

Interior Department Leases Area Offshore Massachusetts for Wind Energy Development

Offshore Wind Auction Results in Largest Area Leased To Date

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WASHINGTON, D.C. –The Interior Department’s Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) today held the nation’s fourth competitive lease sale for renewable energy in federal waters offshore Massachusetts for potential wind energy development. Developing offshore wind energy is part of President Obama’s comprehensive [Climate Action Plan](#) to create American jobs, develop domestic clean energy resources and cut carbon pollution.

The auction consisted of two rounds before determining RES America Developments, Inc. and Offshore MW LLC as the provisional winners of Lease Area OCS-A 0500 (187,523 acres) and OCS-A 0501 (166,886 acres), respectively. Winning bids totaled \$448,171 in high bids. The total acreage of these two areas nearly doubles the amount of acreage leased for wind energy through competitive sales. Lease OCS-A 0502 (248,015 acres) and Lease OCS-A 0503 (140,554 acres) did not receive bids.

“Offshore wind along the Atlantic holds great potential to help power our nation with renewable energy while adding jobs to the economy,” said Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell. “We look forward to working with Governor Baker and his administration during this important time for offshore wind development.”

According to an analysis prepared by the U.S. Department of Energy’s National Renewable Energy Laboratory, if fully developed, the area leased could support approximately two gigawatts of commercial wind generation, enough electricity to power over 700,000 homes.

“We are pleased to see continued commercial interest in the offshore wind industry, as demonstrated by today’s lease sale, particularly given the water depth of the wind energy area offshore Massachusetts. With provisional winners who are well established and have experience in developing wind energy facilities, we are optimistic about a strong renewable energy future offshore Massachusetts,” said BOEM Director Abigail Ross Hopper.

Today’s announcement builds on Interior’s work to stand up a sustainable offshore wind program through BOEM’s renewable energy program. Prior to today’s lease sale, BOEM has awarded five competitive wind energy leases off the Atlantic coast: two offshore Massachusetts-Rhode Island, two offshore Maryland and another offshore Virginia.

Including today’s auction, competitive lease sales have generated more than \$14.5 million in high bids for more than 700,000 acres in federal waters. BOEM expects to hold another competitive lease sale offshore New Jersey later this year.

Efforts to spur responsible development of offshore wind energy are part of a series of Obama Administration actions to increase renewable energy both offshore and onshore, in coordination with state, local and federal partners. The Massachusetts Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force has been a leading agent in intergovernmental collaboration for wind energy development.

The two leased areas today are found within the Massachusetts Wind Energy Area, which starts about 12 nautical miles offshore Massachusetts. To see a map of the Massachusetts Wind Energy Area, click [HERE](#).

Each lease will have a preliminary term of one year, during which the lessee will submit a Site Assessment Plan to BOEM for approval. A Site Assessment Plan describes the activities (installation of meteorological towers and buoys) a lessee plans to perform for the assessment of the wind resources and ocean conditions of its commercial lease area.

If a Site Assessment Plan is approved, the lessee will then have up to five years in which to submit a Construction and Operations Plan (COP) to BOEM for approval. This plan provides detailed information for the construction and operation of a wind energy project on the lease.

After BOEM receives a COP from a lessee, BOEM will conduct an environmental review of that proposed project. Public input will be an important part of BOEM's review process. If the COP is approved, the lessee will have an operations term of 25 years.

For more information on the Massachusetts Wind Energy Area and today's auction, visit BOEM's website by clicking [HERE](#).