

Winter 2014

Vol. 1 Issue 6

BOEM
BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

BULLETIN



QUICK LINKS

Regional Briefs

Gulf of Mexico
Pacific Region
Alaska Region

Press Releases

For constituent inquiries or comments, please contact:

Blossom Robinson
BOEM External Affairs Lead
BOEM Office of Public Affairs
(202) 208-3984
Blossom.Robinson@BOEM.gov

[Join Our Mailing List](#)

Leading the Way to a Sustainable Energy Future BOEM's Efforts to Achieve the President's Climate Action Plan



BOEM Deputy Director Walter Cruickshank

Last summer, President Obama announced a new [Climate Action Plan](#). The foundation of this plan is for our country to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by about 17 percent below 2005 levels by the year 2020. One of the critical components of the plan is the goal to double renewable electricity generation by 2020. As Deputy Director of BOEM, I believe we will meet that goal in part because of the enormous potential for offshore wind energy and our recent milestones toward achieving a sustainable energy future.

Last year, we held the Nation's first two offshore wind energy auctions: one for two lease areas offshore Rhode Island and Massachusetts and another for a single lease area offshore Virginia. In July of 2013, Deepwater Wind New England LLC outbid two other companies and won two lease areas comprising nearly 165,000 acres offshore Rhode Island and Massachusetts. In September, Dominion Virginia Power won the auction for 113,000 acres offshore Virginia. If fully developed, the lease areas offshore Rhode Island/Massachusetts and Virginia could power almost 1.7 million homes.

All in all, these auctions met our expectations and confirmed our long-standing belief that there is a market for offshore wind energy. The success of these sales resulted from tireless efforts by BOEM's Office of Renewable Energy Programs and the Economics Division, as well as our government partners, especially those participating in our intergovernmental renewable energy task forces. These task forces, made up of our Federal, state, local, and tribal partners, have helped us to understand the unique information needs and perspectives associated with renewable energy efforts offshore for each of their respective states. Task force partners have also helped BOEM in providing forums for input

from a diverse set of key stakeholders, including fishermen, environmental and science organizations and the renewable energy industry sector.

BOEM's Office of Environmental Programs continues to add to our knowledge base about the marine environment, building on what has been learned in the past. Through the Environmental Studies Program, which celebrates its 40th anniversary this year, BOEM is funding a broad range of studies to inform decisions about renewable energy development in our offshore areas. Focus areas range from archaeological resources to distributions of marine mammals to effects of electromagnetic fields on fisheries.



Additionally, BOEM partners with states, including Massachusetts, North Carolina, Rhode Island, and Virginia, on important scientific data gathering efforts for wind energy areas. Such data will provide BOEM, states, tribes, stakeholders, and companies with essential information to be used in preparing and evaluating plans associated with commercial wind development activities.

We have come a long way but our work is not done. We have laid the groundwork for additional renewable energy accomplishments in the years ahead, so in many ways, we are just starting down a strong path toward a more diverse offshore energy portfolio.

For example, BOEM just announced a Proposed Sale Notices for Wind Energy Areas offshore Maryland in early December. The bureau is also working on sale notices for Massachusetts and New Jersey. You can expect to see notices in the Federal Register for public comment in the early part of this year. We will also continue planning efforts for commercial wind leasing offshore other coastal states, such as New York and North Carolina. Furthermore, BOEM is evaluating eight additional unsolicited lease and grant requests. Of these, six are on the Atlantic OCS and consist of two transmission proposals, an interim policy lease request for marine hydrokinetic (MHK) technology testing, a research lease request for wind energy technology testing, and two lease requests for wind resource data collection. On the Pacific OCS, we are evaluating a commercial wind lease request for wind demonstration facility and a research lease request for a MHK test site.

These are just some of the recent - and upcoming - offshore wind energy efforts that BOEM has been advancing. We have achieved significant accomplishments - accomplishments that could not have been realized without our dedicated staff, robust stakeholder partnerships, and enterprising industry to back them up.

Of course, our work is not done, but working together, I am confident we can and will contribute to meeting the Administration's vision of a sustainable energy future.

Ocean Research

Updates on BOEM activities



Walrus congregate on sea ice located in the Chukchi Sea north of Alaska, August 2012. Photo by: Kathy Kuletz, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

BOEM, NSF and international partners to study Arctic sustainability

BOEM has joined the National Science Foundation (NSF) and international partners in announcing the first round of awards under the NSF Arctic Science, Engineering, and Education for Sustainability (ArcSEES) program. Of the six new awards, BOEM is supporting two studies related to the bureau's offshore energy management decisions for the Alaskan Outer Continental Shelf.

The first study, [Cumulative Effects of Arctic Oil Development - planning and designing for sustainability](#), will measure and assess long-term cumulative impacts of increases in the oil-and-gas-industry infrastructure in the Prudhoe Bay area of Alaska. The goal is to reduce the impacts of future development in the region. Donald Walker, University of Alaska Fairbanks, is the Principal Investigator.

The second, [Walrus Adaptability and Long-term Responses: Using multi-proxy data to project sustainability](#), will examine the vulnerability and resilience of the walrus population off Alaska's North Slope. This will enhance the bureau's understanding of the complex interplay between climate change; walrus population dynamics and structure; health, habits, feeding ecologies and foraging locations; and subsistence harvesting by Alaska Native hunters. Nicole Misarti, University of Alaska Fairbanks, is the Principal Investigator.

BOEM involvement leverages federal resources to advance our knowledge on Arctic sustainability and delivers high quality science for decision-making on offshore energy.

Six projects were funded as part of the ArcSEES program, and are located at 12 institutions and include collaborative investigators from the U.S., France, Canada, Russia, Finland, Germany, and the UK. Four of the six projects relate to water, energy and food security in the North; North Slope Arctic scenarios for sustainable healthy communities; sustainability of critical areas for eiders and subsistence hunters in an industrializing nearshore zone; and holistic integration for Arctic

numbers in an industrializing nearshore zone, and holistic integration for Arctic-coastal-marine sustainability.

For additional information about the six research grants, please see the [NSF press release](#) and the original solicitation (<http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2012/nsf12553/nsf12553.htm>).



A bear makes its way across a pipeline near Prudhoe Bay, AK

About BOEM

As part of the Department of the Interior, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) promotes energy independence, environmental protection and economic development through responsible, science-based management of offshore conventional and renewable energy.



For more information, visit: www.BOEM.gov



Try it FREE today.