

The BLM will consult with Indian Tribal Nations including the Eastern Shoshone Tribe of the Wind River Reservation, Northern Arapaho Tribe, the Ute Indian Tribe of Uintah and Ouray Reservation, Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Reservations, and Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council on a government-to-government basis in accordance with Executive Order 13175, BLM Manual Section 1780, and other Departmental policies. Tribal concerns, including impacts on Indian trust assets and potential impacts to cultural resources, will be given due consideration. Federal, State, and local agencies, along with Indian Tribal Nations and other stakeholders that may be interested in or affected by the proposed project that the BLM is evaluating, are invited to participate in the scoping process and, if eligible, may request or be requested by the BLM to participate in the development of the environmental analysis as a cooperating agency.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

(Authority: 40 CFR 1501.9)

Andrew S. Archuleta,
State Director.

[FR Doc. 2024-05618 Filed 3-15-24; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

[Docket No. BOEM-2024-0008]

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Atlantic Shores North Project on the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf Offshore New Jersey

AGENCY: Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) announces its intent to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for a construction and operations plan (COP) of a proposed offshore wind energy

project submitted by Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind, LLC (Atlantic Shores). This notice of intent (NOI) initiates the public scoping and comment process under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Atlantic Shores proposes to construct and operate the project in Renewable Energy Lease Area OCS-A 0549 (Lease Area), which is approximately 81,129 acres and located 8.4 statute miles (mi) (7.3 nautical miles) offshore New Jersey and approximately 60 mi offshore New York State. Atlantic Shores proposes to develop the entire Lease Area, known as the Atlantic Shores North Project (the Project).

DATES: Your comments must be received by BOEM on or before May 2, 2024 for timely consideration.

BOEM will hold three in-person and two virtual public scoping meetings for the Atlantic Shores North EIS at the following dates and times (eastern time):

In Person:

- Tuesday, April 9, 2024, 5:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m., The Berkeley Hotel, 1401 Ocean Avenue, Asbury Park, New Jersey 07712
- Wednesday, April 10, 2024, 5:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m., Grand Oaks Country Club, 200 Huguenot Avenue, Staten Island, New York 10312; and
- Thursday, April 11, 2024, 5:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m., Dyker Beach Golf Course, 86th Street and 7th Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11228;

Virtual:

- Wednesday, April 3, 2024, 1:00 p.m., and
- Tuesday, April 16, 2024, 5:00 p.m.

Registration for the virtual public meetings may be completed here: <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/new-jersey/atlantic-shores-north-ocs-0549> or by calling (888) 788-0099 (toll free). Registration for in-person meetings will occur on site. The meetings are open to the public and free to attend.

ADDRESSES: Written comments can be submitted in any of the following ways:

- Delivered by U.S. mail or other delivery service, enclosed in an envelope labeled “ATLANTIC SHORES North EIS” and addressed to Kimberly Sullivan, NEPA Coordinator, Environmental Branch for Renewable Energy, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, 45600 Woodland Road, VAM-OREP, Sterling, Virginia 20166; or
- Through the [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) web portal: Navigate to <https://www.regulations.gov> and search for Docket No. BOEM-2024-0008. Select

the document in the search results on which you want to comment, click on the “Comment” button, and follow the online instructions for submitting your comment. A commenter’s checklist is available on the comment web page. Enter your information and comment, then click “Submit.”

For more information about submitting comments, please see the “Public Participation” heading under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

Detailed information about the proposed Project, including the COP and instructions for making written comments, can be found on BOEM’s website at: <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/new-jersey/atlantic-shores-north-ocs-0549>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kimberly Sullivan, Office of Renewable Energy Programs, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, 45600 Woodland Road, Sterling, Virginia 20166, telephone (702) 338-4766, or email Kimberly.Sullivan@boem.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action

In Executive Order 14008, “Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad,” issued on January 27, 2021, President Joseph R. Biden stated that the policy of his administration is “to organize and deploy the full capacity of its agencies to combat the climate crisis to implement a government-wide approach that reduces climate pollution in every sector of the economy; increases resilience to the impacts of climate change; protects public health; conserves our lands, waters, and biodiversity; delivers environmental justice; and spurs well-paying union jobs and economic growth, especially through innovation, commercialization, and deployment of clean energy technologies and infrastructure.”

Through a competitive leasing process conducted under 30 CFR 585.211–585.225, BOEM awarded US Wind, LLC, the Commercial Lease OCS-A 0499, covering an area offshore New Jersey. BOEM approved an assignment of 100 percent interest in the lease to EDF Renewables Development, Inc., in December 2018, and then to Atlantic Shores in August 2019. BOEM approved the segregation of Lease OCS-A 0499 into two separate leases in April 2022. The northern portion of OCS-A 0499 was retained by Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind, LLC and given a new lease number, OCS-A 0549. Lease OCS-A 0499 is commonly referred to as Atlantic Shores South, and Lease OCS-A 0549 is commonly referred to as

Atlantic Shores North. This NOI only addresses activities within and in support of potential development of Lease OCS-A 0549, Atlantic Shores North.

Atlantic Shores has the exclusive right to submit a COP for activities within the Lease Area. Atlantic Shores submitted a COP to BOEM proposing the construction, operation, maintenance, and conceptual decommissioning of an offshore wind energy facility in Lease Area OCS-A-0549, known as the Atlantic Shores North Project, in accordance with BOEM's COP regulations under 30 CFR 585.626, *et seq.*

Atlantic Shores' goal is to develop a commercial-scale offshore wind energy facility in the Lease Area to provide renewable energy to the States of New Jersey and/or New York. Atlantic Shores proposes to construct up to 157 wind turbine generators (WTG) in a 1.1 mil 0.7 mi (1 nm x 0.6 nm) grid distributed across the Lease Area. Up to 8 small, 4 medium, or 3 large offshore substations (OSS) are proposed within identified rows of structures. There may also be one permanent meteorological (met) tower constructed and up to two temporary meteorological and oceanographic (metocean) buoys installed during construction. Together, the WTGs, OSSs, and met tower and metocean buoys consist of up to 168 offshore structures (Proposed Action).

Two offshore export cable corridors (ECC) are proposed to transmit electricity from the lease area to shore. The proposed Monmouth ECC would make landfall in Sea Girt, New Jersey. The proposed Northern ECC may split, making landfall in the New York City area or in the Asbury Park, New Jersey, area. Multiple onshore interconnection cable routes have been identified from the landing sites to five proposed points of interconnection (POIs). The proposed POIs are the Larrabee and Atlantic substations in Monmouth County, New Jersey; Fresh Kills and Goethals substations in Richmond County, New York; and Gowanus substation in Kings County, New York. Atlantic Shores is actively seeking one or more offshore renewable energy credit (OREC) or power purchase agreement (PPA) awards for this project.

Based on BOEM's authority under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA) (43 U.S.C. 1331 *et seq.*) to authorize renewable energy activities on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS), Executive Order 14008, the shared goals of the Federal agencies to deploy 30 gigawatts (GW) of offshore wind in the United States by 2030, while protecting biodiversity and promoting ocean co-

use, and in consideration of applicant's goals, the purpose of BOEM's action is to determine whether to approve, approve with modifications, or disapprove Atlantic Shores' COP. BOEM will make its determination after weighing the factors in subsection 8(p)(4) of OCSLA that are applicable to plan decisions and in consideration of the above goals. BOEM's action is needed to fulfill its duties under the lease, which requires BOEM to make a decision on the lessee's plan to construct and operate a commercial-scale, offshore wind energy facility(ies) in the Lease area.

In addition, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) anticipates one or more requests for authorization under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) to take marine mammals incidental to construction activities related to the Project. NMFS's issuance of an MMPA incidental take authorization would be a major Federal action connected to BOEM's action (40 CFR 1501.9(e)(1)). The purpose of the NMFS action—which is a direct outcome of Atlantic Shores' request for authorization to take marine mammals incidental to specified activities associated with the Project (e.g., pile driving)—is to evaluate Atlantic Shores' request pursuant to specific requirements of the MMPA and its implementing regulations administered by NMFS, considering impacts of the Atlantic Shores North Project's activities on relevant resources and, if appropriate, issue the permit or authorization. NMFS needs to render a decision regarding the request for authorization due to NMFS's responsibilities under the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1371(a)(5)(A)) and its implementing regulations. If NMFS makes the findings necessary to issue the requested authorization, NMFS intends to adopt, after independent review, BOEM's EIS to support that decision and fulfill its NEPA requirements.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Philadelphia District anticipates requests for authorizing a permit action to be undertaken through authority delegated to the district engineer by 33 CFR 325.8, under section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (RHA) (33 U.S.C. 403) and section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) (33 U.S.C. 1344). In addition, it is anticipated that a section 408 permission will be required pursuant to section 14 of the RHA (33 U.S.C. 408), for any proposed alterations that have the potential to alter, occupy, or use any existing

federally authorized civil works projects.

The USACE considers issuance of permits and permissions under these three delegated authorities a major Federal action connected to BOEM's action (40 CFR 1501.9(e)(1)). The need for the project as provided by the applicant in volume 1, section 1.2 of the COP and reviewed by USACE for NEPA purposes is to provide a commercially viable offshore wind energy project within the Lease Area to supply electricity in support of renewable and offshore wind energy goals established by the State of New Jersey and the State of New York.

The basic Project purpose, as determined by USACE for section 404(b)(1) guidelines evaluation, is offshore wind energy generation. The overall project purpose for section 404(b)(1) guidelines evaluation, as determined by USACE, is the construction and operation of a commercial-scale, offshore wind energy project for renewable energy generation in Lease Area OCS-A 0549 offshore New Jersey and transmission to the New Jersey and/or New York energy grid.

The purpose of USACE section 408 action as determined by Engineer Circular 1165-2-220 is to evaluate the applicant's request and determine whether the proposed alterations are injurious to the public interest or impair the usefulness of the USACE project. The USACE section 408 permission is needed to ensure that congressionally authorized projects continue to provide their intended benefits to the public.

USACE intends to adopt BOEM's EIS to support its decision on any permits or permissions requested under section 10 of the RHA, section 404 of the CWA, and section 408 of the RHA. The USACE would adopt the EIS per 40 CFR 1506.3 if, after its independent review of the document, it concludes that the EIS satisfies the USACE's comments and recommendations. Based on its participation as a cooperating agency and its consideration of BOEM's EIS, USACE intends to issue a record of decision (ROD) to formally document its decision on the Proposed Action.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 2 anticipates requests under section 402 of the CWA for an individual National Pollutants Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit to authorize discharges to surface waters from operation of a high voltage direct current (HVDC) OSS and the installation of suction bucket foundations on the U.S. OCS. EPA intends to rely on the Final EIS to support its decision on NPDES permit issuance.

Proposed Action and Preliminary Alternatives

Atlantic Shores proposes to construct and operate an offshore wind energy facility within Lease Area OCS-A-0549, with up to 168 total foundation locations. Offshore components for the Atlantic Shores North Project include up to 157 WTGs and up to 8 small, 4 medium, or 3 large OSSs, foundations and associated scour protection for WTGs, associated interarray cables, up to 8 high voltage alternating current (HVAC) and HVDC submarine export cable routes in 2 offshore ECCs, cable protection, up to 1 permanent met tower, and up to 2 temporary metocean buoys.

Atlantic Shores is considering monopile, piled jacket, mono-buckets, suction-bucket jackets, suction bucket tetrahedron bases, gravity-based structures, or gravity-pad tetrahedron base foundation types to support the WTGs and OSSs. The WTGs, OSSs, foundations, and interarray cables would be located entirely within the Lease Area. Two offshore export cable corridors are proposed to transmit electricity from the lease areas to shore. Additional details on the ECCs and onshore facilities are described under the Purpose and Need section of this NOI.

BOEM will evaluate reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Action that are identified during the scoping period and included in the draft EIS, including a no action alternative. Under the no action alternative, BOEM would disapprove the Atlantic Shores North COP, and the proposed wind energy facility described in the COP would not be built within the Lease Area.

In addition to the Proposed Action and the no action alternative (*i.e.*, disapproval of the COP), potential alternatives that the draft EIS could analyze include the following preliminary alternatives.

- *Uniform Grid Alternative:* Move all permanent structures that narrow any linear rows and columns to fewer than 0.6 nautical miles (1,100 meters) or in a layout that eliminates two distinct lines of orientation in a grid pattern.

- *Visual Minimization Alternative:* BOEM intends to examine height restrictions and setbacks to reduce visual impacts.

- *Habitat and Fisheries Impact Minimization Alternative:* BOEM intends to examine alternatives that would reduce impacts to habitat and fisheries.

After completing the EIS and associated consultations, BOEM will decide through a ROD whether to

approve, approve with modification, or disapprove the Atlantic Shores North Project COP. If BOEM approves the COP, Atlantic Shores must comply with all conditions of its approval.

Summary of Potential Impacts

The draft EIS will identify and describe the potential effects of the Proposed Action and the alternatives on the human environment. Those potential effects must be reasonably foreseeable and must have a reasonably close causal relationship to the Proposed Action and the alternatives. Such effects include those that occur at the same time and place as the Proposed Action and alternatives and those that are later in time or occur in a different place.

Potential effects include, but are not limited to, impacts (whether beneficial or adverse) on air quality; water quality; bats; benthic habitat; essential fish habitat; invertebrates; finfish; birds; marine mammals; terrestrial and coastal habitats and fauna; sea turtles; wetlands and other waters of the United States; commercial fisheries and for-hire recreational fishing; cultural resources; Tribal issues of concern; demographics; employment; economics; environmental justice; land use and coastal infrastructure; navigation and vessel traffic; other marine uses; recreation and tourism; and visual resources. These potential effects will be analyzed in the draft and final EIS.

Based on a preliminary evaluation of the resources listed in the preceding paragraph, BOEM expects potential impacts on sea turtles and marine mammals from underwater noise caused by construction and from collision risks with Project-related vessel traffic. Structures installed by the Project could permanently change benthic and fish habitats (*e.g.*, creation of artificial reefs). Commercial fisheries and for-hire recreational fishing could be impacted. Project structures above the water could affect the visual character defining historic properties and recreational and tourism areas. Project structures also would pose an allision and height hazard to vessels passing close by, and vessels would, in turn, pose a hazard to the structures. Additionally, the Project might cause conflicts with military activities, air traffic, land-based radar services, cables and pipelines, and scientific surveys. The EIS will analyze all significant impacts, as well as potential measures that would avoid, minimize, or mitigate identified non-beneficial impacts.

Beneficial impacts are also expected by facilitating achievement of State renewable energy goals, increasing job

opportunities, improving air quality, and addressing climate change through E.O. 14008.

(i) Anticipated Permits and Authorizations

In addition to the requested COP approval, various other Federal, State, and local authorizations will be required for the Project. Applicable Federal laws include the Endangered Species Act, Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, MMPA, RHA, CWA, Clean Air Act section 328, and the Coastal Zone Management Act. BOEM will also conduct government-to-government Tribal consultations. For a detailed listing of regulatory requirements applicable to the Project, please see the COP, volume I, available at <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/new-jersey/atlantic-shores-north-ocs-0549>.

(ii) BOEM has chosen to use the NEPA process to fulfill its obligations under NHPA. While BOEM's obligations under NHPA and NEPA are independent, regulations implementing section 106 of NHPA at 36 CFR 800.8(c) allow the NEPA process and documentation to substitute for various aspects of the NHPA review. This process is intended to improve efficiency, promote transparency and accountability, and support a broadened discussion of potential effects that the Project could have on the human environment. During preparation of the EIS, BOEM will ensure that the NEPA process will fully meet all NHPA obligations.

(iii) Schedule for the Decision-Making Process

After the draft EIS is completed, BOEM will publish a notice of availability (NOA) and request public comments on the draft EIS. BOEM currently expects to issue the NOA for the draft EIS in June 2025. After the public comment period ends, BOEM will review and respond to comments received and will develop the final EIS. BOEM currently expects to make the final EIS available to the public in March 2026. A ROD will be completed no sooner than 30 days after the final EIS is released, in accordance with 40 CFR 1506.11.

This Project is a "covered project" under section 41 of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST-41). FAST-41 provides increased transparency and predictability by requiring Federal agencies to publish comprehensive permitting timetables for all covered projects. FAST-41 also provides procedures for modifying permitting timetables to address the unpredictability inherent in the

environmental review and permitting process for significant infrastructure projects. To view the FAST-41 Permitting Dashboard for the Project, visit: <https://www.permits.performance.gov/permitting-project/fast-41-covered-projects/atlantic-shores-north>.

Scoping Process

This NOI commences the public scoping process to identify issues and potential alternatives for consideration in the Atlantic Shores North EIS. BOEM will hold three in-person and two virtual public scoping meetings at the times and dates described above under the “DATES” heading. Throughout the scoping process, Federal agencies, Tribes, State and local governments, and the public will have the opportunity to help BOEM identify significant resources and issues, impact-producing factors, reasonable alternatives (*e.g.*, size, geographic, seasonal, or other restrictions on construction and siting of facilities and activities), and potential mitigation measures to be analyzed in the EIS, as well as to provide additional information.

As noted above, BOEM will use the NEPA process to comply with NHPA. BOEM will consider all written requests from individuals and organizations to participate as consulting parties under NHPA and, as discussed below, will determine who among those parties will be a consulting party in accordance with NHPA regulations.

NEPA Cooperating Agencies

BOEM invites other Federal agencies and State and local governments to consider becoming cooperating agencies and invites federally recognized Tribes to become cooperating Tribal governments in the preparation of this EIS. The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) NEPA regulations specify that cooperating agencies and governments are those with “jurisdiction by law or special expertise.” Potential cooperating agencies should consider their authority and capacity to assume the responsibilities of a cooperating agency and should be aware that an agency’s role in the environmental analysis neither enlarges nor diminishes the final decision-making authority of any other agency involved in the NEPA process.

BOEM has provided potential cooperating agencies with a written summary of expectations for cooperating agencies, including schedules, milestones, responsibilities, scope and detail of cooperating agencies’ expected contributions, and availability of pre-decisional

information. BOEM anticipates this summary will form the basis for a memorandum of agreement between BOEM and any non-Department of the Interior cooperating agency. Agencies should also consider the factors for determining cooperating agency status in the CEQ memorandum entitled “Cooperating Agencies in Implementing the Procedural Requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act,” dated January 30, 2002. This document is available on the internet at: https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/nepapub/nepa_documents/RedDont/G-CEQ-CoopAgenciesImplem.pdf. BOEM, as the lead agency, does not provide financial assistance to cooperating agencies.

Governmental entities that are not cooperating agencies will have opportunities to provide information and comments to BOEM during the public input stages of the NEPA process.

NHPA Consulting Parties

Individuals and organizations with a demonstrated interest in the Project can request to participate as NHPA consulting parties under 36 CFR 800.2(c)(5) based on their legal or economic stake in historic properties affected by the Project.

Before issuing this NOI, BOEM compiled a list of potential consulting parties and invited them to become consulting parties. To become a consulting party, those invited must respond in writing by the requested response date.

Interested individuals and organizations that did not receive a written invitation can request to be consulting parties by writing to the staff NHPA contact at ICF International, Inc., the third-party EIS contractor supporting BOEM in its administration of this review. ICF’s NHPA contact for this review is Maureen McCoy at ASOW_North_Section106@icf.com. BOEM will determine which interested parties should be consulting parties.

Public Participation

Federal agencies, Tribes, State and local governments, interested parties, and the public are requested to comment on the scope of this EIS, significant issues that should be addressed, and alternatives that should be considered.

Information on Submitting Comments

a. Freedom of Information Act

BOEM will protect your privileged and confidential information as required by the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Exemption 4 of FOIA applies to

trade secrets and commercial or financial information that is privileged or confidential. If you wish to protect the confidentiality of such information, clearly label it and request that BOEM treat it as confidential. BOEM will not disclose such information if BOEM determines under 30 CFR 585.114(b) that it qualifies for exemption from disclosure under FOIA. Please label privileged or confidential information “Contains Confidential Information” and consider submitting such information as a separate attachment.

BOEM will not treat as confidential any aggregate summaries of such information or comments not containing such privileged or confidential information. Information that is not labeled as privileged or confidential may be regarded by BOEM as suitable for public release.

b. Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

BOEM discourages anonymous comments. Please include your name and address as part of your comment. You should be aware that your entire comment, including your name, address, and any other personally identifiable information included in your comment, may be made publicly available. All comments from individuals, businesses, and organizations will be available for public viewing on [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov).

For BOEM to consider withholding your PII from disclosure, you must identify any information contained in your comments that, if released, would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of your personal privacy. You must also briefly describe any possible harmful consequences of the disclosure of information, such as embarrassment, injury, or other harm.

Even if BOEM withholds your information in the context of this notice, your submission is subject to FOIA. If your submission is requested under FOIA, your information will only be withheld if a determination is made that one of FOIA’s exemptions to disclosure applies. Such a determination will be made in accordance with the Department’s FOIA regulations and applicable law.

c. Section 304 of the NHPA (54 U.S.C. 307103(a))

After consultation with the Secretary, BOEM is required to withhold the location, character, or ownership of historic resources if it determines that disclosure may, among other things, risk harm to the historic resources or impede the use of a traditional religious site by practitioners. Tribal entities should

designate information that falls under section 304 of NHPA as confidential.

(i) Request for Identification of Potential Alternatives, Information, and Analyses Relevant to the Proposed Action

BOEM requests data, comments, views, information, analysis, alternatives, or suggestions relevant to the Proposed Action from the public; affected Federal, Tribal, State, and local governments, agencies, and offices; the scientific community; industry; or any other interested party. Specifically, BOEM requests information on the following topics:

1. Potential effects that the Proposed Action could have on biological resources, including bats, birds, coastal fauna, finfish, invertebrates, essential fish habitat, marine mammals, and sea turtles.

2. Potential effects that the Proposed Action could have on physical resources and conditions including air quality, water quality, wetlands, and other waters of the United States.

3. Potential effects that the Proposed Action could have on socioeconomic and cultural resources, including commercial fisheries and for-hire recreational fishing, demographics, employment, economics, environmental justice, land use and coastal infrastructure, navigation and vessel traffic, other uses (marine minerals, military use, aviation), recreation and tourism, and scenic and visual resources.

4. Other possible reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Action that BOEM should consider, including additional or alternative avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures.

5. As part of its compliance with NHPA section 106 and its implementing regulations (36 CFR part 800), BOEM seeks comment and input from the public and consulting parties regarding the identification of historic properties within the Proposed Action's area of potential effects, the potential effects on those historic properties from the activities proposed in the COP, and any information that supports identification of historic properties under NHPA. BOEM also solicits proposed measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any adverse effects on historic properties. BOEM will present available information regarding known historic properties during the public scoping period at <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/new-jersey/atlantic-shores-north-ocs-0549>. BOEM's effects analysis for historic properties will be available for public and consulting party comment with the draft EIS.

6. Information on other current or planned activities in, or in the vicinity of, the Proposed Action, their possible impacts on the Project, and the Project's possible impacts on those activities.

7. Other information relevant to the Proposed Action and its impacts on the human environment.

To promote informed decision-making, comments should be as specific as possible and should provide as much detail as necessary to meaningfully and fully inform BOEM of the commenter's position. Comments should explain why the issues raised are important to the consideration of potential environmental impacts and possible alternatives to the Proposed Action, as well as economic, employment, and other impacts affecting the quality of the human environment.

The draft EIS will include a summary of all alternatives, information, and analyses submitted during the scoping process for consideration by BOEM and the cooperating agencies.

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*, and 40 CFR 1501.9.

Karen J. Baker,

*Chief, Office of Renewable Energy Programs,
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management.*

[FR Doc. 2024-05649 Filed 3-15-24; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

[Docket No. BOEM-2024-0020]

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Assessment for Commercial Wind Lease Issuance, Site Characterization Activities, and Site Assessment Activities on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf in the Gulf of Maine Offshore the States of Maine, New Hampshire, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

AGENCY: Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) intends to prepare an environmental assessment (EA) to consider the potential environmental impacts associated with possible wind energy-related leasing, site characterization activities, and site assessment activities on the U.S. Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) in the Gulf of Maine offshore the States of Maine and New Hampshire and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. BOEM is seeking public input regarding

important environmental issues and the identification of reasonable alternatives that should be considered in the EA.

The environmental impacts of any proposed wind energy projects will be assessed after a lease is issued and before BOEM decides whether or not to approve any lessee's project construction and operations plan.

DATES: BOEM must receive your comments no later than April 17, 2024.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by either of the following methods:

- *Through the regulations.gov web portal:* Navigate to <https://www.regulations.gov> and search for Docket No. BOEM-2024-0020 to submit public comments and view supporting and related materials available for this notice. Click on the "Comment" button below the document link. Enter your information and comment, then click "Submit Comment"; or

- *By U.S. Postal Service or other delivery service:* Send your comments and information to the following address: Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Office of Renewable Energy Programs, 45600 Woodland Road, Mail Stop VAM-OREP, Sterling, VA 20166.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Brandi Sangunett, BOEM, Environment Branch for Renewable Energy, 45600 Woodland Road, Mail Stop VAM-OREP, Sterling, VA 20166, (703) 787-1015 or brandi.sangunett@boem.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background: On October 19, 2023, BOEM announced a draft wind energy area (WEA) on the U.S. Gulf of Maine OCS for public review and comment. The Draft WEA is in the Gulf of Maine offshore the States of Maine and New Hampshire and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, covering approximately 3.5 million acres. Before finalizing the WEA, BOEM considered feedback from government partners, federally recognized Tribes, ocean users, and other stakeholders. Concurrently with this NOI, BOEM is announcing the final wind energy area (Final WEA) in the Gulf of Maine, covering approximately 2 million acres. Detailed information about the WEA can be found on BOEM's website at: <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/maine/gulf-maine>.

Proposed Action and Scope of Analysis

The EA's proposed action is issuing wind energy leases in the Gulf of Maine WEA. The EA will consider project easements and grants for subsea cable corridors associated with leasing. The EA also will consider the potential environmental impacts associated with