



Department of Energy

Golden Field Office
15013 Denver West Parkway
Golden, Colorado 80401

SUBJECT: Notice of Scoping and Notification of Public Scoping Informational Meetings for the New England Aqua Ventus I Offshore Wind Project Environmental Assessment, Knox, Lincoln, Penobscot, and Waldo Counties, Maine (DOE/EA-2049)

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is requesting public input on the scope of an Environmental Assessment (EA) for New England Aqua Ventus I, an offshore wind advanced technology demonstration project consisting of two turbines on floating foundations in the Gulf of Maine, approximately 2.5 miles south of Monhegan Island, Lincoln County, Maine and 12 miles off the mainland (the proposed project). Additional project activities and/or potential impacts from the project would occur in or near Hampden, Searsport, Port Clyde, Monhegan Island and Pemaquid, Maine.

Under the Proposed Action, DOE would authorize the University of Maine to expend federal funding to support the development of the proposed project. Development actions include design, construction, and commissioning of the proposed project; environmental monitoring; and up to five years of post-construction structural and performance monitoring data collection by the University of Maine. This project is also known as the Maine Aqua Ventus I project. The operation, maintenance and eventual decommissioning of the proposed project are considered connected actions under the Council on Environmental Quality's *Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act* (40 CFR §1508.25) and will be analyzed in this EA as part of the Proposed Action.

DOE is preparing a draft EA to evaluate the potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of the proposed project.

Resource Areas to be considered in the EA

The EA will describe and analyze potential impacts to the human environment that would be caused by the proposed project and, as applicable, will identify possible mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate those impacts. The following resource areas and issues will be considered in the EA:

- Aesthetics and Visual Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources (including benthic, avian and bat species; and protected species)
- Cultural Resources
- Floodplains and Wetlands
- Geology, Sediments, and Soils
- Noise
- Ocean and Land Use (including commercial fishing, recreation, navigation, transportation and traffic)

- Socioeconomics (including Environmental Justice)
- Water Quality (including sedimentation, spills and hazardous material management)

Public Scoping Process and Public Informational Meetings

Public scoping is a key component of the NEPA process and is used to help the agency define the scope of issues to be addressed in the EA. Public participation is an integral part of the public scoping process.

DOE is conducting public informational meetings to provide details about the proposed project and the proposed scope of the EA; and to receive input from the public regarding the scope and issues to be considered in the EA. Dates and times of public informational meetings are as follows:

- **February 28, 2017 from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Location:** Fire Department Meeting Room at the Town of St. George Office, 3 School Street, Tenants Harbor, Maine 04860. Meeting format: open house.
- **March 1, 2017 from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm. Location:** Monhegan Island School, 1 Monhegan Avenue, Maine 04852. Meeting format: short presentation with an open house to follow.

A detailed project description and additional meeting information, including inclement weather delays or postponements, are posted at: www.energy.gov/node/2053718.

Comments on the Proposed Scope of the EA

DOE welcomes your input on DOE's Proposed Action, alternatives, and environmental issues to be reviewed. To ensure DOE receives your written comments in time for consideration in preparation of the draft EA, please provide them on or before **March 22, 2017** to:

Ms. Diana Heyder, NEPA Division
U.S. Department of Energy
Golden Field Office
15013 Denver West Parkway
Golden, CO 80401
Email: AquaVentus1EA@ee.doe.gov

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Robin L. Sweeney
Director, Environment, Safety, and Health Office