

# BOEM issues first wind energy research lease in Federal offshore waters

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As part of the Obama Administration's [Climate Action Plan](#) to create American jobs, develop domestic clean energy resources and cut carbon pollution, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) announced today that it has executed a wind energy research lease with the Commonwealth of Virginia's Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME).

This is BOEM's first executed wind energy research lease. Under this lease, DMME proposes to design, develop and demonstrate a grid-connected, 12-megawatt (MW) offshore wind test facility on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) off the coast of Virginia – adjacent to the Virginia Wind Energy Area (WEA). The data obtained and lessons learned from this project will be made publicly available and inform the future production of renewable energy within the WEA.

“Developing our clean energy resources is an essential element of building a new Virginia economy,” said Governor Terry McAuliffe. “With this research lease, Virginia is leading the way in building wind turbines in the Atlantic Ocean and taking the next step toward the clean energy economy we need to create jobs and lower energy costs now and into the future.”

“The data collected under this research lease will help us understand the wind potential, weather and other conditions relevant to standing up wind power generation offshore Virginia,” said BOEM Director Abigail Ross Hopper. “This data will be valuable not only to BOEM and DMME, but also to other government agencies, the offshore renewable energy industry, universities, environmental organizations and others.”

In 2012 the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced funding awards for seven proposed "Offshore Wind Demonstration Projects." One of the awards was given to Dominion Resources, Inc., which partnered with DMME and others to establish the Virginia Offshore Wind Technology Advancement Project (VOWTAP). This was also one of three projects to receive a second funding award from DOE in 2014 for deployment

activities. To learn more about DOE's offshore wind program and these awards, click [here](#).

In February 2013, DMME submitted a lease application to BOEM for the installation and operation of two 6-MW turbines, associated cabling to shore, and ancillary metocean facilities, such as meteorological buoys. The electricity generated by these turbines could power 3,000 homes.

Later in 2013, BOEM determined there was no competitive interest in the area where the state agency proposed to conduct these activities and proceeded with the leasing process on a non-competitive basis. That decision cleared the way for DMME to submit a [Research Activities Plan](#) for which BOEM developed an environmental assessment (EA) that was published in December 2014 for public comment. Based on the comments received and depending on the results of ongoing consultations, BOEM will revise the EA with a Finding of No Significant Impact or issue a notice of intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.

Upon completion of BOEM's technical and environmental reviews and other reviews required by Federal law, BOEM may approve, approve with modifications or disapprove the Research Activities Plan. DMME must receive BOEM's approval of its Research Activities Plan prior to the installation of the two turbines and associated cabling to shore.

To learn more about BOEM's findings on VOWTAP, click [here](#).

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