

# **NH Offshore Wind Update**

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# NH's Early Offshore Wind Activities (2019)

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- **January 2019** – NH Governor Chris Sununu requests the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) establish the Gulf of Maine Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force with membership from New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Maine, and all federally recognized Tribes in the Gulf of Maine Region.
- **December 3, 2019** – Governor Sununu signs Executive Order 2019-06 supporting the efforts of the Task Force and directing the NH Office of Strategic Initiatives, the NH Department of Environmental Services, and the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs to produce a report on greenhouse gas emissions and port & transmission infrastructure in New Hampshire as it relates to the potential for the deployment of offshore wind in the Gulf of Maine.
- **December 19, 2019** – BOEM holds the first meeting of the Tri-State Task Force with presentations from BOEM, other federal agencies, all three states, and other stakeholders.

And then comes COVID... the Task Force's activities are paused as the federal government and the three states (and everyone else) focus on COVID-19 response efforts.



# Gulf of Maine OSW Activities Resume (2020/2021)

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- **July 29, 2020** – Governor Sununu signs HB 1245 which includes the creation of the NH Commission to Study Offshore Wind and Port Development; the Commission, chaired by NH State Senator David Watters, meets monthly and includes representatives from state government, the business community (including NH’s commercial fishing industry), and labor unions.
- **March 1, 2021** – Governor Sununu signs Executive Order 2021-03 reiterating his support for the exploration of offshore wind in the Gulf of Maine and updating his previous Executive Order to extend the deadline for the study on greenhouse gas emissions and port & transmission infrastructure.
- **Summer 2021** – BOEM, New Hampshire, Maine, and Massachusetts resume the activities of the Task Force, specifically developing a plan and timeline for the next phase of BOEM’s process, which is the siting and leasing process; this includes creating a regional stakeholder engagement plan which will support each of the states’ individual stakeholder engagement plans.



# National Activities that Renewed the Offshore Wind Discussion in New Hampshire

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- **March 29, 2021** – The Biden Administration announces their commitment to use federal funding and its federal regulatory authority to support their call for the deployment of 30 gigawatts (GW) of offshore wind in the United States by 2030 as part of their overall efforts to address climate change.
- **May 10, 2021** – BOEM releases the record of decision (ROD) for Vineyard Wind 1 allowing it to begin the construction phase of the project.
- **June 4, 2021** – Nine Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states (including ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NY, NJ, MD, and VA) send a letter to BOEM expressing appreciation for their efforts regarding offshore wind in the United States but also ask for additional support from the federal government in a few areas, particularly on the issue of compensatory mitigation for negatively impacted commercial fishing activities.
  - This leads to BOEM engaging the Special Initiative on Offshore Wind (SIOW), an independent, non-profit project at the University of Delaware’s College of Earth, Ocean, and Environment that supports the advancement of offshore wind, to facilitate conversations among the nine states, BOEM, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and other stakeholders about the issue of compensatory mitigation and other issues relating to offshore wind; all three Gulf of Maine states were signatories to the letter to the Biden Administration and have participated in SIOW’s working group.



# National Activities that Renewed the Offshore Wind Discussion in New Hampshire (CONT'D)

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- **October 2021** – BOEM releases their schedule for upcoming leasing auctions for seven bodies of water in the United States; the Gulf of Maine is one of the seven with a projected auction to take place during the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of calendar year 2024.
- **November 22, 2021** – BOEM releases a request for information (RFI) regarding *Guidance for Mitigating Impacts to Commercial and Recreational Fisheries from Offshore Wind Energy Development*; BOEM hosted multiple public meetings during the comment period for this RFI to engage stakeholders on this subject.
- **November 24, 2021** – BOEM releases ROD for South Fork Wind allowing it to begin the construction phase of the project.



# 2022/2023 Gulf of Maine Activities and Milestones

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- **February 2022** – The NH Department of Environmental Services and the NH Department of Energy releases the report on greenhouse gas emissions and port & transmission infrastructure in New Hampshire as it relates to the potential for offshore wind in the Gulf of Maine.  
<https://www.des.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt341/files/documents/offshore-wind-deployment-report.pdf>
- **May 19, 2022** – BOEM hosts the second meeting of the Tri-State Task Force to reset the effort to explore offshore wind in the Gulf of Maine and begin the siting and leasing phase of their process.
- **June to November 2022** – Relevant NH state agencies will conduct a six-month stakeholder engagement effort to discuss their questions, priorities, and concerns as it relates to BOEM’s siting and leasing process for the Gulf of Maine and the mapping efforts that are part of this process; NH’s engagement activities will be coordinated with BOEM’s regional activities and the activities of Massachusetts and Maine.
- **June 2022-2023** – Work will begin on a NH funded impacts assessment study to be conducted by an independent, objective consultant to perform a SWOT analysis of the potential economic, energy, and environmental impacts for New Hampshire and the New England Region of offshore wind in the Gulf of Maine; stakeholder engagement by the consultant will also be part of the process for their analysis.



# Related State Issues

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- **Shifting How NH Administers Energy Policy Responsibilities** – In NH’s 2022/2023 State Budget, the NH Office of Strategic Initiatives was eliminated with the energy policy responsibilities being transferred to the newly created NH Department of Energy and the planning functions being transferred to the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs; in addition, some of the NH Public Utilities Commission (PUC)’s policy functions were transferred to the NH Department of Energy as well.
- **Reform of the Siting Evaluation Committee (SEC)** – The SEC is the State entity responsible for overseeing the permitting process for energy projects. The NH State Legislature is implementing changes to the SEC in two phases:
  - **Phase 1** – In the current session of the State Legislature, there is legislation that would improve the processes and functionality of the SEC, including reducing the threshold for quorum and streamlining the processes to address public complaints the SEC receives about existing SEC certified projects.
  - **Phase 2** – There will also be a study to look at the role the SEC plays within state government and exploring the possibility of changes to that role now that New Hampshire has a Department of Energy; specifically, should the permitting responsibilities be handled by the new department given the state’s other permitting responsibilities are handled by state agencies.



# Related State Issues (CONT'D)

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- **State Legislative Activities** – In the 2022 Session of the NH State Legislature, two pieces of legislation were passed relating to offshore wind activities, SB 268 and SB 440:
  - **SB 268:** The focus of this bill is to ensure New Hampshire’s statutes included our regulatory policies regarding offshore wind deployment, including the need to address compensatory mitigation for negatively impacted commercial fishing activities along with other commercial and recreational maritime activities; the catalyst for this piece of legislation was to ensure NH had the ability to utilize federal consistency for offshore wind projects in federal waters in the Gulf of Maine.
  - **SB 440:** The focus of this bill is to ensure the NH Department of Energy’s Office of Offshore Wind Industry Development advises the NH Public Utilities Commission (PUC) and is part of any conversations regarding a NH utility being interested in pursuing clean energy resources produced in the Gulf of Maine.
- **Improvements to NH’s Port Infrastructure** – The NH Port Authority has five projects it has either started or is in the final stages of securing funding for that are part of its efforts to ensure New Hampshire’s main port in Portsmouth and its supporting facilities in other parts of the state have the capacity and capability to service the large cargo ships that are part of offshore wind supply chain operations; the state is moving these projects forward as quickly as possible to ensure completion of all five projects before construction of any offshore wind facilities in the Gulf of Maine begins.





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