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Commercial Leasing for Wind Power on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Offshore New Jersey – Call for Information and Nominations

Comment On: BOEM-2011-0005-0001

Commercial Leasing for Wind Power; Call for Information and Nominations Outer Continental Shelf Offshore New Jersey

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Comment from Gregory DiDomenico, organization

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General Comment

New Jersey's commercial fishermen are opposed to the construction of offshore windfarms due to their becoming impediments to fishing. Most commercial fishermen do not believe there has been a sufficient analysis of whether NJ have alternatives other than offshore wind: If New Jersey and other coastal states have credible and cheaper other alternatives for renewable energy, these should be developed first.

*Has the state and federal government made the compelling study demonstrating ocean energy development is the only alternative? *If this is the only practical alternative, the state and federal government have not communicated this sufficiently to the public. For commercial fishermen, fishing between the turbines might be possible provided that: *Fishing is permitted. *Insurance companies cannot pursue damages against fishermen operating within the farms. *Windfarms are aligned with rows of turbines along contours SW to NE to facilitate fishing. *If turbines could be spaced very close together so the area is compact and small, windfarms would not pose significant impact if sited in areas of little fishing activity, however, it appears that a large area is being proposed for development with significant number of turbines, so turbines should be spaced very far apart so towing can be done between rows of turbines. *Cables must be installed with the knowledge by the developers that fishermen will tow over them (thus the cables should be buried deep). *Windfarm operators should monitor cables to make sure they remain buried. If cables come unburied it should be the responsibility of the windfarm operator to perform remedial burial expeditiously and to notify fishermen to avoid an exposed cable. *There will be a loss of fishing revenue. These losses will become cumulative as more offshore wind farms are developed. The permitting agencies must provide that all windfarm developers anticipate and plan for these specific and cumulative financial impacts and devise a mitigation plan.