

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AREA IDENTIFICATION

Commercial Wind Energy Leasing on the Outer Continental Shelf Offshore New York

March 16, 2016

Pursuant to 30 C.F.R. § 585.211(b), the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) has completed the Area Identification process to delineate a Wind Energy Area (WEA) offshore New York.

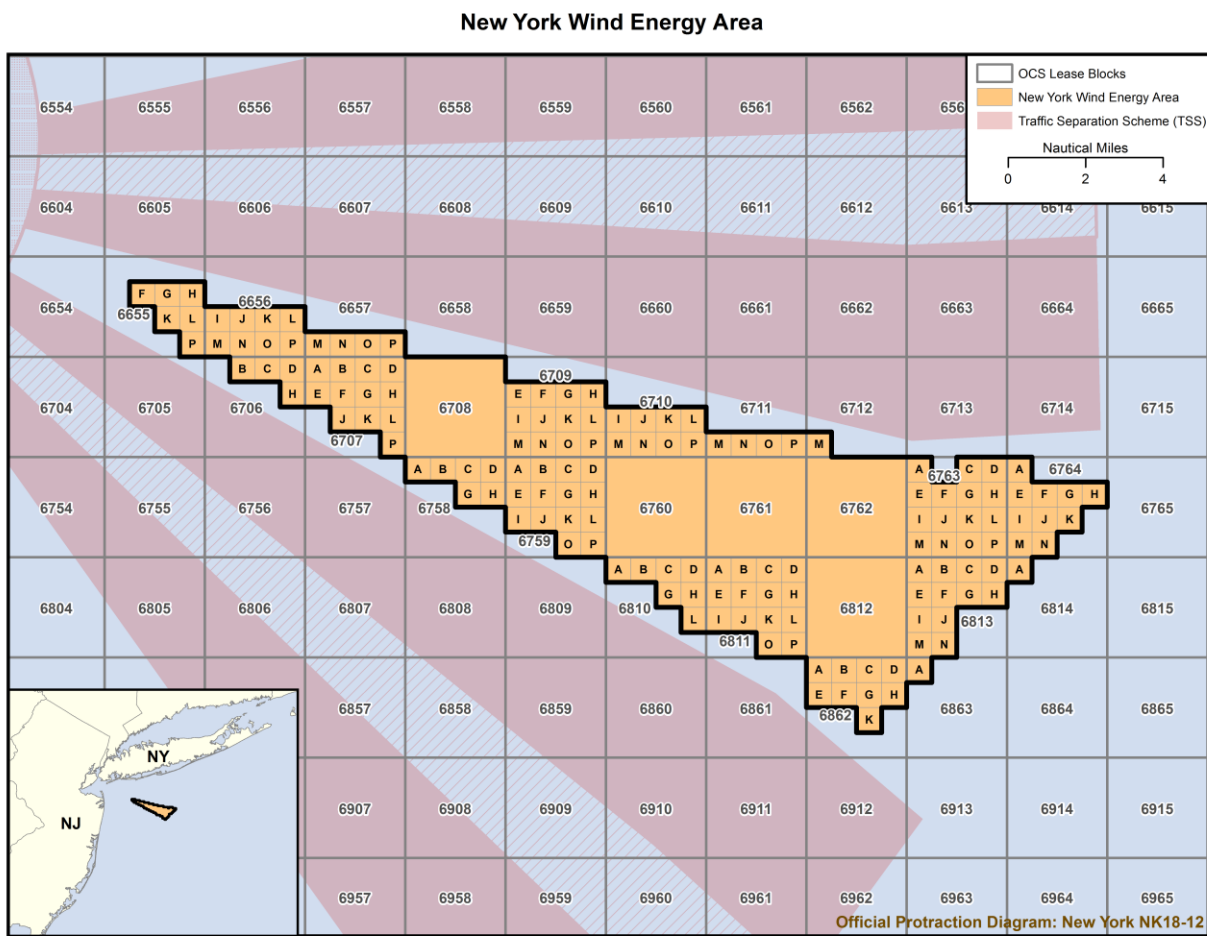
BOEM is announcing the New York WEA after concluding more than four years of review and consideration of the proposed area. The goal of BOEM's Area Identification process is to identify the offshore locations that appear most suitable for wind energy development. The New York WEA consists of five OCS blocks and 148 sub-blocks. It begins approximately 11 nautical miles (nmi) south of Long Beach, New York, and extends approximately 26 nmi southeast along its longest portion. The entire area is approximately 127 square miles, 81,130 acres, or 32,832 hectares.

The WEA being considered for leasing offshore New York is based upon an unsolicited lease application that BOEM received on September 8, 2011, from the New York Power Authority (NYPA). In that request, NYPA proposes to construct a 350-700 megawatt (MW) wind facility offshore Long Island. In analyzing this proposed area, BOEM published a Request for Interest (2013), a Call for Information and Nominations (2014), and a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Assessment (2014); held numerous stakeholder meetings; and worked with BOEM's New York Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force to gather data and information about the area.

As a next step toward leasing the New York WEA, BOEM may publish a Proposed Sale Notice for public comment, which will describe the area being offered for leasing and the proposed terms and conditions of a wind energy auction. Then, upon considering public comments and completing the necessary environmental assessment (EA) and consultations, BOEM may publish a Final Sale Notice that announces the date, time, and specific conditions of the auction. BOEM expects the environmental review to be completed and the notices to be published later in 2016.

In BOEM's EA, conducted pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), BOEM is only considering the issuance of a lease and approval of a site assessment plan for the New York WEA. BOEM is not considering, and the EA will not support, any decisions regarding the construction and operation of a wind energy facility. In the future, should a lessee propose to construct a commercial wind energy facility, the lessee will be required to submit a construction and operations plan for BOEM's review and approval. BOEM would then prepare a site-specific NEPA document and conduct necessary environmental consultations before making a final decision to approve the construction of the proposed project. As the process moves forward, BOEM will continue to analyze issues and work with stakeholders before a decision is made to authorize the development of a wind power facility offshore New York.

Figure 1. The New York Wind Energy Area



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