



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

**U.S. Department
of the Interior**

www.doi.gov

News Release

Date: May 14, 2012

Contact: Adam Fetcher (DOI) 202-208-6416

Theresa Eisenman (BOEM) 202-251-6701

Interior Advances Offshore Atlantic Transmission Line

'No Competitive Interest' finding clears way for environmental analysis of proposed transmission 'backbone' for Outer Continental Shelf wind farms

WASHINGTON – Advancing President Obama's 'all-of-the-above' strategy to develop domestic energy resources, Deputy Secretary of Interior David J. Hayes and Director of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) Tommy P. Beaudreau today announced a finding of no competitive interest for the proposed Mid-Atlantic offshore wind energy transmission line. The decision clears the way for the project to move forward with the environmental review necessary to grant the company, Atlantic Grid Holdings, LLC, a right-of-way for the proposal to build a "backbone" transmission line that would enable up to 7,000 megawatts of wind turbine capacity to be delivered to the grid.

"As part of the President's all-of-the-above energy strategy, we are moving ahead to responsibly evaluate and expedite appropriate projects for America's offshore areas, particularly the wind power-rich Atlantic coast," said Deputy Secretary Hayes. "The first-of-its-kind Atlantic Wind Connection is an encouraging sign of significant industry interest in developing the infrastructure to support offshore wind development. It's the type of project that will spur innovation that will help us stand-up a clean energy economy to power communities up and down the east coast."

The proposed project is a high-voltage, direct-current subsea transmission system that would collect power generated by wind turbine facilities off the Atlantic coasts of New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia. The first such offshore infrastructure proposed in the United States, the system's parallel, redundant circuits would total about 790 miles in length. Major investors in the Atlantic Wind Connection proposal include Google, Inc.; Good Energies II, LP; Marubeni Corporation and Elia.

"This 'backbone' transmission project would play a central role in bringing energy generated by our nation's abundant offshore wind power resources to the grid to power homes and businesses," said BOEM Director Beaudreau. "Our next step will be to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of issuing a renewable energy right-of-way grant for this project."

Before proceeding with the review of this project, BOEM had to determine whether there were other developers interested in constructing transmission facilities in the same area. Last December, BOEM put out a request for competitive interest in order to gather that information.

BOEM also solicited public comment on site conditions and multiple uses within the right-of-way grant area that would be relevant to the proposed project or its impacts, yielding nearly 60 public comments that will help inform future decisions. Following the 60-day open comment period, BOEM has determined there is no

overlapping competitive interest in the proposed right-of-way grant area off the Mid-Atlantic coast, clearing the way for consideration of the Atlantic Wind Connection.

The proposed transmission line would be constructed in phases to connect offshore wind power to the grid based on the company's estimates of when offshore wind generation facilities will be in place. A right-of-way grant occupies a corridor 200 feet wide, centered on the cable with additional widths at the hubs. The right-of-way grant corridor is anticipated to extend about 790 statute miles. Full construction of all phases of the multi-stage project would take about 10 years.

Today's announcement is part of the Obama Administration's coordinated strategy to develop all appropriate sources of renewable and conventional energy on U.S. public lands. The plan calls for development of onshore and offshore renewable energy under a 'Smart from the Start' approach that prioritizes and processes existing applications in a coordinated, focused manner with full environmental analysis and public review.

A Fact Sheet on the proposal and the Administration's Renewable Energy Program is online [here](#).

A map of the area proposed for a ROW grant area can be found online [here](#).

For more information on BOEM's Renewable Energy program, click [here](#).