

## HearingComments, DNREC (MailBox Resources)

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**From:** DoNotReply@delaware.gov  
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**Subject:** Public Hearing Comments  
**Attachments:** Scholarly Sources.pdf

Comments on Docket #2024-P-MULTI-0007 -- US Wind Project

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### Comments:

I am writing in support of state permits associated with cables that would bring renewable energy from the U.S. Wind project off the shore of Maryland. While the details of these plans will need to be worked out to ensure minimal harms to state resources and habitats, the state of Delaware has a vested interest -- and a responsibility -- in supporting our nation's decarbonization efforts. Supporting the project and issuing permits is an important first step to identifying the best paths forward. There is scientific consensus that anthropogenic climate change is an existential threat that will continue to worsen exponentially without a clean energy transition. It is already happening. An overwhelming majority of the warmest days on record for both land and sea surface temperatures have been in 2023 and 2024 with no signs of slowing. While there may be concerns about the uncertainties associated with offshore wind development's effects on marine wildlife and fisheries, these possible harms pale in comparison to unchecked ocean warming, acidification, and destabilization. Additionally, federal agencies like NOAA and BOEM have plans in place to evaluate and minimize harms to marine wildlife, habitats, and fishing/shipping activities as the nation invests in a lower carbon future. I have no doubt that you will receive many comments on the merits and drawbacks of offshore wind farms, and I understand that these processes are not necessarily votes. My comment focuses on DNREC's responsibilities, decision making process, and the kinds of information I think should be considered to make an informed decision about issuing the relevant permits. I am a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine, Atmospheric, and Earth Science and have been staying at my family's home in Sussex County this winter and spring while I conduct my last research project. My research focus is whale and dolphin conservation, with an emphasis on environmental communication. The research I have done and the expertise I have developed in my doctoral studies has shown that misinformation and manufactured uncertainty are common strategies used to resist actions that threaten powerful groups' status quo. Offshore wind is something that has come up quite regularly and I have seen first hand the challenges local citizens face in making sense of all the information they encounter related to local projects. Across environmental governance, powerful groups are known to activate and co-opt well-intentioned individuals to speak out and use environmental laws to impede progress in service of their own interests rather than engage constructively to achieve progress that will benefit all. I caution DNREC against falling for these tactics from real estate developers, fossil fuel interests, politicians, and more. In addition to considering ecological and economic studies, I implore DNREC to consider social science in its decision making to ensure a more complete understanding of this project and paths forward. Attached is a combined PDF of some peer-reviewed studies related to wind energy case studies as well as other case studies from political ecology. There are important lessons to be learned from these sources and I hope DNREC takes care to include the human dimensions of offshore wind development and environmental decision making as it evaluates support for permits associated with the U.S. Wind project. The agency should take care to not repeat the mistakes of the past to pave the way for a bright future for our region and our shared planet. This is a pivotal moment and Delaware has an incredible opportunity to demonstrate leadership and effective inter-agency collaboration in the clean energy transition that will benefit people, economies, and health for generations to come.