

## US Wind Offshore Wind Transmission Line Applications

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To:HearingComments, DNREC (MailBox Resources) <DNRECHearingComments@delaware.gov>

Cc:Mayor & Council <Mayor&Council@oceancitymd.gov>

Dear Ms. Vest,

On behalf of the Mayor and City Council of Ocean City Maryland I am writing in opposition to the US Wind applications submitted to the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DENREC). The work under consideration by DENREC is part of an overall plan by US Wind to industrialize the Delaware and Maryland Coastlines and includes:

- The installation of high voltage electric cables through Delaware beaches, state parks, wetlands, and coastal estuaries.
- Dredging 74,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment from a sensitive coastal estuary.
- Placing 38,250 cubic yards of concrete in coastal waters
- Installing 114 wind turbines and four power substations in the ocean off the Delmarva coast

As of this date, there are two similar offshore wind generation facilities in operation off the United States east coast and both have been plagued with problems that have resulted in environmental damage and beach closures. At Block Island the offshore cables were installed so poorly that they became exposed at the shoreline resulting in power outages and beach closures. The current CEO of US Wind, Jeff Grybowski, was in charge of the Block Island project. At the Vinyard Wind project a turbine blade literally disintegrated showering the ocean and beaches with hazardous debris. Similar blade failures are now occurring in Europe. It is clear that in the rush to build these projects and use ever larger turbines, safety has taken a back seat.

Sediment results from the Indian River/ Bay contain high levels of thallium, 2-Methylnaphthalene, mercury, selenium, zinc, naphthalene, acenaphthylene, arsenic, and nickel. Currently that contaminated sediment is somewhat inert and resting on the bay bottom. Once that sediment is disturbed through either cable installation or the associated dredging, it will become suspended in the water column degrading water quality. US Wind proposes to use hydraulic dredging and then pump the excavated material into geofabric bags which will then be taken to a landfill. At the landfill they will be passively dewatered and the water, now contaminated by mixing with dredged sediment, will be released back into the Indian River/Bay.

Horizontal directional drilling uses a drilling fluid typically made up of water and bentonite clay mixed with other chemical additives. This fluid is pumped at high pressure through the bore hole and there is a well-known and non-trivial risk of inadvertent fluid release which can then percolate all the way to surface. US Wind proposes to use this method to install high voltage cables across Delaware beaches and sensitive wetlands.

Taken individually any of these issues should be grounds enough for DENREC to deny these applications. The cumulative impacts of these proposed actions on Delaware's fragile coastal ecosystem are even more substantial.

DENREC should also consider the potential cumulative impacts of other projects that will request to install these transmission lines if US Wind's application is approved. There are two existing undeveloped offshore wind lease areas off the Delaware coast and a third under consideration. Any project constructed in these lease areas will also need to connect to the grid in Delaware, requiring more high voltage cables running through your beaches, bays and wetlands.

Like Delaware, Ocean City supports clean energy. We realize the threat that continued reliance on fossil fuels can have on our environment. However, allowing US Wind and others to construct these projects and industrialize our entire coast threatens to destroy the very things we are trying so hard to protect. Nothing of this scale has ever been allowed to occur along our coasts. This will change the Delaware shore forever and there is no need for it. We urge you to deny these applications and preserve the Delaware beaches.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me anytime.

Sincerely,



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