



Maryland Renewable Energy Task Force

BOEM Environmental Review Process Update

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Presentation Overview

- Mid Atlantic EA – Update
- Mid Atlantic EA – Alternatives Considered
- Mid Atlantic EA – Mandatory Design Criteria (Appendix B)
- Next Steps: Environmental Review Process for a Competitive Lease
- BOEM Studies – Ongoing Renewable Projects

Mid Atlantic EA - Update

- July 2011 – Published Notice of Availability of the Draft EA for areas off NJ, MD, VA and DE
- BOEM received approximately 60 comment letters
 - Topics included:
 - Postpone decision until the Atlantic Coast Port Access Route Study (ACPARS) is complete
 - Inclusion of additional data sources
 - Implement principles of Coastal Marine Spatial Planning
 - Recommendations for additional mitigation measures
- February 2012 – Published Notice of Availability of the Final EA and Finding of No Significant Impacts
 - Considered 5 alternatives plus No Action
 - Includes Mandatory Design Criteria for Lessees (Appendix B)

Mid Atlantic EA – Alternatives Considered

- **Alternative A** – Proposed Action
- **Alternative B** – Removal of Anchorage Ground Offshore Delaware
- **Alternative C** – Removal of Category B Areas Offshore Maryland
- **Alternative D** – Seasonal Prohibition to Protect the North Atlantic Right Whale (applicable to all Wind Energy Areas)
- **Alternative E** – Removal of Inclement Weather Diversion Areas Offshore Virginia (the Preferred Alternative)
- **Alternative F** – No Action

Mid Atlantic EA – Mandatory Design Criteria (Appendix B)

- These requirements were developed to reduce potential impacts to Endangered Species Act-listed marine fish and non-ESA listed marine mammals, sea turtles and marine fish.
- Requirements were divided into three sections:
 - those required during all phases of site characterization and site assessment activities on a lease
 - those required during site characterization activities
 - those required during construction of meteorological towers and installation of buoys
- These project design criteria were shared with National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) through the informal ESA consultation, which was completed on September 2011, with NMFS concurrence that the proposed activities would not likely adversely affect listed whales or sea turtles.
- These requirements will be included by BOEM as conditions on all mid-Atlantic leases issued and SAPs approved.

Next Steps: Environmental Review Process for a Competitive Lease

■ Site Assessment Plan (SAP)

- Must be approved by BOEM before construction of a meteorological tower or installation of a meteorological buoy can occur.
- If the SAP activities do not fall within the Mid Atlantic EA analysis, BOEM would prepare a separate site- and project-specific NEPA analysis.
- Site characterization survey results are required to be submitted with the SAP.

■ Construction and Operations Plan (COP)

- Must be submitted to BOEM when a lessee is prepared to propose wind energy generation on its lease.
- A separate site and project-specific NEPA analysis, most likely an EIS, would be prepared.
- Site characterization survey results are required to be submitted with the COP.

BOEM Studies – Ongoing Renewable Projects

- Working with Federal agencies to collect information – NOAA, FWS, DOE and USCG
- **Ongoing studies for renewable projects include:**
 - **Birds and Bats** – Distribution, abundance, and migratory pathways
 - **Tourism and Recreation** – Economic effects, visual impacts
 - **Marine Mammals** – Migratory pathways, effects to sound
 - **Fisheries** – Habitat identification, effects of sound from pile driving, Electromagnetic Field (EMF), conflict mitigation
- Fisheries/Offshore Wind Mitigation Measures Development Workshop – Ocean City, January 11, 2013

Questions and Comments

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