



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR JAY INSLEE

April 5, 2024

***An open letter to coastal interests and representatives***

The issue of potential development of floating offshore wind facilities off Washington's coast is of importance to many Washington residents, with notable interest to coastal communities. Governor Inslee is currently considering how best to proceed with regard to the issue.

Several events over the past five years have precipitated discussion about offshore wind. The Biden administration has set goals for offshore wind generation and there are projects in the planning pipeline along the West Coast. In Washington, two unsolicited lease requests submitted to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) have prompted the discussion about potential development off our coastline. Moreover, for Washington to meet our climate and clean energy goals, we need to significantly increase our clean energy generation by 2045. With strong and reliable winds off our coast, offshore wind has potential to be a significant source of clean energy.

At the same time, there are important and unresolved questions on potential impact of offshore wind, including potential impacts to treaty-reserved tribal rights, the marine ecosystem, commercial and recreational fishing, and coastal communities. We also recognize the significant concern that Tribes and stakeholders have raised regarding BOEM's planning process for offshore wind, the *Intergovernmental Task Force*.

Given the opportunities and risks, it is imperative that we consider offshore wind through a planning and evaluation process that is science-driven and transparent, includes robust tribal consultation, and incorporates stakeholder voices. While coastal Tribes and coastal communities are likely most directly impacted by decisions on offshore wind, the issue is of statewide interest.

***Seeking input on planning and evaluation process for offshore wind off Washington's coast***

The Governor's Office recently retained *Gridworks*, a consulting firm, to engage with Tribes and stakeholders to inform recommendations on the design of a Washington-specific process and framework for planning and evaluation of potential offshore wind development off our coast. **The project is not intended to evaluate potential offshore wind development, but rather to recommend the design of a comprehensive and transparent process to do so and communicate this framework within a final report to the Governor's Office, due June 2024.**

The Governor will use the report's findings and recommendations to inform next steps on offshore wind. Examples of possible next steps could include but are not limited to: pursuing a state planning process; convening of advisory groups; pursuing scientific studies to gather critical data; requesting a BOEM Task Force; a combination of each of these options; or taking no action. **Gridworks' report will inform both the scope and nature of options for consideration. It is important to note that no decisions have been made on the range or scope of potential next steps.**

We would value your expertise, perspective, and input on the design of a planning and evaluation process for Washington State. Gridworks is contacting representatives of Tribes, coastal communities, and those likely impacted by offshore wind to seek feedback on this issue.

Sincerely,

Carrie Sessions

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Sessions', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Carrie Sessions

Senior Policy Advisor on Environment and Water

Office of Governor Inslee

[carrie.sessions@gov.wa.gov](mailto:carrie.sessions@gov.wa.gov)

(253) 290-1126