

Fact Sheet—Great Lakes Offshore Wind Energy Consortium

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What is the Great Lakes Offshore Wind Energy Consortium?

To remain a leader in the global clean energy economy the United States needs Federal and state governments to execute permitting and review processes in an efficient and effective manner that protects the health and safety of our communities while supporting vital economic growth.

In particular, the excellent offshore wind resource in the Great Lakes region presents a significant opportunity to stimulate economic revitalization. Accordingly, a bipartisan federal-state memorandum of understanding (MOU) has created the new Great Lakes Offshore Wind Energy Consortium to support the efficient, expeditious, orderly and responsible review of proposed offshore wind energy projects in the Great Lakes.

What will the Great Lakes Offshore Wind Energy Consortium do?

Offshore wind proposals must be evaluated for potential social, environmental, cultural, safety and security impacts by the appropriate Federal and State agencies. The Consortium will enhance coordination among participating federal and Great Lakes state regulatory agencies, working toward the shared goal of coordinating reviews and data collection and dissemination needs to the extent practicable. The MOU facilitates coordinated, regionally-based planning that has the potential to lower costs and improve the efficiency of decisions. The MOU also embodies a fundamental principle of the National Ocean Policy to support sustainable, safe, secure, and productive access to, and uses of the Great Lakes.

What is the potential for Great Lakes offshore wind and how does this agreement help?

Deployment of offshore wind in the Great Lakes region would stimulate economic revitalization in key sectors of the economy, diversify the Nation's energy supply and enhance our national security by accelerating energy independence efforts, and reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Offshore wind turbines are being used in a number of countries to harness the energy of the moving air over the oceans and convert it to electricity. The total offshore wind potential is over 700 gigawatts in the Great Lakes regions. This represents about one-fifth of the total offshore wind potential in the United States. While offshore wind is an emerging technology in the United States, over 3800 MW of installed capacity already exists today, mainly in Europe. Work under the MOU will spur collaboration on innovative ways to address significant market barriers to offshore wind deployment in a key region of North America, the Great Lakes. A similar agreement forming the Atlantic Offshore Wind Energy Consortium, has been successful spurring cooperation and increased efficiencies with respect to wind development in the Atlantic outer continental shelf.

Why are the federal government and the states signing this agreement now?

The Administration and participating states are committed to building the foundation for a clean energy economy. In addition, the President has directed federal agencies to speed infrastructure development through more efficient and effective permitting and environmental review. This agreement also responds in part to a request to the President by a bipartisan group of the nation's governors to establish a combined intergovernmental state-federal task force on wind energy development in order to help meet America's domestic energy demands in an environmentally responsible manner, while reducing the nation's dependence on imported energy sources and stimulating state and national economic development.

Which federal agencies are parties to the agreement?

The White House Council on Environmental Quality
The U.S. Department of Defense
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Admin.

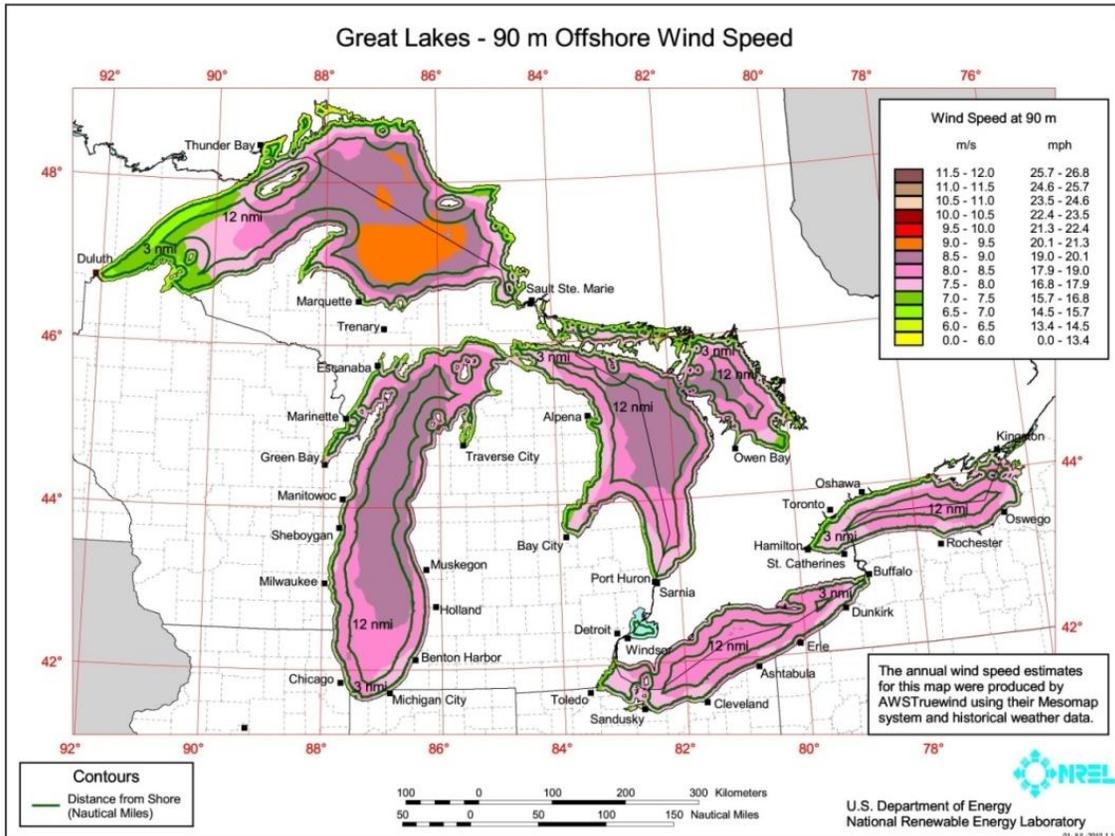
The U.S. Department of Energy
The U.S. Department of the Army
The U.S. Coast Guard
The Federal Aviation Administration
The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

Which Great Lakes states are currently parties to the agreement?

- Illinois
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- New York
- Pennsylvania

What is the scope of the Great Lakes Wind Resource?

The below map created by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory describes the high wind speeds, corresponding to excellent wind power resources, available in the Great Lakes:



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