

Gulf of Maine Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force Charter

Introduction

Under the regulatory framework for renewable energy activity on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS), the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) issues leases, easements, and rights-of-way for orderly, safe, and environmentally responsible offshore renewable energy development activities, such as the siting and construction of wind generation facilities on the OCS. This charter establishes the BOEM Gulf of Maine Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force (“Task Force”) to: 1) educate members about the renewable energy program, processes, and requirements; 2) exchange data and information; 3) discuss issues of concern; and 4) assist government decision-making within the established BOEM regulatory framework regarding renewable energy activity on the OCS in the Gulf of Maine.

Purpose

The BOEM Gulf of Maine Task Force is chartered to facilitate coordination and consultation related to renewable energy planning activities on the OCS in the Gulf of Maine. Numerous entities have statutory roles and interest related to OCS renewable energy projects. To the extent practicable, the Task Force collaborates to exchange information and inform BOEM’s mission to facilitate the responsible development of renewable energy resources on the OCS.

Participation in the Task Force offers members the opportunity to provide meaningful and timely input into the implementation of the BOEM renewable energy regulatory framework. While BOEM will consider all input, the Gulf of Maine Task Force is neither a decision-making nor approval body and the Secretary of the Interior remains the ultimate decision-maker with regard to renewable energy leasing and development on the OCS.

Authority

Subsection 8(p)(7) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act directs the Department of the Interior to “provide for coordination and consultation with the Governor of any state or the executive of any local government that may be affected by a lease, easement, or right-of-way” authorizing renewable energy activities on the OCS. BOEM has established the Task Force to help fulfill this obligation in its consideration of renewable energy activities on the OCS in the Gulf of Maine. This Task Force has not been chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, and its membership is therefore limited to “full-time or permanent part-time officers or employees of the Federal Government and elected officers of State, local, and tribal governments (or their designated employees with authority to act on their behalf), acting in their official capacities,” pursuant to 41 CFR § 102-3.40(g).

This charter does not expand or alter the scope of the Task Force members’ respective authorities, nor shall it be construed to create any legal obligation on the part of any Task Force member or any private right or cause of action for or by any person or entity.

Membership

BOEM Renewable Energy Task Forces are intergovernmental groups. As noted above, Task Force members are limited to Federal officials and elected state, local, and tribal officials, or designated member representatives. Personnel who do not meet these requirements will not be listed as a member on the Task Force Roster but may still attend and observe the meeting proceedings as a member of the public. Task Force meetings may include opportunities for public input or discussion.

BOEM recognizes the regional nature of ocean uses and renewable energy development on the OCS and the importance of incorporating regional perspectives into the planning process. As such, the initial Gulf of Maine Task Force membership may consist of representatives from state, local, and tribal governments within Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts.

BOEM also recognizes that participants in the Task Force will change over time as OCS renewable energy activity in the Gulf of Maine proceeds, and that the membership list is therefore dynamic. Representatives from other states and governmental entities may be invited to participate periodically in Task Force meetings to provide additional perspectives on relevant transboundary issues. BOEM stakeholders may also be invited to provide updates on relevant activities.

Roles and Responsibilities

BOEM coordinates the Task Force work with other governments and agencies through designated primary points of contact, who are responsible for assuring appropriate participation from all relevant functional units within their respective organizations and for accomplishing necessary sharing of information. Points of contact for each state are designated as follows, and will be updated as needed on the BOEM website:

Maine	Dan Burgess, Director of the Maine Governor’s Energy Office
Massachusetts	Bruce Carlisle, Managing Director of Offshore Wind, Massachusetts Clean Energy Center
New Hampshire	Matthew Mailloux, Energy Advisor, Office of Strategic Initiatives, New Hampshire Governor’s Office

Communication

BOEM will use email to communicate meeting dates, times, and locations and to distribute meeting materials to Task Force members through the primary points of contact. In-person meetings will be arranged on an as-needed basis, and BOEM may also conduct meetings by telephone or by using web-meeting software (e.g., WebEx). Materials distributed and discussed at Task Force meetings may be of a sensitive nature and should not be circulated beyond Task Force member agencies and offices unless expressly permitted by BOEM, subject to the requirements of applicable “freedom of information” laws and associated regulations. Public information or materials generated from Gulf of Maine Task Force meetings will be made available on the BOEM website.