



Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

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MEMORANDUM

Date: December 7, 2023
To: Council
From: Julia Beaty, staff
Subject: Updates on Offshore Wind Energy Development

This memo summarizes recent updates on offshore wind energy development, with an emphasis on updates since the October 2023 Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) meeting. This list is not intended to be exhaustive and focuses on updates of greatest relevance to the Council.

- **Submitted comment letter:** [MAFMC and NEFMC Letter to BOEM: Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Maryland Offshore Wind Project \(11/20/23\)](#)
- **Approval of three offshore wind projects.** Since the October Council meeting, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) approved the Construction and Operations Plans for three additional wind projects. Details on associated terms and conditions, including fisheries mitigation measures and compensation, can be found in the Records of Decision available at the following links.
 - [Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind](#)
 - [Revolution Wind](#) (off Rhode Island/Massachusetts)
 - [Empire Wind](#) (off New York)
- **Fisheries compensation.** BOEM's final [mitigation guidance](#) for the impacts of offshore wind energy development on fisheries has not yet been released. The separate [state-led initiative](#) to form a third-party compensation fund administrator is ongoing. An anticipated next step is announcement of a request for proposals.
- **Ørsted ceases development of Ocean Wind 1 and 2 projects off New Jersey.** Ørsted, the developer of multiple planned wind energy projects off the East Coast, [announced](#) it will cease development of the Ocean Wind 1 and 2 projects off New Jersey. Ørsted cited project delays due to supply chain challenges, increased interest rates, and the lack of adjustments to their pricing agreements on a separate project (Sunrise Wind). Ørsted still holds the Ocean Wind 1 and 2 lease areas and has not communicated future plans for the leases.
- Developers for several projects have sought to re-negotiate their pricing agreements with states. These requests have largely been denied (e.g., [Empire, Beacon, and Sunrise](#)

[Wind](#)). With the exception of Ørsted's Ocean Wind 1 and 2 projects, developers have not cancelled any projects but rather are seeking to negotiate different pricing agreements through new power purchase solicitations.

- **New and upcoming power purchase agreements.**
 - New York's fourth competitive offshore wind energy solicitation is currently accepting proposals from developers. More information is available [here](#).
 - Three projects were selected through New York's third offshore wind energy solicitation: Attentive Energy One, Community Offshore Wind, and Excelsior Wind. More information is available [here](#).
 - Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut will coordinate on multi-state offshore wind energy proposals. More information is available [here](#).
- **Gulf of Maine Wind Energy Areas.** In October 2023, BOEM announced draft Wind Energy Areas in the Gulf of Maine. These areas may be further refined into lease areas. More information is available [here](#).
- **Suction bucket foundation testing.** Beacon Wind, LLC plans to test use of a suction bucket foundation within their lease area off Massachusetts. The environmental impacts of this new foundation type have not been thoroughly studied; therefore, BOEM plans to prepare an environmental assessment to analyze the potential impacts. More information is available [here](#).
- **NOAA and Community Offshore Wind Partner on Environmental Monitoring Program.** The Northeast Fisheries Science Center and Community Offshore Wind, the developer of a planned wind project off New York/New Jersey, signed a 5-year cooperative research and development agreement to exchange data and expertise. More information is available [here](#).
- **Ongoing construction.** The following approved wind energy projects have ongoing construction activities in federal waters. Additional shoreside construction activities (e.g., [waterway dredging in New Jersey](#)) are also taking place for these and other projects.
 - **Vineyard Wind 1.** The 62 turbine Vineyard Wind 1 project, located 15 miles south of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket, is currently in construction. The most recent updates on construction activities are available [here](#).
 - **South Fork Wind.** The 12 turbine South Fork Wind project, located approximately 19 miles southeast of Block Island and 35 miles east of Montauk Point, is currently in construction. The project [began sending power to the grid](#) on December 6, 2023. For the most recent updates on construction activities, see the Northeast mariners briefings posted [here](#).
- **Ongoing survey activities (geotechnical, geophysical, fisheries, etc.).** Several offshore wind projects are undertaking geophysical, geotechnical, fisheries, and other types of survey work throughout the region. These surveys use a variety of gear types, including some equipment that is installed in a given location for extended periods of time (e.g., buoys, acoustic receivers). The best way to stay informed of these survey activities is to sign up for email updates from individual wind developers (see the project specific links available [here](#)).

- **Fisheries liaison outreach.** Fisheries liaisons for most offshore wind projects periodically host port hours, dock visits, and other outreach events. The best way to stay informed of these events is to sign up for email updates from individual wind developers (see the project specific links available [here](#)).
- **Stay informed.** To stay up to date on individual wind projects, including development of fishery communications plans, details on offshore survey operations, outreach events, and other updates, see the project-specific links available at <https://www.mafmc.org/offshore-wind-notices>.