

BOEM Completes Environmental Review of Offshore Wind Leasing in Central California

Environmental analysis finds no significant impacts

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As part of the Biden-Harris administration's goals of permitting 30 gigawatts of offshore wind energy capacity by 2030 and deploying 15 gigawatts of floating offshore wind energy capacity by 2035, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) today announced it has completed its environmental review of potential impacts from offshore wind energy leasing activities in the Morro Bay Wind Energy Area (WEA), located 20 miles offshore central California. The EA reflects close coordination and engagement with the State of California, the Department of Defense, Tribes, ocean users, including the fishing community, and coastal communities.

The final Environmental Assessment (EA) assesses potential impacts from the issuance of leases within nearly 240,898 acres (376 square miles) of the Morro Bay WEA off the coast of San Luis Obispo County, California. The Morro Bay WEA, if developed, could bring up to 3 gigawatts of clean energy to the grid, enough to power more than one million homes. Based on the analysis in the EA, BOEM has issued a finding of no significant impacts (FONSI) to environmental resources.

"The completion of our environmental review is an important step forward to advance clean energy development in a responsible manner while promoting economic vitality and well-paying union jobs in central California," said **BOEM Director Amanda Lefton**. "We will continue to work closely with Tribes, state and federal partners, and key stakeholders to ensure any future development avoids or minimizes potential impacts to the ocean and other ocean users in the region."

The EA considers potential environmental consequences of site characterization activities (i.e., biological, archeological, geological, and geophysical surveys and core samples) and site assessment activities (i.e., installation of meteorological buoys). The EA also considers project easements associated with potential leases and related right-of-way grants for subsea cable corridors in the Morro Bay WEA.

If BOEM decides to conduct a lease sale in the Morro Bay WEA, the bureau will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) before approving the construction of any offshore wind energy facility in the Morro Bay WEA. That EIS will analyze the specific environmental consequences associated with the project, in consultation with Tribes, appropriate federal, state, and local agencies, and stakeholders and the public.

The EA, FONSI, and detailed information about the proposed leasing in the Morro Bay WEA are available on BOEM's website at www.boem.gov/California.

BOEM initially [announced](#) its intent to prepare an EA for the Morro Bay WEA on November 12, 2021. BOEM sought public input on the issues and alternatives to be considered in the EA which can be found on the BOEM website.

BOEM published the draft EA on April 6, 2022, initiating a 30-day public comment period. BOEM also held two public virtual meetings with stakeholders to obtain additional input.

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The Department of the Interior's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is responsible for America's offshore energy and mineral resources. The bureau promotes energy independence, environmental protection and economic development through responsible, science-based management of energy and mineral resources on the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf.