



WORLD SHIPPING COUNCIL
PARTNERS IN AMERICA'S TRADE

Comments of the

World Shipping Council

Submitted to the

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

Department of the Interior

In the matter of

Commercial Leasing for Wind Power Development on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Offshore California— Call for Information and Nominations

Docket Number:
BOEM-2018-0045

January 28, 2019

The World Shipping Council (WSC) is a non-profit trade association that represents nineteen liner shipping¹ companies that carry over 90% of U.S. international containerized trade. WSC's member companies operate more than 5,000 ocean-going liner vessels -- mostly containerships -- of which approximately 1,500 vessels make more than 27,000 calls at ports in the United States each year.

WSC files these comments with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) in response to the Call for Information and Nominations published on October 19, 2018 (83 Fed. Reg. 53096), which invites public comment on three wind energy call areas on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) off the coast of California.

WSC has filed multiple comment submissions with BOEM regarding OCS wind energy development, all of which have articulated the critical need for wind energy projects to be sited a safe distance from high-use commercial shipping routes. Allowing the placement of wind energy facilities too close to maritime traffic routes would risk the safe navigation of vessels carrying America's waterborne commerce and could result in substantial environmental harm. The environmental costs and damage of a single collision between a ship and a wind turbine, as well as the potential loss of life and property, could easily exceed any benefits of siting wind turbines in the area.

We respectfully offer the following comments to BOEM on the above-referenced action.

1. The Proposed Wind Energy Call Areas Conflict with High-Use Commercial Shipping Routes and Established Safety Corridors Off the California Coast

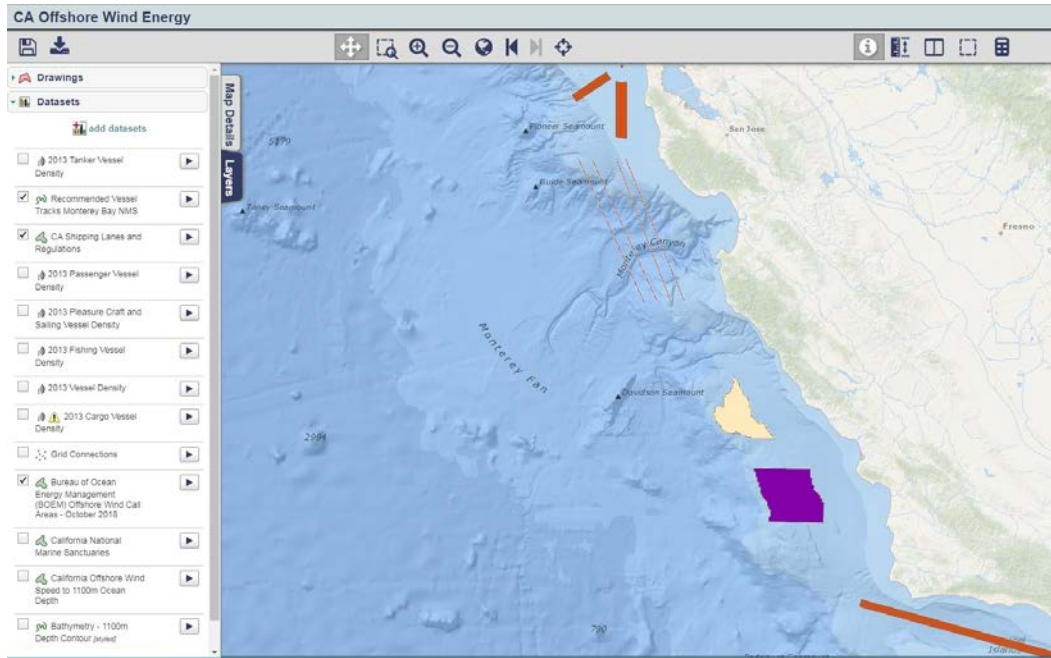
The Call for Information invites comments on three proposed wind energy call areas offshore California: Morro Bay, Diablo Canyon and Humboldt. The Morro Bay call area is approximately 27 nautical miles (nm) long by 27 nm wide and sits immediately to the west of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary and approximately 18 nm off Point Piedras Blancas. The Diablo Canyon call area is approximately 23 nm long by 30 nm wide and sits approximately 20 nm off Point San Luis. The Humboldt call area is approximately 28 nm long by 14 nm wide and sits approximately 20 nm off the coast of Eureka. There is significant commercial shipping activity in and near all three of these call areas, including deep-draft oceangoing cargo vessels, passenger ships, coastal tug and barge traffic and fishing vessels.

A. Comments on Morro Bay and Diablo Canyon Call Areas

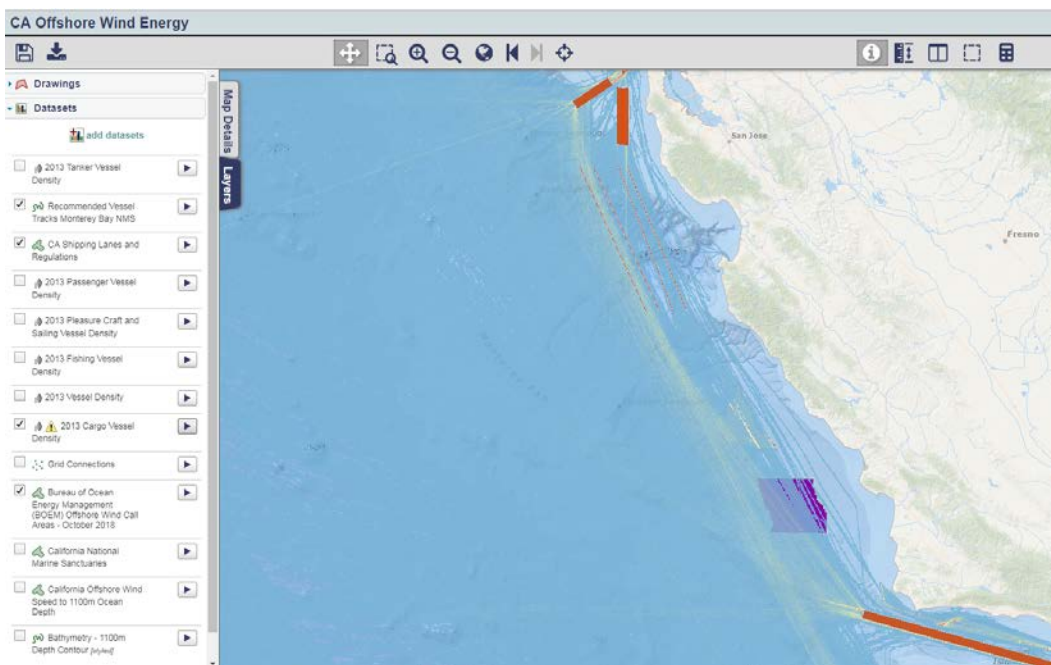
The screen shot below (from the California Offshore Wind Energy Gateway) depicts the Morro Bay and Diablo Canyon call areas, which sit approximately ten nm from one another along the Santa Lucia Bank. Traffic Separation Schemes (TSS) directing traffic into and out of San Francisco Bay and the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach are depicted in red. The

¹ Liner vessels operate on fixed schedules among pre-determined ports. WSC's member lines operate containerships, roll-on/roll-off, and car carrier vessels. A list of the Council's members may be found at www.worldshipping.org.

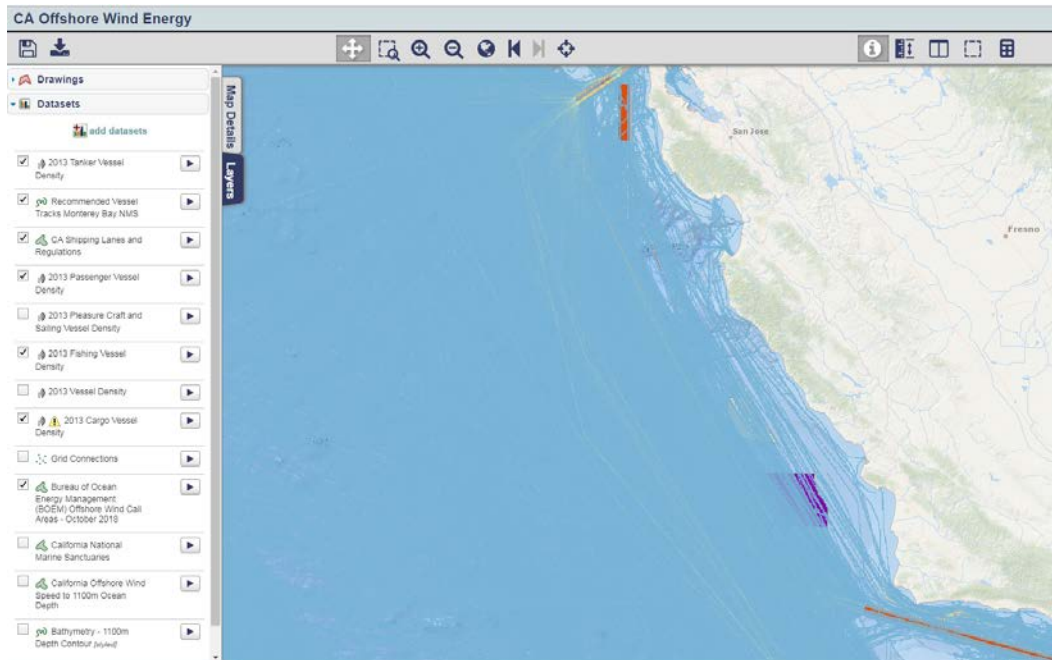
Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS) recommended vessel tracks are depicted in orange.



The following screen shot shows the same geographic area with cargo vessel AIS track lines (from 2013). The yellow lines on the picture indicate high-use, longstanding shipping routes used by oceangoing cargo ships operating along the California coast between San Francisco and Los Angeles/Long Beach. Further examination shows that the western halves of the Morro Bay and Diablo Canyon call areas overlap with existing high-use cargo vessel routes.



The next screen shot shows the same geographic area, but with AIS track lines for cargo vessels, tankers, passenger vessels, and fishing vessels displayed. The Morro Bay call area is now barely visible and more than half of the Diablo Canyon call area is obscured by the vessel track lines. In simple terms, this indicates that these two proposed wind energy development areas pose direct conflicts with existing commercial vessel traffic routes for the range of commercial vessels that operate in these waters.



If the Morro Bay and Diablo Canyon call areas remain in the locations proposed, the vessels that currently operate in the traffic routes with which those call areas conflict would be forced to move further offshore, where they could create potential navigational safety conflicts with other oceangoing commercial vessels already operating there. For example, coastal tug and barge and fishing vessel traffic, which usually operates closer to shore, would be forced offshore where larger and often faster container ships, vehicle carriers, tankers and passenger ships operate. Increasing the density of vessels using a given area and the mixing of different vessels sizes and types with vastly different maneuvering and operating characteristics increases the risk of vessel collisions.

The Morro Bay and Diablo Canyon call areas also pose a conflict with vessels entering and departing the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS) recommended tracks, which were formally adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in 2000 after being developed by a stakeholder group (which included representatives from the State of California, the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), environmental organizations and the shipping industry) to reduce the risk of vessel collisions or allisions and the resultant environmental damage to the Sanctuary from an oil spill. The MBNMS recommended tracks connect the entrance/exit of the southernmost TSS lanes serving San Francisco Bay and the northernmost TSS lanes serving Los Angeles, Long Beach and other ports east of the Channel Islands. A vessel departing the MBNMS track southbound on a direct course for the Santa Barbara Channel TSS would pass

through the middle of the Morro Bay and Diablo Canyon call areas. Similarly, a vessel that departed the Santa Barbara Channel TSS bound for the MBNMS tracks into San Francisco Bay would pass through the middle of both call areas.

Finally, we note that the proposed Morro Bay and Diablo Canyon call areas conflict with the U.S. Coast Guard's (USCG) 2016 Marine Planning Guidelines² (MPG), which were specifically developed to guide offshore developers and marine planners as they consider the navigational safety impacts of offshore projects with multiple permanent fixed structures. The USCG MPG consider the sea space needed for ships to maneuver safely and contain recommended minimum separation distances for the siting of offshore structures near shipping routes.

The proposed Morro Bay and Diablo Canyon call areas conflict with the following provisions of the USCG MPG:

For Coastwise or Coastal Shipping Routes:

- *Identify a navigation safety corridor to ensure adequate sea area for vessels to transit safely;*
- *Provide inshore corridors for coastal ships and tug/barge operations;*
- *Minimize displacement of routes further offshore;*
- *Avoid displacing vessels where it will result in mixing vessel types; and*
- *Identify and consider cumulative and cascading impacts of multiple Offshore Renewable Energy Installations (OREIs), such as wind farms.*

For Navigation Safety Corridors³:

- *Navigation safety corridors should be given priority consideration over other potential uses of the same water space.*

For Port Approaches and TSSs:

- *The minimum planning distances between a maritime traffic route and a fixed structure are 2 nm from the parallel outer or seaward boundary of a traffic lane and 5 nm from the entry/exit of a traffic lane. (WSC Note: These planning distances are relevant because they provide minimum suggested distances between high-use maritime traffic routes and fixed structures to allow vessels sufficient room to maneuver in emergency situations).*

The conflicts with the above USCG MPG make it clear that the proposed Morro Bay and Diablo Canyon call areas pose tangible risks to the safe navigation of vessels operating along the California coast between San Francisco and Los Angeles. These risks apply equally to the safe operation of wind turbines in the proposed areas.

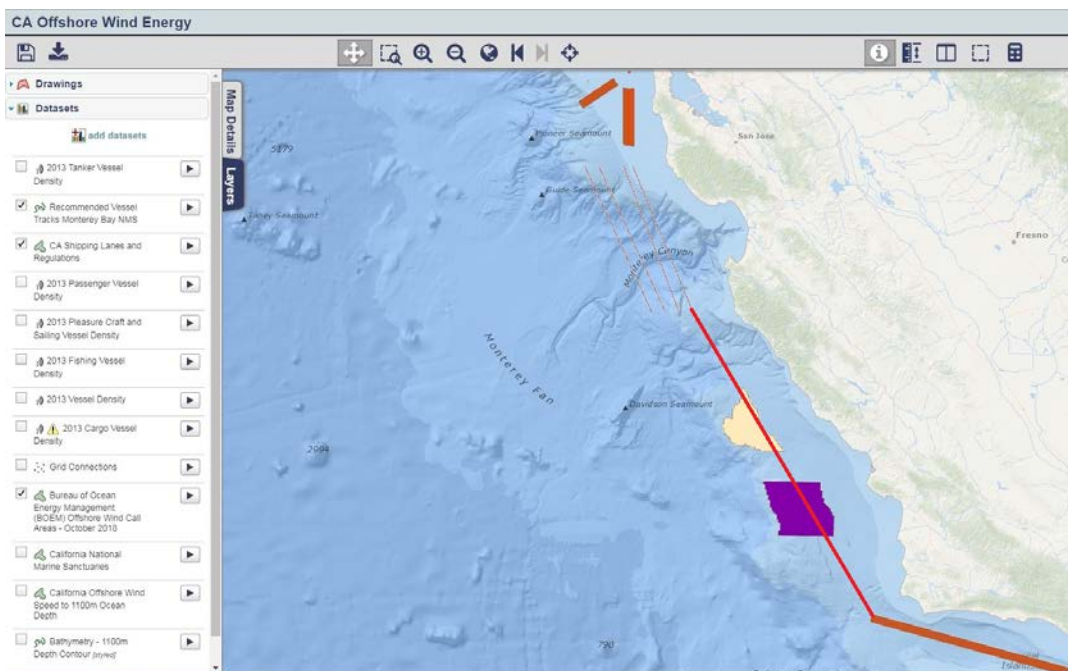
² The USCG Marine Planning Guidelines may be found in Appendix E to USCG Commandant Instruction 16003.2A, which is available at: https://media.defense.gov/2017/Mar/15/2001716995/-1/-1/0/CI_16003_2A.PDF

³ The MBNMS recommended tracks have, since December 2000, been the Navigation Safety Corridors for vessels transiting along the coast of California offshore of the MBNMS.

Recommendations: As discussed above, the proposed Morro Bay and Diablo Canyon call areas pose direct and substantial conflicts with the USCG MPG, with existing commercial vessel traffic routes and with vessels following the MBNMS recommended tracks.

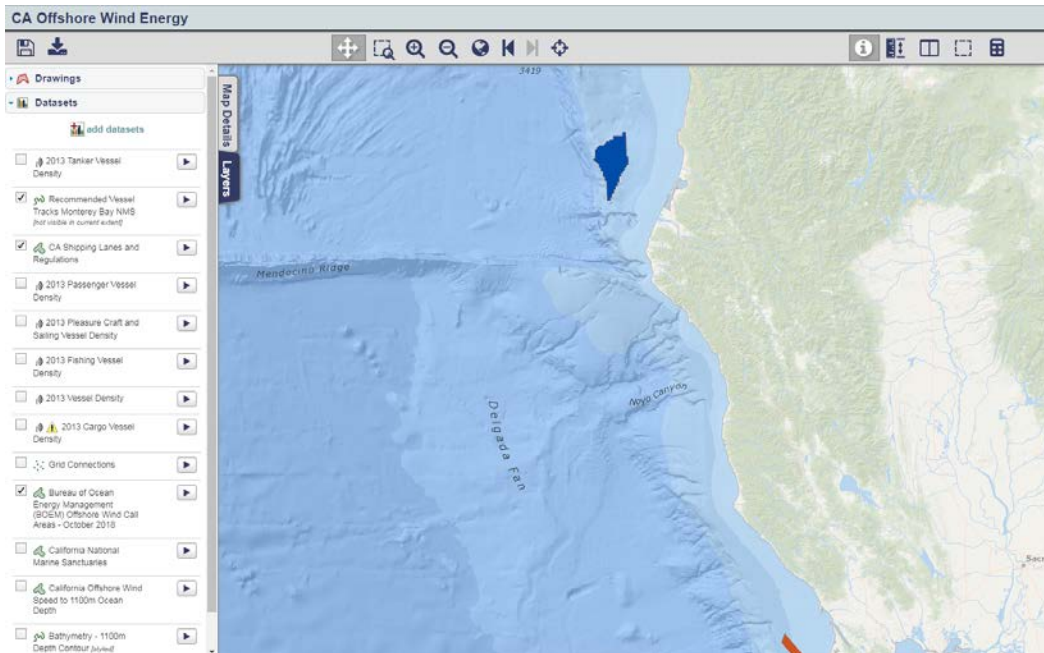
To address these safety conflicts, we recommend that BOEM:

- 1) Eliminate from consideration any call area aliquots to the west of a line drawn from the easternmost lane of the MBNMS tracks to the easternmost lane of the Santa Barbara Channel TSS (see red line in chart below); and
- 2) Work with the USCG to complete a navigational safety risk assessment or port access route study (PARS) of the waters between and including the ports of San Francisco and Los Angeles/Long Beach.

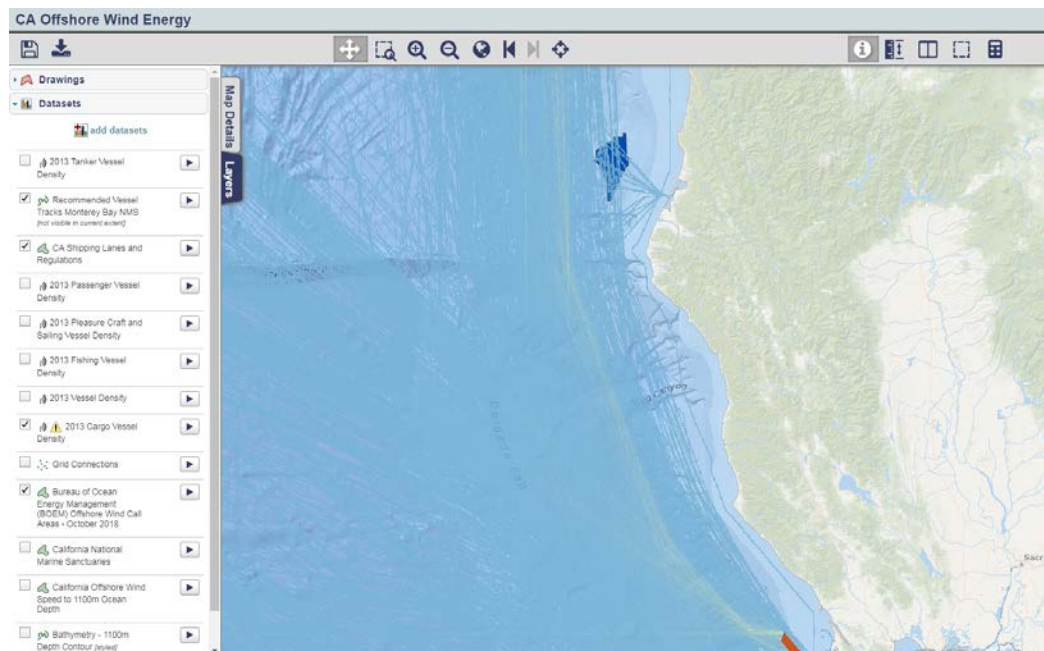


B. Comments on Humboldt Call Area

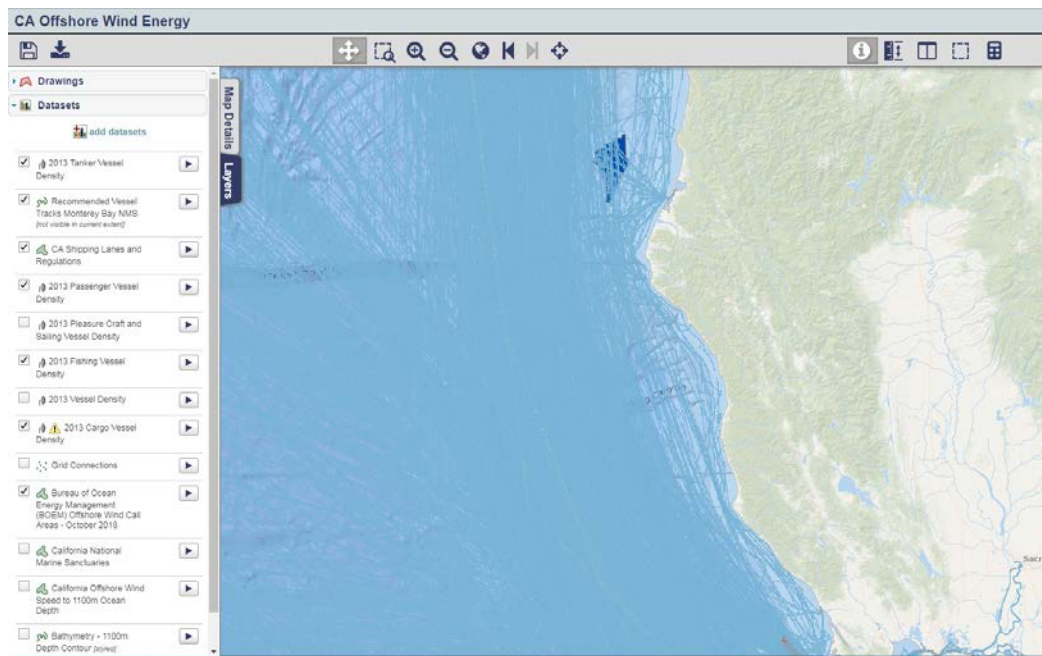
The following screen shot depicts the Humboldt call area. At the lower right corner of the image, the entrance/exit of the northernmost TSS serving San Francisco Bay is visible.



The following screen shot shows the same geographic area with cargo vessel AIS track lines. The yellow lines on the picture just west of the proposed call area indicate high-use, shipping routes used by oceangoing cargo ships operating along the California coast between San Francisco and ports to the north.



The next screen shot shows the same geographic area, but with AIS track lines for cargo vessels, tankers, passenger vessels, and fishing vessels displayed. When compared with the image above, the image below demonstrates not only that large numbers of vessels of various types are already operating in the proposed Humboldt call area, but also that the presence of a wind farm in the call area would force vessels that normally transit through the call area to divert either offshore or nearer to shore (depth permitting). Diversion of coastal vessels offshore creates potential navigational safety conflicts with larger, faster oceangoing commercial vessels that already operate there. As stated earlier in these comments, increasing the density of vessels using a given area and the mixing of different vessels sizes and types, with vastly different maneuvering and operating characteristics, increases the risk of vessel collisions.



We also note that the proposed Humboldt call area conflicts with the following provisions of the USCG MPG:

For Coastwise or Coastal Shipping Routes:

- *Identify a navigation safety corridor to ensure adequate sea area for vessels to transit safely;*
- *Provide inshore corridors for coastal ships and tug/barge operations;*
- *Minimize displacement of routes further offshore; and*
- *Avoid displacing vessels where it will result in mixing vessel types.*

Recommendations: To address the above discussed navigational safety issues posed by the Humboldt call area, we recommend that BOEM:

- 1) Eliminate from consideration any call area aliquots to the west of 124.66 degrees west longitude; and
- 2) Work with the USCG to complete a navigational safety risk assessment of the waterways that may be affected by the proposed call area.

2. BOEM Should Apply Navigational Safety Exclusions as Early as Possible in the Wind Energy Lease Area Development Process

Dealing with navigational safety risks at the beginning of the wind energy lease area development process would simplify and streamline the required environmental impact statement (EIS) process. This approach would also prevent OCS developers from wasting time and money to develop and submit bids for wind energy areas that are later excluded from development to address navigational safety risks.

In addition, incorporating navigational safety exclusions before soliciting statements of interest from the public is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Regulations promulgated by CEQ under NEPA require that: *“Agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts.”* (40 C.F.R. § 1501.2). The rationale behind that requirement applies here, because safety of navigation and protection of the ocean and coastal environment dictate that fixed structures must not be sited near maritime traffic lanes. The sooner that is made clear, the more efficient the rest of the wind energy area siting process will be.

Recommendations: We recommend that BOEM incorporate the following practices into its renewable energy lease area development process:

- a) Apply the USCG MPG to current and proposed wind energy areas and delay inviting interest in wind farm leases in areas until conflicts with the MPG have been addressed; and
- b) Apply any further recommendations from USCG navigational safety risk assessments and/or port access route studies (PARS) to current and proposed wind energy areas before inviting further interest in the affected areas.

3. Conclusion

WSC appreciates the opportunity to provide comments to BOEM on the California Call for Information and Nominations. The effort to site and deploy emerging, clean energy technologies on the OCS should not create risks to the safe transportation of America’s waterborne commerce or to ecosystems and coastal communities that would be affected by an allision between an oceangoing commercial ship and a fixed wind turbine.

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