

THE NEWS ROOM

THE BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT,
REGULATION AND ENFORCEMENT

FOR RELEASE:
September 14, 2010

Office of Public Affairs

BOEMRE and Maine Form Offshore Renewable Energy Task Force

BELFAST, ME – The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE) and the state of Maine today announced the formation of an offshore renewable energy task force. This inter-governmental task force has been formed to facilitate communication between BOEMRE and local, state, tribal and federal stakeholders in the state concerning commercial renewable energy leasing and development on the OCS off the coast of Maine.

The task force includes state government officials designated by the Governor, relevant officials from affected federal agencies, elected local government officials and tribal leaders.

“BOEMRE created this task force to facilitate the efficient and effective review of proposed renewable energy projects on the OCS offshore Maine,” said BOEMRE Director Michael R. Bromwich. “We will continue to work together to initiate the commercial leasing process that enables Maine to meet its objective of renewable energy development, and continue our work in support of the Administration’s goal of expanding our nation’s energy resource portfolio.”

“This is an important next step for Maine and the nation in meeting the challenges of energy independence and security, climate change and economic development. Deep water energy development employing advanced technologies holds great promise,” said Governor of Maine, John E. Baldacci. “Maine is building on its leadership in renewable ocean energy, harnessing its strength of expertise and research advances at the University of Maine and ocean-related businesses and industries.”

BOEMRE, in partnership with Maine’s Office of the Governor, held the first meeting of the BOEMRE-Maine Task Force today. The task force meeting featured a discussion about the commercial leasing process for OCS renewable energy and a presentation of the draft task force charter. The task force members discussed options for starting the leasing process and the timelines for specific actions required by BOEMRE and the state for developing offshore renewable energy.

Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar hosted a meeting in February 2010 with Maine Governor Baldacci and other Governors and representatives of Atlantic Coast states to discuss a regional approach to wind energy development on the OCS. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in June 2010 that formally established the Atlantic Offshore Wind Energy Consortium to promote the efficient, orderly, and responsible development of wind resources on the OCS. Together, Secretary Salazar and the Atlantic governors are using this agreement to facilitate federal-state cooperation for commercial wind development on the OCS off of the Atlantic coast through collaborative efforts on issues of mutual interest.

In April 2009, President Barack Obama and Secretary Salazar announced the final framework for renewable energy development on the OCS. This framework establishes the process BOEMRE uses for granting leases, easements, and rights-of-way for offshore renewable energy development activities, such as the siting and construction of wind generation facilities on the OCS. The framework also allows for BOEMRE to use task forces in carrying out its responsibilities for authorizing OCS renewable energy activities in partnership with state, local, and tribal governments, and Federal agencies.

Task forces have been formally established with Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Virginia, Delaware and Maryland, and are in process for New York, North Carolina, South Carolina and Florida.

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