

Answers to Q&A

RE: Offshore Wind from CRI's 15th Annual Dinner

1. *What stage of the approval process are we at in Delaware currently?:*

The US Wind project off the Ocean City/Fenwick Island Coast is going through a public comment process on its draft Environmental Impact Statement from the US Bureau of Ocean Energy Management that ends November 20 (see our recent publications on this). BOEM will likely release the Final EIS and a favorable final decision by the end of the first quarter of 2024. That will be when we can begin legal action. Construction would start in late 2024. Orsted has not even submitted its Construction & Operation Plan yet, so is years away from approval.

2. *Where does MERR stand on the issue?:*

They have stated they oppose the project as it may seriously threaten marine mammals but have not taken any actions. I tried to get some help finding a marine biologist expert witness through the group, but they were no help.

3. *What is the best resource website?:*

www.Saveourbeachview.com has the most information.

www.oceanlegaldefense.org has copies of lawsuits and recent articles.

4. *What is the tipping point that best sways public opinion and legislative opinion?:*

When projects get close to approval and or some event like whales washing up in NJ, the public gets interested. An organized group like ours can then leverage that. When enough of the public is interested, the politicians get interested. In NJ, even the majority leaders in the House & Senate switched to asking for a slowdown.

5. How does DNREC have the authorization to have the wind farm transmission lines come through our state parks in Sussex County? What can be done about this?:

The Coastal Zone Act gives DNREC permitting authority. Originally the Act said no electric transmission lines were allowed. DNREC snuck a regulatory change in about a year ago, eliminating that restriction. Technically we only have 30 days after a regulation is in the State Register to file a lawsuit, but it might be challenged as it requires legislative action.

6. Is NJ's cancelation permanent?:

It does appear to be permanent for this project, but the lease area still exists, so a new project could be bid at some future date. For example, the Skipjack project sits on the same lease area as the canceled Blue Water Wind project, which was canceled in 2011.

7. Will DE's windmills be scrapped like NJ's?:

The DE projects have higher guaranteed prices than the NJ projects. The US Wind project looks like it might not have a high enough price to be financed and may be scrapped. Skipjack may have high enough prices, but Orsted has said they need to reconfigure the project, whatever that means, and their stock price has dropped 80%, so they may go bankrupt. We will have to wait and see.

8. Is Orsted contributing to political campaigns?:

I haven't seen direct evidence of that, but in other states, developers have given money to small-town governments to keep them from fighting projects.

9. How do windmills generate CO2?:

They don't directly. Some CO2 is emitted in the mining of minerals and in building the turbines. Because they are intermittent inefficient quick backup generators generate emissions. A Maryland PSC consultant determined the offshore wind projects would merely replace onshore wind projects more centrally located in the regional grid. Offshore wind at the edge of the grid would have more transmission losses, so it would lower emissions and cost by 4X to build onshore instead.

10. How much is Inland Bays CEO pocketing in bribes to look the other way?:

The Center for the Inland Bays has received about \$150,000 in donations from developers.

11. How much money has DNREC received from the wind companies?:

I haven't seen any specific donations but Orsted offered the State Parks Division \$18 million to bring power lines into Fenwick Island State Park and that project died. There is no public record of bribes to state officials.

12. How much financial need from this group to continue fighting this fight?

An estimate for 2024 budget for the Offshore Wind Fight is \$160,000.