

Wind Farms Seek Angler Input

by Capt. Dave Monti

At press time we had a lot of breaking offshore wind farm news.

- *Vineyard Wind was still waiting to hear back on a \$30-million mitigation offer they made to fishermen and the state of Rhode Island.*
- *Vineyard Wind signed an agreement to protect North Atlantic right whales with conservation groups.*
- *The South Fork Wind Farm (at Cox Ledge) asks for fishermen input on needed research.*
- *RISAA recommends research approach/protocol to New England ocean wind farm developers, and requests turbine bases have enhanced structure at bases (see page 33).*

Vineyard Wind project news

Vineyard Wind and the Natural Resources Defense Council, the National Wildlife Federation, and Conservation Law Foundation entered into a January 23, 2019 agreement to protect critically endangered North Atlantic right whales.

Under the agreement, Vineyard Wind will institute a variety of protective measures to keep right whales safe while installing and operating turbines at its proposed 84-turbine project off the coast of Massachusetts.

Collin O'Mara, president and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation said, "Scaling up offshore wind in wildlife-friendly ways is essential to confronting the climate crisis... By ensuring that offshore wind power is responsibly built and operated, this model agreement is a win-win for conserving wildlife and creating well-paying jobs..."

As this agreement was made meetings by the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council to consider the developer's mitigation offer were postponed. Fishermen were silent about the offer with many speculating that it was not enough as the State of Rhode Island's Department of Environmental Management said that fishermen stand to lose \$30 to \$35-million from fishing that could occur in the windfarm area over the next 25 years.

Vineyard Wind countered and said the state's estimate was high as it assumed no fishing would occur in the windfarm area which will not be the case. Fishermen have asked that turbines be spread one mile apart so they can fish in the wind farm.

Additionally, fishermen off Block Island trawl right alongside turbines there, and gill netters have set nets up close to the turbines as they provide structure and habitat for fish. The Massachusetts project offered Rhode Island fishermen who fish there \$6.2 million in mitigation settlements to fishermen and \$23-million in mitigation to establish a research fund to explore ways commercial fishing and ocean wind farms could coexist and flourish together. The research fund would be administered by the State of Rhode Island through the Coastal Resource Management Council.

South Fork Wind Farm (at Cox Ledge) asks RISAA/Fishermen for input

Deepwater Wind/Orsted, developer of the 15 turbine South Fork Wind Farm at Cox Ledge, has sent out a request to fishermen to provide research input (via a survey) on research that is to occur at and around the project before, during and after construction.

The 'South Fork Wind Farm Fisheries Research and Monitoring Questionnaire' aims to collect feedback from fishermen and the fishing industry on what we want to see researched in the wind farm area. They are asking folks to prioritize the resources to research/monitor so they can better develop an overall monitoring plan that is inclusive of the resources important to that area, as indicated by the recreational and commercial fishing industry.

Fishermen do not need to fish in the SFWF area to fill out this questionnaire.

Respondents can either print out the questionnaire and mail it to the company's Providence office or fill it out online at <http://dwwind.com/information-for-mariners/research-monitoring-questionnaire/>.



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