

Association to Preserve Cape Cod Endorses Vineyard Wind Project

At a joint press conference held today by the Association to Preserve Cape Cod and Vineyard Wind LLC, APCC announced it is endorsing the Vineyard Wind project. Vineyard Wind is proposing an 800-megawatt offshore wind project to be located in federal waters approximately 15 miles south of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket and approximately 34 miles south of the Cape Cod mainland.

Andrew Gottlieb, APCC's executive director, made the announcement alongside Erich Stephens, chief development officer for Vineyard Wind.

APCC's decision to support the project came after exhaustive review of the project, including the recent release of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the project and Vineyard Wind's multiple state regulatory filings through the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act process. This week, Vineyard Wind announced the release of the project's Final Environmental Impact Report for the state.

"APCC realizes that all major projects will have some impact, and Vineyard Wind is no exception," said Gottlieb. "But the impact to the environment and to the human race will be catastrophically more significant if we choose to do nothing. Vineyard Wind is the first major offshore wind project in the United States, and it will be a significant step toward reversing our reliance on fossil fuels."

"Today's endorsement is especially meaningful to the Vineyard Wind project," said Stephens. "As Cape Cod's leading nonprofit environmental advocacy and education organization, the APCC truly understands the contributions the proposed wind farm will make in terms of addressing the impacts of climate change and the accompanying significant threat to the Cape's natural resources and economy. We appreciate the organization's support as well as its efforts to ensure the project undergoes a substantive, comprehensive review by local, state and federal agencies."

The recent report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change predicting dire consequences unless world governments and private businesses commit to radical changes that significantly reduce carbon emissions underscored the need for immediate action and prompted APCC to take a public stand to endorse Vineyard Wind.

"In giving our endorsement to Vineyard Wind, APCC is not abdicating our role as Cape Cod's environmental guardians," said Gottlieb. "Our expectation is that Vineyard Wind will continue to do due diligence in addressing the key environmental issues associated with the project."

"We have reached a point where we are confident the project has worked diligently and successfully to avoid the potential for most environmental impacts," stated Gottlieb. "Where environmental impacts may be unavoidable, those impacts are likely to be minimal, and they are proposing comprehensive mitigation to address those potential impacts."

APCC has stated in its written comments on the project that two key issue areas are the protection of marine mammals, especially North Atlantic right whales, and the protection of groundwater at the site of the project's proposed substation in Barnstable.

“APCC will continue to follow these issues and weigh in as necessary. It is vitally important for the first major offshore wind energy project to set the proper standard for future offshore wind projects. We look forward to working with Vineyard Wind on this effort,” said Gottlieb.