

## California –

### Trident Winds Offshore Wind Unsolicited Lease Request

#### What is an unsolicited lease request?

Receipt of an unsolicited lease request by BOEM is the earliest step in a process that includes environmental analysis and stakeholder engagement.

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 granted BOEM authority to issue leases for renewable energy projects on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS), which generally begins 3 nautical miles offshore California. An unsolicited lease request is a submission received by BOEM that is not in response to a Call for Information and Nominations issued by BOEM. The first step in reviewing an unsolicited lease request is for BOEM to review the applicant's legal, technical, and financial qualifications to hold an OCS renewable energy lease. On March 21, 2016, BOEM made the determination that Trident Winds, LLC (Trident Winds) is legally, financially, and technically qualified to hold an OCS lease.

#### What is the unsolicited lease request proposing?

Trident Winds submitted a lease request for an area offshore Morro Bay, California. The project proposes an offshore wind facility with a nameplate capacity of up to 800 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy generated by approximately 100 floating foundations with up to 8 MW wind turbines. The project's anticipated net generation capacity is approximately 650 MW, which takes into account offshore transmission line losses and other losses associated with suboptimal wind conditions, equipment downtime, and other operating constraints. The energy generated by the project would be transmitted to shore by an undersea power transmission cable.

The project is proposed to be located approximately 33 nautical miles northwest of Morro Bay, California, in water depths of approximately 2,600-3,300 feet. The proposed lease area is 67,963 acres.

#### What happens next?

After coordination with the State of California and other stakeholders, BOEM will publish a *Federal Register* Notice to publicly announce the proposed lease area and to invite submission of expressions of interest from other parties for wind projects in the same area. The Notice will also request the public and interested stakeholders to comment and provide information about site conditions and other uses of the requested area. While there is no regulatory requirement on the timing of the Notice, BOEM expects publication 4 to 6 months after the determination that Trident Winds is legally, financially, and technically qualified to hold an OCS lease.

(more)

### **The unsolicited lease request proposes an offshore wind project adjacent to Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary; can BOEM issue a lease adjacent to a designated sanctuary?**

Yes. BOEM can issue a renewable energy lease adjacent to a national marine sanctuary. BOEM's leasing process incorporates extensive consultation and coordination with key federal, state, and local stakeholders. Additionally, provisions in the National Marine Sanctuaries Act require formal federal consultation for actions that are likely to affect a national marine sanctuary resource. BOEM will work closely with all of our partners, including Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, in reviewing this lease request and will comply with any required consultations.

### **The Trident Winds unsolicited lease request is for an area that partially falls within the area nominated as the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary. If BOEM issues a renewable energy lease to Trident Winds, can the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary still be designated?**

Yes. BOEM's leasing authority does not prevent the designation of a national marine sanctuary on the OCS. BOEM and NOAA's ONMS would work closely to ensure compatibility of OCS renewable lease activities and the new sanctuary if ONMS were to move forward with the designation process.

### **Could BOEM issue a lease in the proposed Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary after it is designated?**

No. Under its existing leasing authority, BOEM is restricted from issuing renewable energy leases in designated national marine sanctuaries on the OCS. Should the proposed Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary be designated, BOEM could not issue a lease within the sanctuary. If the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary is designated, the regulations NOAA would adopt for that area would determine if NOAA could consider permits or other regulatory mechanisms to allow construction of renewable energy projects inside the sanctuary.

### **For More Information**

Overview of BOEM's leasing process: [Wind Energy Commercial Leasing Process Fact Sheet](#).

Renewable Energy Program Regulations: [30 CFR 585](#)

BOEM's Renewable Energy Program in California: [BOEM California Activities](#).

To be added to BOEM's Hawaii Stakeholders distribution list, please send an email with your contact information and a valid email address to [pacificrenewables@boem.gov](mailto:pacificrenewables@boem.gov).

#### **For further questions, contact:**

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