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## **BOEMRE Funds \$2.5 Million in Bird Monitoring Studies on the Atlantic OCS**

*Results will Assist in Reviews of Future Renewable Energy Project Locations*

**WASHINGTON, DC** — The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE) announced today that it has awarded approximately \$2.5 million to Pandion Systems, Inc. for two bird monitoring studies on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). The collection of this information is important for the future development of offshore renewable energy projects on the Atlantic OCS.

“BOEMRE continues to look for opportunities to support scientific research on the OCS,” said BOEMRE Director Michael R. Bromwich. “The results from these studies will add significant information to our current body of knowledge and will help accelerate reviews for future renewable energy projects on the Atlantic OCS.”

One study will monitor the acoustics and thermal imagery of passing birds on the Atlantic OCS. Both acoustic microphones and thermal imaging cameras will be used to capture information on bird traffic. This equipment will be solar powered, remotely operated and will transmit data to shore, recording flight calls and capturing thermal images of birds 24 hours a day. This will be the first study of its kind to capture bird traffic offshore, at night or in poor visibility weather conditions, over an extended period of time. These devices will be deployed widely in ways that will pinpoint the exact location of a bird in flight. The height of passing birds, especially at night or in poor visibility, is critical when determining the risk posed by offshore wind turbines to local and migratory bird populations. This award was made in the amount of \$1,586,291 for one year, with BOEMRE being able to renew the award for three extensions of one year each, at a total cost of \$3,959,940 over four years if all options for extensions are exercised.

The other study will conduct surveys to monitor the seasonal presence of birds, marine mammals and sea turtles on the Atlantic OCS. This study will also develop aircraft and equipment guidelines and sampling protocols to determine areas on the Atlantic OCS that are important to these species. There are currently no established protocols for using high definition aerial imagery to survey vast areas such as the Atlantic OCS. Determination of a safe, effective and scientifically credible method to sample a large area, such as the Atlantic OCS, will lead to the first ever collection of survey data over a broad area. This award was made in the amount of \$896,310 and will be completed in September 2012.

Contact: [BOEMRE Public Affairs](#)