



North Carolina Environmental Review and Next Steps

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National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

NEPA is a procedural law that requires Federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed action(s), and reasonable alternatives, prior to making decisions.


- **Major Actions/Decision Points**
 - Lease Issuance (Survey Work)
 - Plan Approval (Site Assessment, Construction and Operation, or General Activities)
 - Decommissioning Activities

What is an Environmental Assessment (EA)?

- An EA is a concise public document which:
 - Briefly provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS);
 - Aids an agency's compliance with NEPA when no EIS is necessary (better alternatives and mitigation measures) and;
 - Facilitates preparation of an EIS when one is necessary.

North Carolina Environmental Assessment

- EA published on January 23, 2015 for public review and comment (Docket No. BOEM-2015-0001)
 - 30-day comment period closed on February 23, 2015
 - 195 comments received
- Revised EA and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) published on September 17, 2015

OCS EIS/EA
BOEM 2015-038 

**Commercial Wind Lease Issuance and Site
Assessment Activities on the Atlantic Outer
Continental Shelf Offshore North Carolina**
Revised Environmental Assessment

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
Office of Renewable Energy Programs

BOEM
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

Proposed Action: What was considered

- Lease Issuance
- Associated site characterization surveys
- Subsequent site assessment activities



Proposed Action:

What was NOT considered

- Installation, operation, and decommissioning of a commercial wind energy facility
- If an eventual lessee were to submit a construction and operations plan, BOEM would conduct a project specific environmental analysis that would likely take the form of an EIS

Environmental Assessment Findings

- For most resources, reasonably foreseeable impacts were negligible to minor.
- Potential moderate impacts identified for marine mammals and sea turtles
 - Only result from noise related to pile driving (i.e., meteorological tower construction)
 - Standard Operating Conditions developed to minimize or eliminate these potential impacts
- No reasonably foreseeable significant impacts are expected to occur as a result of the proposed action

Consultations

- National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)
- Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA)
- Endangered Species Act (ESA)
- Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Essential Fish Habitat (EFH))



Environmental Lease Stipulations



****Additional Construction or Operations Stipulations May Be Added As Terms and Conditions of Plan approval***

Next Steps:

Site Assessment Plans (SAPs)

- BOEM will determine if the NC EA and consultations adequately consider the proposed activities
- Unless effects are significantly different, no additional NEPA required
- NHPA Section 106 consultation required
- NHPA Section 106 finding document per our Programmatic Agreements – 30-day consulting party review



Next Steps: Construction and Operations Plans (COPs)

- BOEM will conduct a site/project specific environmental review, most likely an Environmental Impact Statement, and consultations
- Additional opportunities for public comment
- Main factors influencing timing: scale and complexity of the proposed facility and activities; level of public controversy; and number of environmental and socioeconomic issues



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