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Want to learn more about Central Coast offshore wind development? Here's your chance



The wind turbines planned off the San Luis Obispo County coast would be similar to Ocean Wind's WindFloat Atlantic floating offshore wind energy project near Portugal. They are each about 688 feet tall, or about twice the height of the Statue of Liberty. *Courtesy of Ocean Winds*

By Mackenzie Shuman

Local, state and federal politicians will attend an [informational session](#) next month to discuss plans for a massive offshore wind energy development off California's Central Coast, along with industry representatives and academics.

The session is scheduled to be held on Nov. 1 from 4 to 8 p.m. at the Katcho Achadjian Government Center, 1055 Monterey St. in San Luis Obispo.

The event, which is free and open to the public, is aimed at people [curious about the hundreds of wind turbines](#) that could be floating in the Pacific Ocean off San Luis Obispo's coast by the end of the next decade.

The proposed Morro Bay wind energy area is to encompass 376 square miles about 20 miles west of San Simeon and Cambria. If fully developed, it could generate up to 6 gigawatts of electricity.

U.S Representative Salud Carbajal is scheduled to give welcome and opening remarks during the event, according to an agenda released Thursday. His remarks will be followed by three 45-minute panels.

The first will be moderated by state Sen. John Laird and feature a discussion on what offshore wind implementation may look like, including the next steps, a timeline and how the public can stay engaged.

California Energy Commission Chair David Hochschild, California Coastal Commission Executive Director Kate Huckelbridge, State Lands Commission California Sea Grant fellow Matthew Koller and Doug Boren, Pacific Regional Office director for the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, will sit on Laird's panel.

Up next is a panel moderated by California State Assembly member Dawn Addis. She will discuss the roles that the city of Morro Bay, San Luis Obispo County and Cal Poly will play in navigating offshore wind development. On her panel will be San Luis Obispo County Supervisor Dawn Ortiz-Legg, Morro Bay Mayor Carla Wixom and Ben Ruttenberg, director of Cal Poly's Center for Coastal Marine Sciences.

SLO County Supervisor Bruce Gibson will then moderate a panel discussing the industry perspective. Molly Croll, American Clean Power's Pacific Offshore Wind director, will be answering questions from Gibson along with Offshore Wind California Director Adam Stern.

Additionally, representatives from the [three companies who won leases](#) to potentially develop wind turbines in the Morro Bay wind energy area will be on Gibson's panel. Those representatives are Invenergy Executive Vice President Erin Lieberman, Golden State Wind CEO Tyler Studs and Equinor Director of Operations Martin Goff.

Following the three panels, there will be 60 minutes for public comment. During this time, people are encouraged to make statements regarding their questions, concerns or opinions on offshore wind on the Central Coast.

U.S. Representative Jimmy Panetta is scheduled to give closing remarks after public comment. Those planning to attend in person do not need to register for the event.

If you cannot make it to the in-person event, you can attend virtually via Zoom. To do so, you must register at this link: us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_WmGXsJ4HRgm-DY0qMhY7XQ.