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New England District

News release

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Corps to meet on Martha's Vineyard to take scoping comments on Wind Farm EIS, and public comments on scientific data tower permit application

CONCORD, Mass. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will participate in a meeting April 18 in Edgartown on the island of Martha's Vineyard to accept comments on two proposed projects by Cape Wind Associates in Nantucket Sound, Mass.

At the April 18 scheduled Martha's Vineyard Commission meeting, the Corps will explain the projects, the Federal review process, and accept scoping comments as part of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Cape Wind proposal to build a wind farm power generation field in Horseshoe Shoals in Nantucket Sound, Mass.

Additionally, Corps officials will also take comments on the separate issue of Cape Wind's permit request to build a Scientific Measurement Devices Station (SMDS) and associated monitoring device in Nantucket Sound.

These two proposed projects are separate issues and on separate review paths -- the wind farm on the EIS path and the Scientific Measurement Devices Station (data tower) on a permitting path -- despite being requested by the same company for the same general area.

The meeting will be held on Thursday, April 18 at the Whaling Church at 7:30 p.m. in Edgartown on the island of Martha's Vineyard.

The Wind Farm proposal is in the scoping stage of a Federal Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) with the Corps of Engineers acting as the lead federal agency. The Corps is working closely with Massachusetts' officials in conducting its Environmental Impact Report (EIR) of the Wind Farm project. The two environmental reviews will result in a joint EIS/EIR.

Cape Wind requested a Section 10 permit from the Corps for the installation and operation of 170 offshore wind turbine generators off the coast of Massachusetts in

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Martha's Vineyard Cape Wind meeting/2-2-2-2-2

Horseshoe Shoals to generate up to 420 MW of renewable energy that will be distributed to the New England regional power grid, including Cape Cod and the islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. The power will be transmitted to shore via a submarine cable system. The proposed Wind Farm would occupy about 28 square miles in Horseshoe Shoals between Nantucket Island and the Cape Cod mainland.

Previous scoping meetings on the Wind Farm EIS were held in Boston on March 6 and in West Yarmouth, Mass., on March 7. An EIS normally takes about 18-36 months to complete, depending on the complexity of the information to be gathered.

The proposal for the data tower is to install a pile-supported scientific measuring tower extending about 197 feet in the air above the mean lower low water elevation in the ocean waters of Nantucket Sound as well as an associated measurement device imbedded in the sea floor. The ocean waters at this location are about 13 feet deep and the steel support pilings for this structure will be driven about 100 feet into the seabed. These devices are to gather scientific data, including meteorological and oceanographic data, to evaluate the design and engineering criteria for a proposed wind energy project in this area of Horseshoe Shoals. The device to be imbedded in the ocean bottom, with a line connecting it to the tower, is located approximately 300 feet from the proposed data tower.

The Corps is seeking comments on whether or under what circumstances the Corps should permit this data tower. Additionally, a Public Hearing strictly on the Scientific Measurement Devices Station is scheduled for April 11 in Hyannis, Mass.

More information on both projects is available online at: <http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/>. Each project has a separate webpage.

To assist in properly evaluating either proposal, on the scoping for the wind farm EIS, or on the Scientific Measurement Devices Station permit request, the public is asked to submit comments to Brian E. Valiton at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, 696 Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742-2751.