

RECHARGE

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US starts 'first of a kind' regional offshore wind review



BOEM director Liz Klein.
Photo: Department of Interior

BOEM hopes new approach will speed process and take account of cumulative impacts

By **Andrew Lee**

The US has launched a “first of a kind” regional environmental consultation over lease areas on track to support up to 7GW of offshore wind in the New York Bight.

Federal seabed regulator the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is inviting public feedback on draft development impact reports for six leasing areas off New York and New Jersey.

The process is the first time BOEM has consulted over multiple lease areas on a regional basis – an approach designed to speed up the development process while taking account of potential cumulative impacts of offshore wind.

BOEM unveiled plans for the programmatic environmental impact statement (PEIS) process in mid-2022, months after the six leases in the 488,000-acre New York Bight **smashed records by selling for a combined \$4.37bn**. It has since decided to adopt a similar approach off California.

BOEM director Elizabeth Klein said: “We look forward to receiving additional public comment to inform this first ever regional environmental review of offshore wind energy development on multiple leases.

“We are confident that this comprehensive approach can create efficiencies for future project-specific wind energy reviews in a manner that protects the ocean environment and marine life.”

Interested parties have until 26 February to comment on the draft statements in a window opening on 12 January.

Progress for the blockbuster federal leasing comes amid a turbulent period for the first wave of projects planned to supply New York and New Jersey with offshore wind power, with offtake deals and projects being cancelled as developers struggle with escalating costs.

New York Bight leases and others nearby.
Photo: BOEM

