



*The Town of Sunset Beach*

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March 3, 2015

Office of Renewable Energy Programs  
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management  
381 Elden Street, HM 1328  
Herndon, VA 20170-4617

Re: Public Comments regarding BOEM 2015-009

Dear Sirs:

The Town of Sunset Beach respectfully submits the following comments concerning BOEM's Environmental Assessment for North Carolina wind energy areas.

We fully support Brunswick County's objections regarding the limited scope of your request for comments on the impact of various surveys and buoys or towers –i.e., that this fails to consider other factors that greatly impact the economic and financial implications of the proposed Wilmington West wind energy area to our town and to the general coastal area.

The major industry in Sunset Beach is tourism. The Wilmington West energy field is only 10 miles off our shores. We are concerned that the visual impact of a wind field so close to our shores will be so obtrusive to our homeowners and guests, particularly at night, that this will deal a huge blow to the economic underpinnings of our Town. Few object to the idea of wind farms; what we request is that you move the field at least five miles further off of our shores to reduce the impact of this field on our community.

Further, we support the other concerns that Brunswick County has raised:

- The cost and economic viability of the proposed energy
- The environmental impact of the full scale facilities
- The effect the facilities will have on tourism
- The distribution of the revenues to those impacted by the facilities
- The effect on economic development
- The benefit to the local communities
- The impact on local wildlife

We would like to add to those concerns the specific impact on turtles and birds. The Town is a turtle sanctuary and we do not believe that any definitive studies have been done to address the potential harm that construction of wind farms – particularly the noise created -will have on the turtle population in our area. Further, we are part of the North Carolina birding trail, and about half of the bird species in our Town are coastal birds. The proposed wind farm may have an adverse effect on our coastal bird population.

Because these factors have not been adequately addressed, we urge you to adopt either alternative 2 (excluding the Wilmington West field from a site assessment), or alternative 4 (no site assessment would occur in the proposed areas covered by the EA).

Respectfully submitted,

Ron Watts, Mayor  
Town of Sunset Beach