

economic feasibility; environmental impacts; and geographic considerations.

Availability of the FEIS: The FEIS, Revolution Wind COP, and associated information are available on BOEM's website at: <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/revolution-wind>. BOEM has distributed digital copies of the FEIS to all parties listed in FEIS appendix H. If you require a digital copy on a flash drive or a paper copy, BOEM will provide one upon request, as long as these materials are available. You may request a flash drive or paper copy of the FEIS by contacting Laura Lee Wolfson at (703) 787-1433 or Lauralee.wolfson@boem.gov.

Cooperating Agencies: The following Federal agencies and State governmental entities participated as cooperating agencies in the preparation of the FEIS: Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement; Environmental Protection Agency; National Marine Fisheries Service; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; U.S. Coast Guard; Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management; Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council; and the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation; National Park Service; Federal Aviation Administration; Department of Defense; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and Department of the Navy participated as a participating agency.

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 4231 *et seq.* (NEPA, as amended) and 40 CFR 1506.6.

Karen Baker,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

[Docket No. BOEM-2023-0042]

Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Assessment for a Wind Energy Research Lease on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf Offshore Maine

AGENCY: Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability; request for comments.

SUMMARY: BOEM announces the availability of the draft environmental assessment (EA) for the potential issuance of a wind energy research lease to the State of Maine. The draft EA

analyzes the potential environmental impacts of the site characterization and site assessment activities that are expected to take place should this research lease be issued. This notice of availability (NOA) announces the start of the public review and comment period, as well as the dates and times for public meetings on the draft EA. After BOEM holds the public meetings and addresses public comments submitted during the review period, BOEM will publish a final EA. The EA will inform BOEM's decision whether to issue the research lease.

DATES: Comments must be received no later than August 21, 2023. BOEM's virtual public meetings will be held on the following dates at the times (eastern time) indicated.

- Tuesday, August 1; 5:00 p.m.
- Thursday, August 3; 1:00 p.m.

Registration for the virtual public meeting is required and may be completed at <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/maine/gulf-maine>. Meeting information will be sent to registrants via their email address provided during registration.

ADDRESSES: The draft EA and detailed information about the proposed research lease can be found on BOEM's website at: <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/maine/gulf-maine>. Comments can be submitted in any of the following ways:

- Orally or in written form during any of the public meetings identified in this NOA.
- In written form by mail or any other delivery service, enclosed in an envelope labeled "Gulf of Maine Research Lease EA" and addressed to Chief, Office of Renewable Energy Programs, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, 45600 Woodland Road, Mailstop VAM-OREP, Sterling, VA 20166.

• Through the *regulations.gov* web portal: Navigate to <http://www.regulations.gov> and search for Docket No. BOEM-2023-0042. Click on the "Comment" button below the document link. Enter your information and comment, then click "Submit Comment."

For more information about submitting comments, please see "*Information on Submitting Comments*" under the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** heading below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jessica Stromberg, BOEM Office of Renewable Energy Programs, 45600 Woodland Road, Sterling, Virginia 20166, (703) 787-1730 or jessica.stromberg@boem.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Proposed Action: The draft EA analyzes the proposed action, which is the issuance of a research lease to the State of Maine, and the no action alternative. The EA considers the reasonably foreseeable environmental consequences associated with lease issuance, site characterization surveys, and site assessment activities, such as the deployment and recovery of a meteorological buoy, that are expected to take place should a research lease be issued to the State of Maine. BOEM has decided to prepare an EA for this proposed action in order to assist the agency's planning and decision-making (40 CFR 1501.5(b)).

Availability of the draft EA: The draft EA and associated information are available on BOEM's website at: <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/maine/gulf-maine>. If you require a digital copy on a flash drive or paper copy, BOEM will provide one upon request, if supplies are available. You may request a flash drive or paper copy of the draft EA by contacting Mary Boatman at (703) 787-1662 or mary.boatman@boem.gov.

Cooperating Agencies: The following three Federal agencies participated as cooperating agencies in the preparation of the draft EA: the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, National Marine Fisheries Service, and U.S. Coast Guard.

Information on Submitting Comments

a. Freedom of Information Act

BOEM will protect privileged or confidential information that you submit when 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

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 (PII) that you include, may be made publicly available. All comments from identified individuals, businesses, and organizations will be available for public viewing on regulations.gov. Note that BOEM will make available for public inspection all comments, in their entirety, submitted by organizations and businesses, or by individuals identifying themselves as representatives of organizations or businesses.

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 comment is subject to FOIA. If your comment is requested under FOIA, BOEM will withhold your information only if it determines 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.

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 4231 *et seq.* (NEPA, as amended) and 40 CFR 1506.6.

Karen Baker,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Bureau of Ocean Energy Management**

[Docket No. BOEM-2023-0021]

Final Sale Notice (FSN) for Commercial Leasing for Wind Power Development on the Outer Continental Shelf in the Gulf of Mexico (GOMW-1)

AGENCY: Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Interior.

ACTION: Final sale notice.

SUMMARY: This Final Sale Notice (FSN) contains information pertaining to the areas available for commercial wind energy leasing on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) in the Gulf of Mexico (GOM). Specifically, this FSN details certain provisions and conditions of the leases, auction details, the lease form, criteria for evaluating competing bids, and procedures for award, appeal, and lease execution. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) will offer three leases for sale using a multiple-factor bidding auction format: Lease OCS-G 37334, Lease OCS-G37335, and Lease OCS-G37336 (Lease Areas). The issuance of any lease resulting from this sale will not constitute approval of project-specific plans to develop offshore wind energy. Such plans, if submitted by the Lessee, will be subject to environmental, technical, and public reviews prior to a BOEM decision on whether the proposed activity should be authorized.

DATES: BOEM will hold an online mock auction for potential bidders starting at 8:00 a.m. Central Daylight Time (CDT)/9:00 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) on August 28, 2023. The monetary auction will be held online and will begin at 8:00 a.m. CDT/9:00 a.m. EDT on August 29, 2023. Additional details are provided in the section entitled, "Deadlines and Milestones for Bidders."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Bridgette Duplantis, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Office of Leasing and Plans, 1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard, New Orleans, Louisiana 70123, (504) 736-7502 or bridgette.duplantis@boem.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**I. Background**

The OCS Lands Act authorizes BOEM to offer renewable energy leases for sale on the OCS competitively, unless BOEM determines there is no competitive interest. On June 11, 2021, BOEM published a Request for Interest (RFI) for commercial leasing for wind power development in the Gulf of Mexico OCS (88 FR 31339). The RFI Area comprised

the entire Central Planning Area (CPA) and Western Planning Area (WPA) of the Gulf of Mexico, excluding the portions of those areas located in water depths greater than 1,300 meters. On November 1, 2021, BOEM published the Call for Information and Nominations (86 FR 60283) encompassing an area of almost 30 million acres just west of the Mississippi River to the Texas/Mexican border. On July 20, 2022, BOEM announced that it was seeking public comments on two draft Wind Energy Areas (WEAs) totaling 7,364,668 acres offshore Galveston, Texas, and Lake Charles, Louisiana. In response to feedback collected, BOEM announced the Area Identification on October 31, 2022. BOEM published the Proposed Sale Notice (PSN) in the **Federal Register** (88 FR 11939) on February 22, 2023. A 60-day comment period followed. BOEM requested any prospective bidders who wished to participate in the GOM lease sale to submit qualification materials postmarked no later than April 25, 2023. BOEM also hosted an auction seminar for prospective bidders on March 23, 2023, to discuss the proposed auction format. BOEM received 330 comment submissions in response to the PSN, which are available on [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) (Docket ID: BOEM-2023-0021) at: <https://www.regulations.gov/document/BOEM-2023-0021-0001>. BOEM has posted its responses to the comments that were submitted during the PSN comment period. The document entitled, *Response to Comments*, can be found on BOEM's website at: <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/gulf-mexico-activities>.

In response to the comments received, BOEM made several changes to the GOMW-1 sale format and procedures from those proposed in the PSN and to the lease stipulations in the Proposed Leases. BOEM will offer all three lease areas during one multi-factor GOMW-1 auction. In each round of the auction, a bidder can bid for, at most, one of the offered leases at a time. A bidder may switch between different Lease Areas from round to round subject to the auction rules, but must bid in each round, and ultimately can acquire, at most, one lease in the auction.

II. List of Eligible Bidders

BOEM has determined that the following 16 entities are legally, technically, and financially qualified to hold a commercial wind lease offshore the GOM, pursuant to 30 CFR 585.107 and 585.108, and therefore may participate in this lease sale as bidders subject to meeting the requirements