced weapons and solid rocket motors affordably at scale. To meet the growing customer demand, Northrop Grumman has invested more than $1 billion since 2018 to enhance capacity and capabilities for weapons and missile components, including solid rocket motors. With decades of proven success and over

one million solid rocket motors delivered, Northrop Grumman is a trusted provider of SRMs and advanced propulsion systems essential for defense, payload delivery and space exploration.

Northrop Grumman is delivering advanced propulsion and solid rocket motors at scale today and is investing in further expanding capacity to meet growing customer demand and support a resilient defense industrial base. Propulsion work takes place across six strategic sites in West Virginia, Utah and Maryland, totaling 10 million square feet of manufacturing space. We’re tripling capacity for small tactical SRMs at our West Virginia production facility, doubling production capacity for large SRMs in Utah, and increasing by 25% manufacturing capacity in Maryland to accommodate future high-demand programs, including air-breathing hypersonic propulsion solutions.