

## **BOEM Designates Wind Energy Area off Central California** *Agency Seeks Public Input on Potential Commercial Offshore Wind Leasing*

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**CAMARILLO, Calif.** – As part of the Biden-Harris administration’s efforts [to advance clean energy development](#), the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) today announced its designation of the Morro Bay Wind Energy Area (WEA) offshore California. The WEA is located approximately 20 miles offshore the central California coastline and contains approximately 240,898 acres (376 square miles).

BOEM will now prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA), as required under the National Environmental Policy Act, to consider potential impacts from site characterization activities (e.g., biological, archeological, geological, and geophysical surveys) and site assessment activities (e.g., installation of meteorological buoys) within the WEA. BOEM’s preparation of the EA will initiate a public comment period along with two virtual public meetings.

“Offshore wind presents a significant opportunity for California and our nation as we transition to clean, renewable energy. Today’s announcement represents significant progress towards that future,” **said BOEM Director Amanda Lefton**. “As the process continues, BOEM is committed to environmental reviews, which are critical for a strong resource management program, and to robust public engagement.”

BOEM completed its review of a Construction and Operations Plan (COP) for the Vineyard Wind project earlier this year and is currently reviewing ten additional COPs. Moreover, BOEM plans to review at least an additional five COPs by 2025, for a total of at least 16 COP reviews representing more than 19 GW of clean energy.

The 60-day public comment period will begin on November 12, 2021 and will extend through 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on January 11, 2022. BOEM will hold two virtual public meetings during this time.

Once BOEM considers all public input, the agency will publish a draft EA for public review and comment. The analyses contained in the EA will help BOEM determine whether to move forward with an area(s) for a proposed lease sale.

Additional information on the Morro Bay WEA, virtual public meetings and how to comment can be found on the BOEM’s website at [www.boem.gov/MorroBayEA](http://www.boem.gov/MorroBayEA).

### **Background**

The goal of BOEM’s Wind Area Identification process is to identify the offshore locations that appear most suitable for wind energy development, taking into consideration potential impacts to resources and ocean users.

The Morro Bay WEA was designated after extensive collaboration with other federal agencies and the State of California as well as engagement with ocean users, Tribes, local communities,

and the public. It includes portions of the area initially analyzed in BOEM's [Call for Information and Nominations](#) published on October 19, 2018, and two extensions analyzed in BOEM's [Call for Information and Nominations](#) published on July 29, 2021.

Identification of the Morro Bay WEA underscores BOEM's commitment to an all of government approach to achieve the Biden Harris Administration goal to deploy 30 GW of offshore wind by 2030 and conserving and restoring ocean and coastal habitats. The Morro Bay WEA is adjacent to the [proposed](#) Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary along California's central coast. Advancing both wind energy development and the sanctuary designation process in the area demonstrates the Biden-Harris Administration's commitments to these important and complementary goals.

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