

## The NewsRoom

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### **MMS and Maryland Energy Administration Hold Offshore Renewable Energy Task Force Meeting**

**Annapolis, MD** – The Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS), in partnership with the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA), today held its first Task Force meeting with officials from Maryland to discuss renewable energy development on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). The MMS is establishing inter-governmental Task Forces to consult with local, state, tribal, and Federal stakeholders concerning renewable energy commercial leasing and development on the OCS.

The Task Force includes state government officials, officials from affected federal agencies, elected local government officials, and tribal leaders. MMS and MEA are working with the Task Force to facilitate the commercial leasing process for OCS renewable energy development offshore Maryland.

"The MMS-Maryland Task Force will provide a forum for everyone to work together on siting proposed renewable energy projects off the coast of Maryland," said MMS Director Liz Birnbaum. "MMS looks forward to the input, advice, and participation of this task force as we initiate planning for offshore commercial renewable energy leasing."

"Offshore wind energy offers vast potential to create jobs for our workers and to help stabilize electric costs for our families while also increasing grid stability," remarked MEA Director Malcolm Woolf. "As we continue our commitment to promote a *Smart, Green and Growing* Maryland, the benefits of the clean energy generated from offshore wind may prove to be vital for our State's energy and environmental future. The Task Force will be a critical component of Maryland's ability to strategically and responsibly move towards a new clean energy economy."

The meeting included an MMS-led discussion of the commercial leasing process for OCS renewable energy and a presentation of the draft Task Force charter. The Task Force members also discussed options for starting the leasing process off Maryland and specific actions and timelines to support Maryland's goal of developing offshore renewable energy.

In April 2009, President Barack Obama announced that the MMS had finalized the framework for renewable energy development on the OCS. This framework establishes a process 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 provides for MMS's use of Task Forces in carrying out its responsibilities for authorizing OCS renewable energy activities in partnership with state, local, and tribal governments, and federal agencies

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