

## OFFSHORE WIND IN MAINE

Offshore wind (OSW) is an emerging energy sector in the United States. The industry generates renewable energy by harnessing strong ocean winds with fixed or floating arrays of turbines. President Biden's administration and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management are firmly committed to rapidly expanding offshore wind energy generation by 2030. Additionally, many states are striving to meet their own ambitious OSW targets, some of which are planning development in the Gulf of Maine.

### MAINE'S DISPOSITION FOR OSW

Maine has nearly two decades of OSW research and planning experience. The Gulf of Maine is renowned for its natural wind resource and the state's coastline is home to some of the deepest natural ports. Maine's research and educational institutions are home to world-leading innovation and production in advanced composites for wind turbines. The state also houses industry clusters necessary for OSW, such as concrete and cement production and marine steel fabrication. Maine's skilled workforce in onshore wind, shipbuilding, and cargo transportation is poised to excel in the offshore wind industry.

Offshore wind in Maine also presents many unknown impacts to the state's commercial fishing industry, marine resources, migratory birds and whales, and environmental considerations.

### RECENT LEGISLATION

**LD 336, An Act To Encourage Research To Support the Maine Offshore Wind Industry** states that the proposed floating OSW research array is in the public benefit and directs the PUC to negotiate a contract for up to 144 MW of offshore wind. **The Governor's Energy Office filed an application** with the federal government for a 15.2 square mile lease, nearly 30 miles offshore, for the project. **MMA did not take a position on this bill**, and it **passed with broad support** and became public law in 2021.

**LD 1619, An Act To Establish a Moratorium on Offshore Wind Power Projects in Maine's Territorial Waters** proposed a 10-year moratorium on OSW in state managed waters. **MMA testified neither for nor against** the bill. This middle-of-the-road approach left a pathway for Maine to pursue OSW in federal waters and included an exemption for the state's floating OSW pilot project. The **bill passed with bipartisan support** and became public law in 2021.

### OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND



Fight Climate  
Change



Harness  
Renewable Energy



Create Jobs &  
Economic Growth



Sustain Maine's  
Maritime Heritage

*Offshore wind in the Gulf of Maine is going ahead in some form, thus the questions are when it will happen, who the stakeholders will be, and what role, if any, Maine's municipalities will play?*

## THE MAINE OFFSHORE WIND INITIATIVE

**PHASE 1:**  
Develop initial  
recommendations  
(July – December 2021)

**PHASE 2:**  
Refine and consolidate  
recommendations based  
on public and stakeholder  
feedback (January – June 2022)

**PHASE 3:**  
Finalize Roadmap content  
(July – November 2022)

**PHASE 4:**  
Communicate Roadmap  
(December 2022 – beyond)



Launched in 2019, and with federal grant support, the Maine Offshore Wind Initiative is pursuing responsible development of OSW energy in the Gulf of Maine and is determining how to position Maine to benefit from the industry. Current aspects of the initiative include the Gulf of Maine [Floating Offshore Wind Research Array](#), [Seasport Study](#), and [Maine OSW Roadmap](#).

### MAINE OFFSHORE WIND ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUPS

The Advisory Committee for the Maine Offshore Wind Roadmap is a high-level strategic body that will provide guidance to the Governor’s Energy Office (GEO) on the vision and development of the Roadmap. GEO’s objective for the Roadmap is to identify how to foster an offshore wind industry that works for Maine’s people, Maine’s economy, and Maine’s heritage.

Folded into the Advisory Committee are four working groups: (1) Energy markets and strategies, (2) Environment and wildlife, (3) Supply chain, workforce development, ports and marine transportation, and (4) fisheries.

### OFFSHORE WIND IN THE MUNICIPAL CONTEXT

The majority of OSW development will occur in federally managed waters. However, shoreside infrastructure could be the purview of local government. A test case for OSW is currently underway with the 1-turbine New England Aqua Ventus I project off the coast of Monhegan Island.

Land-based activities include transmission cables that come ashore, buildings and accessory structures, vehicular access, stormwater rerouting, solid waste disposal, zoning compliance, and extensive portside development located on uplands or submerged lands. There is some potential that state-sponsored priorities for shoreside infrastructure or land-based activities could conflict with local regulations or policies.



**REGULATION:** How to ensure OSW development is compatible with other land use activities in the municipality? Who is responsible for siting and permitting cables that come ashore? Who spearheads the Site Law permit? Will shoreland zoning ordinances be preempted? Are exclusionary zoning ordinances allowed? Can municipalities charge application fees for OSW development? Who should be notified of pending permitting? Who mediates disputes when multiple jurisdictions are involved?



**TAXATION:** Can municipalities enforce their taxation authority over OSW development within municipal boundaries? Are state-owned buildings and infrastructure exempt from property tax assessment? Will municipalities be compensated for lost property value from the presence of OSW infrastructure?



**ENVIRONMENT:** How are municipalities protected against unwanted environmental impacts? Who is responsible for remediating environmental damage? What is the process for decommissioning abandoned sites and what, if any, is the role of municipalities? How will receive this renewable energy?



**ECONOMIC:** What will revenues from power generation be used for? Can municipalities participate in the ownership of wind farms? How can municipalities attract complementary businesses and industry sectors? What is the potential effect to commercial fishing? What are the potential impacts and notable benefits to Maine’s tourist economy? Is there sufficient workforce housing in port communities?