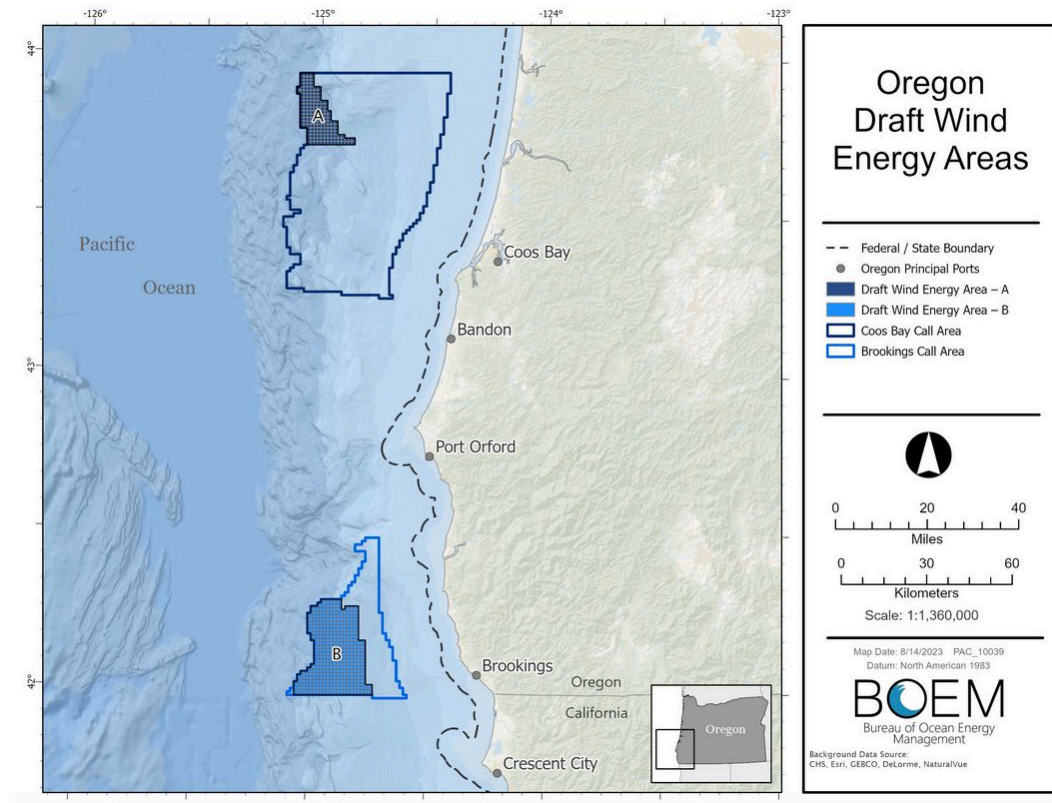


Capturing the Wind: Federal agency ID's two possible sites off Brookings, Coos Bay

August 23, 2023



The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) today identified two draft Wind Energy Areas (WEAs) off the Oregon Coast and opened a 60-day public review and comment period on those WEAs.

The development is part of the Biden-Harris administration’s goal of deploying 30 gigawatts of offshore wind energy capacity by 2030 and 15 gigawatts of floating offshore wind by 2035.

The draft WEAs cover approximately 219,568 acres offshore southern Oregon with their closest points ranging from approximately 18 – 32 miles off the coast.

The two sites are just northwest of Coos Bay and west of Brookings.

A map of the draft WEAs can be found on Oregon state activities page.

“As BOEM works to identify potential areas for offshore wind development, we continue to prioritize a robust and transparent process, including ongoing engagement with Tribal governments, agency partners, the

fishing community, and other ocean users,” BOEM Director Elizabeth Klein said. “At the request of Oregon’s governor and other state officials, there will be a 60-day public comment period on the draft WEAs and BOEM will hold an intergovernmental task force meeting in addition to public meetings during the comment period. We look forward to working with the state to help us finalize offshore areas that have strong resource potential and the fewest environmental and user conflicts.”

Oregon has major opportunities for offshore wind deployment, which will create good-paying jobs and new economic activity, according to the BOEM. Due to the deep waters off of Oregon’s Coast, these areas are also an opportunity to accelerate U.S. leadership in floating technologies, the agency stated. The draft WEAs announced today would tap up to 2.6 GW of Oregon’s potential.

To identify the draft WEAs, BOEM officials said they used a comprehensive process that involved outreach to potentially impacted stakeholders and ocean users, Tribes, and the public to identify the potential offshore locations that appear most suitable for floating offshore wind energy development and took into consideration possible impacts to local coastal and marine resources and ocean users.

BOEM collaborated with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science to use an ocean planning model that seeks to identify and minimize conflicts.

The two draft WEAs reflect changes based on public, stakeholder, and interagency engagement from the Oregon Call Area that the Department of the Interior released for public comment in April 2022. Public input from this new comment period will be considered before formally designating final WEAs off the coast of Oregon.

Public Meetings and Comments

During the 60-day public comment period starting on August 15, 2023, BOEM will hold public meetings to outline data and information used to inform the draft WEAs and to discuss next steps.

The meetings will be open to the public, with one specifically designed for engaging the fishing community. BOEM will also convene an Oregon Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force meeting to discuss the draft WEAs and next steps in offshore wind energy planning in Oregon. Additional information on the webinars will be available on the BOEM Oregon state activities page.

To comment on the draft WEAs please go to [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) and search for docket number BOEM-2023-0033. BOEM will accept comments through 11:59 pm ET on October 16, 2023.

Reaction

Oregon U.S. Senator Ron Wyden released the following statement concerning the BOEM announcement.

“Clean, renewable energy is critical to stem the worst effects of climate change, like the chronic heat waves and increasing red flag wildfire warnings this week and throughout the year. But it is also critical that development of clean energy projects is done responsibly with every possible opportunity for input from communities.

I have repeatedly urged the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to do a better job of including all Oregonians' voices while considering the potential for siting wind energy options off the Oregon Coast. Thankfully, this federal agency has listened to my call -- along with Senator Merkley and Reps. Bonamici and Hoyle -- both to extend the public comment period and hold open public meetings on the draft proposal.

This will add multiple opportunities for all Oregonians to make their voices heard in the process and I will continue to watchdog this to ensure that BOEM follows through on its commitment to listen with an open mind and open process."

Read the full draft report [here](#)

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