

THE NEWS ROOM

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BOEMRE Initiates Leasing Process for Commercial Wind Development on Outer Continental Shelf offshore Maryland

WASHINGTON, DC – The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE), in partnership with the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA), announced today that it is moving toward wind energy development offshore Maryland on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) by issuing a Request for Interest (RFI) for renewable energy development.

"We have been working closely with Maryland officials to facilitate the commercial leasing process for renewable energy in federal waters off the Maryland coast," said BOEMRE Director Michael R. Bromwich. "We hope our RFI generates significant interest and strong responses as we push forward to meet the Administration's goal of stimulating offshore wind production. We are pleased to partner with Governor Martin O'Malley and his team as they seek to meet Maryland's renewable energy goals."

"Today's announcement marks another step forward for Maryland's new economy," said Governor Martin O'Malley. "By harnessing the outstanding wind resources off of Maryland's coast, we can create thousands of green collar jobs, reduce harmful air pollution, and bring much needed, additional clean energy to Maryland."

BOEMRE will use industry responses to gauge specific interest in the commercial development of wind resources off the state's shores. If responses indicate that there is no competitive interest in this area, the agency may proceed with the noncompetitive lease process. Whether the leasing process is competitive or noncompetitive, it will include public participation as well as a thorough environmental review conforming with all applicable laws.

The western edge of the RFI area is located approximately 10 nautical miles from the Ocean City, Md. coast and the eastern edge is approximately 27 nautical miles from the Ocean City, Md. coast. The area was selected through consultation with the Maryland Renewable Energy Task Force, an intergovernmental coordination group led by BOEMRE. Task Force members include federal agencies, tribal governments, and state and local agencies that have a role in permitting, reviewing or regulating resources or activities that are involved in energy development on the OCS.

BOEMRE's RFI also invites all interested and affected parties to comment and provide information that will be useful in considering the area of interest for commercial wind energy leases, including information on environmental issues and concerns.

The notice is available for public inspection today through the Federal Register's website at: <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/public-inspection/index.html>. A map of the area of interest as well as the electronic copy of the RFI can be found at: <http://www.boemre.gov/offshore/RenewableEnergy/StateActivities.htm#Maryland>.

The public is invited to submit comments no later than January 10, 2011 in one of the following ways:

- Electronically: <http://www.regulations.gov>. In the entry titled "Enter Keyword or ID," enter BOEM–2010–0038, then click search. Follow the instructions to submit public comments and view supporting and related materials available for this rulemaking. BOEMRE will post all comments.
- By mail, sending your indications of interest, comments and information to the following address: Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement, Office of Offshore Alternative Energy Programs, 381 Elden Street, Mail Stop 4090, Herndon, VA 20170.

In April 2009, President Barack Obama and Secretary Salazar announced the final framework for renewable energy development on the OCS.

This framework establishes the process BOEMRE uses for granting leases, easements and rights-of-way for offshore renewable energy development activities, such as the siting and construction of wind generation facilities on the OCS. The framework also provides for BOEMRE's use of task forces in carrying out its responsibilities for authorizing OCS renewable energy activities in partnership with state, local, and tribal governments, and federal agencies.

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