

For Immediate Release:
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**BOEM Seeks Industry Interest in Renewable Wind Energy
Offshore North Carolina**
Agency Also Requests Public Comment on Potential Impacts

WASHINGTON — As part of the Obama Administration’s all-of-the-above energy strategy to expand domestic energy development, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) announced today it is publishing a Call for Information and Nominations to gauge the offshore wind industry’s interest in acquiring commercial wind leases in three areas offshore North Carolina and to request comments regarding site conditions, resources and other uses within the Call areas.

In consultation with the North Carolina Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force, BOEM has identified three areas on the Outer Continental Shelf offshore North Carolina where commercial wind energy leasing could take place. The three Call Areas are comprised of 195 whole OCS blocks and 60 partial blocks, totaling 1,441 square nautical miles. One area is located six miles offshore Kitty Hawk, and two areas are located seven and 13 miles offshore southern Wilmington.

Consistent with Interior Secretary Salazar’s *Smart From the Start* strategy for offshore wind, each of the three Call Areas has been designed to make available areas that are attractive for commercial offshore wind development while also protecting sensitive habitats and resources and minimizing space use conflicts with activities such as military operations, shipping and fishing. Site-specific mitigation measures, stipulations or exclusion areas may be developed as a result of future environmental reviews and associated consultations.

In addition to the Call, BOEM is publishing in the Federal Register a Notice of Intent (NOI) to Prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA). Through the NOI, BOEM is seeking public comment for determining significant issues and alternatives to be analyzed in the EA. The EA will consider potential environmental and socioeconomic impacts associated with issuing commercial wind leases and approving site assessment activities on the lease areas.

“Today’s announcement represents a significant step forward in facilitating the responsible development of renewable, clean energy offshore the United States,” said BOEM Director Tommy P. Beaudreau. “We are working with the state of North Carolina, industry and a broad range of stakeholders to ensure that commercial wind leasing is done smartly and in a manner that engages and involves stakeholders throughout our process.”

The Call and the NOI will be published in the Federal Register on December 13, 2012, and BOEM will accept public comments for 45 days in either of the following ways:

Electronically: <http://www.boem.gov/About-BOEM/Public-Engagement/Public-Engagement-Opportunities.aspx>. Click on the “Open Comment Documents” link and follow the instructions to view relevant materials and submit comments.

In written form, deliver to:

Office of Renewable Energy Programs
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
381 Elden Street, HM 1328
Herndon, Virginia 20170-4817.

BOEM will soon schedule public information meetings to provide additional opportunities to comment on the Call and the NOI. Once scheduled, information about the public information meetings will be found online at:

<http://www.boem.gov/Renewable-Energy-Program/State-Activities/North-Carolina.aspx>.

For more information about Department of Interior’s “Smart from the Start” program go to <http://www.boem.gov/Renewable-Energy-Program/Smart-from-the-Start/Index.aspx>.

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) promotes economic development, energy independence, and environmental protection through responsible, science-based management of offshore conventional and renewable energy development.

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