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US Army Corps of Engineers
New England District

Yankee Engineer

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Corps releases Draft EIS on proposed wind energy project in Nantucket Sound

by Timothy Dugan
Public Affairs Office

The New England District released the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on the proposed Cape Wind energy project in Nantucket Sound, Mass.on November 9.

The Draft EIS/EIR was prepared by the Corps, in cooperation with 16 federal, state and local resource agencies, in response to a permit application from Cape Wind Associates, LLC for the installation and operation of 130 offshore wind turbine generators in Nantucket Sound, Mass.

"After 34 months of intensive analysis and research, the Corps of Engineers has completed an objective document that is about 4,000 pages long that will provide the public with an opportunity to make an informed decision on this wind energy proposal," said District Engineer Col. Thomas Koning. "The purpose of the Draft EIS/EIR is to assess the environmental impacts associated with the proposed construction of an offshore wind-powered generating facility by Cape Wind Associates in Nantucket Sound."

The Draft EIS/EIR draws few conclusions but provides detailed information on the potential impacts and benefits of the applicant's proposed wind energy project in Nantucket Sound and potential impacts and benefits at the alternative sites.

"The Draft EIS/EIR is four volumes and almost 4,000 pages," Col. Koning said. "The Corps of Engineers now encourages the public, groups and agencies to comment on the Draft EIS during a 60 day public review period."

Cape Wind Associates LLC applied to the Corps for a permit to construct an offshore wind energy facility in November 2001. The purpose is to generate up to 454 MW of clean, renewable wind-generated energy that will be transmitted to the New England regional power grid, including Cape Cod and the Islands. The proposed wind turbines would be up to 420 feet high with the hub height approximately 260 feet above the water surface.

"The Draft EIS/EIR document is intended to fulfill the regional, state and federal environmental assessment requirements," said Cape Wind Energy Project EIS Manager Karen K. Adams, with the Corps' New England District, Regulatory Division.

The northernmost turbines would be more than four miles from Yarmouth, the southeastern most turbines would be about 11 miles from Nantucket, and the westernmost turbines would be about 5.5 miles from Martha's Vineyard.

"The Draft EIS/EIR is a compilation of information, analysis and studies addressing the most relevant potential impacts and public interest factors that were listed in the EIS scope of work which we developed from the public comments received during the spring of 2002," Mrs. Adams said.

The Draft EIS includes an executive summary, an explanation of purpose and need, the alternatives analysis, the affected environment and environmental consequences, a list of preparers, public involvement documentation, a list of cooperating agencies, an acronym list, an

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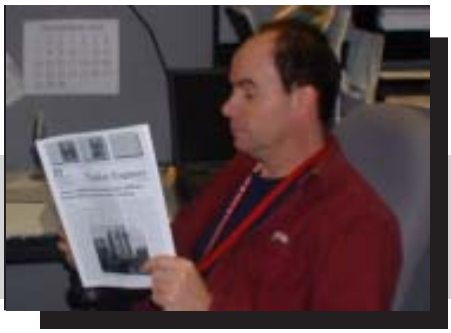
Yankee Voices



Sympathy

... to Colonel (Ret) Roy P. Beatty, Deputy Division Engineer for the Sentinel ABM Program in the late 1960s, on the passing of his wife, Bonnie Beatty. Mrs. Beatty died October 18. Cards of sympathy may be sent to the Beatty family at 1841 S. Creek Dr., Austell, GA 30106-1148.

Congratulations

…to Julie Canney, an Administrative Assistant in Information Management, who was selected as the WE Employee of the Month for November 2004.

…to the Project Delivery Team for the Elizabeth Mine Emergency Tailing Stabilization Project in Stratford, Vermont. They were selected by the WE Committee as Team of the Month for November 2004. Team members include Marla Levenson, Sheila Winston-Vincuilla, Jon Kulberg, Mark Vance, Sheila Holt, Jim Morocco, Steve Umbrell, Conrad Menard and Chris Caisse.

Army Civilian Corps Creed

I am an Army Civilian – a member of the Army Team.
I am dedicated to the Army, its Soldiers and Civilians.
I will always support the mission.
I provide stability and continuity during war and peace.
I support and defend the Constitution of the United States and consider it an honor to serve the Nation and its Army.
I live the Army values of Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage.
I am an Army Civilian.

Congress approves 3.5 percent civilian pay raise

Congress approved a 3.5 percent average pay increase for civilian federal workers, marking the end of a drawn-out political battle over military and civilian pay parity.

The raise was included in the fiscal 2005 omnibus appropriations bill approved by a House-Senate conference committee. House lawmakers approved the conference report on Saturday, Nov. 21, 2004. The Senate approved the final version of the spending bill later the same day.

Words worth repeting...

"Experience is not what happens to a man; it is what a man does with what happens to him."
- Aldous Huxley

"Treat people as if they were what they ought to be and you help them to become what they are capable of being." - Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

"All for one, one for all, that is our motto." - Alexandre Dumas

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Commander's Corner:

What Horse's Behind Came Up With That?

by Col. Thomas Koning
District Engineer

The District's senior leadership just returned from a three-day, off-site conference where we set out a course for the next year. We have done this on an annual basis to chart a path forward in the areas of: Business Processes and Information Technology (IT); Contracting Initiatives; PMBP/P2; People/Next Generation; and Strategic Relationships. For example, the Business Processes and IT group developed cost-avoidance measures (CISCO phones, cell phone switch, chair repair) that are now saving us $1.2 million per year. Those savings are plowed back into the District into fully funding the leave account, purchasing IT hardware, and having a G&A rate three-percent under the Corps average – to name a few. We do this in all the above-mentioned areas, because we are a learning organization and we work hard to be competitive in order to be the provider of choice for our customers.

We do not want to do things the old way – just because we have always done it that way. A former Chief-of-Staff of the Army, General Eric Shinseki once said, "You may not like change very much, but you will like irrelevance even less."

Let me tell you a story about why we do some of the things we do. Many years ago I used to teach a Field Geology course at the Air Force Academy in the summer months. Part of the course involved teaching the cadets the role that the railroads played in settling the west.

Have you ever wondered why the standard gauge distance between the rails in the United States is 4 feet, 8-1/2 inches? The answer is simple – because that is the way they built them in England and we hired English engineers to design our system. Well, then, why did the English build them that way?

Again, simple – the English railroad engineers took the design and spacing from the pre-railroad tramways in Europe. And, before you ask the next obvious questions, I will tell you the answer – The tramway builders made them that width because they used the same jigs and tools when they converted from building wagons that used the 4 feet, 8-1/2 inch spacing.

OK, so I have led you to the next question: why did European wagons have that spacing? Simple again – because of the spacing of the ruts in the long-distance roads in Europe, any other spacing would cause the wagon wheels to break.

OK, so where did the rutted roads come from? I am glad you asked. The roads were built by the Romans and they have been in use ever since (although now rut-less). The ruts came from the width of the chariot wheels that were standard in the Roman Legion.

So, now you know what "Horse's Behind" came up with the width of the U.S. railroad gauge – the Romans – a chariot was just wide enough to accommodate the width of the rear-end of two horses.

Although some things are the way they are for good reasons, I think we owe it to our customers to give thought to their problems and when appropriate develop innovative and better solutions. Your District leadership does just that. We do not try to change everything that we may not like because some things have good reasons why they are the way they are. However, we focus at the off-site conference to find better ways of doing our jobs and meet our customer's expectations. You will be hearing more about these ideas in the coming months. Please jump in and be part of the team making change happen.

District team meets with Wampanoag Tribal Nation

The New England District held a Government-to-Government Outreach Meeting with the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) on September 29 on the Island of Martha's Vineyard in Aquinnah, Mass. The District team was welcomed by Donald Widdiss, Vice-Chairman of the Wampanoag Tribe, Tobias Vanderhoop, Chairperson of the Cultural and Heritage Commission, and Cheryl Andrews-Maltais, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer. "I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your hospitality and for giving us the opportunity to meet and discuss your needs and goals, and to focus on how the Corps may be able to assist you," said Col. Thomas Koning. "Our commitment is to uphold this relationship in our interactions by acknowledging your tribal sovereignty, respecting our trust responsibility to the Tribe and its resources, and lastly, by engaging in protocols of meaningful and mutual communication and consultation." Marc Paiva, district tribal coordinator, William Hubbard, Acting Deputy District Engineer, and permit project managers Ruth Ladd and Alan Anacheka-Nasemann, also participated.

First Election held in Afghanistan
District Voluteers witness first steps towards freedom

by Phil Durgin, Readiness Branch and
Kim Osgerby, Public Affairs

On the monumental day of October 9, 2004, Afghanistan held its first presidential election. Phil Durgin, from the New England District, and Heidi Cherry from the Baltimore District, participated in the election as official observers representing the U.S. Embassy. Although they are USACE employees, Phil and Heidi are currently working with USAID on water resources.

During Election Day, Phil and Heidi participated as members of an eight-person team that visited several polling stations in the area of Kabul. Phil was the official male observer, and Heidi was the official female observer. The rest of the team consisted of two drivers, a female and male interpreter, and two guards. Phil and Heidi's role as official observers consisted of visiting polling stations, examining records, speaking with election officials, and documenting any problems that occurred during the voting process. According to Phil, "we could ask questions, but we were not allowed to direct the election officials to do anything." Phil also stated, "we provided a presence to let the voters know that the international community was interested in making sure that a fair election was being held." In observance of Muslim customs, the voting centers were separated by gender. Phil could only observe the male voting stations, while Heidi was allowed to enter both the male and female. According to Heidi, "there were large numbers of women voting, and many came carrying at least one child. They all seemed happy once they entered the voting area and took their burqas off."

The mentality of the Afghan men and women during the election was relatively different. While the men waited in line quietly, the women were much more social. The women spoke amongst each other, and helped out anyone who had problems. While observing the voting, Phil noticed some of the problems that occurred during the day. "One minor incident I saw was a person raising his voice arguing because he was rejected from voting. The officials at the polling place said his voter registration card was invalid because he pasted his picture on it." Another problem Phil witnessed was created by representatives of the presidential candidates, which were allowed in the polling centers. Although it was illegal, some of the representatives tried to influence voters while they were waiting in line.

photo's by Phil Durgin

Afghani women wait to vote.

Afghani men wait in line to vote.

Verifying voter eligibility proved to be the largest obstacle of the day. Two methods were established to ensure that no double voting occurred: registered voters were given a registration card which was punched as they left the polls, and voters' thumbs were marked with permanent ink as they entered the polls. Lack of records listing registered voters enabled people to get more than one card. Incorrect ink was used at many polls, which allowed voters to rub their thumbs clean immediately. If a voter used the wrong ink, and had several registration cards, they would be able to vote numerous times. According to Heidi, the Afghan people were very concerned about the potential injustice of multiple voting. Because of voter distress, one of her polls temporarily shut down while the officials discussed what to do about the ink. Phil shared his personal thoughts of how the first Afghanistan election went. "Many people appeared to be proud and had a smile on their face as they inserted their vote in the ballot box. I think that people throughout the country viewed this as an important event in their lifetimes and did not want it marred by violence. It was a way of stating that they are citizens of Afghanistan." The votes from Kabul were counted at an Afghan National Army site being constructed by the Afghanistan District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. On November 3rd, 24 days after the election, Hamid Karzai was declared the winner over the other 17 candidates with 55% of the vote.

CASH FOR IDEAS

The Army Suggestion Program (ASP) New Automated Web Application

by Lorraine Cronin,
Resource Management

The Army Suggestion Program can trace its roots back to at least World War I, when the first known Army suggestion program came into existence. The program is therefore one of the government's oldest and largest of its kind. In 1954, Congress passed legislation that allows government agencies to pay cash awards to civilian employees for suggestions beneficial to the government. Military members became eligible for awards in 1965.

The ASP provides incentives to soldiers and civilians to submit ideas that improve the efficiency and productivity of the Army. Good ideas are worth submitting if they accomplish a job better, save time and money, simplify or streamline operations, recommend a change or exemption from a restrictive regulation or policy, and improve safety and morale. The ASP provides cash award incentives up to $25,000 for adopted ideas that save Government resources.

The automated ASP replaces the manual system for submitting suggestions. Under the old system, suggesters completed DA Form 1045 and forwarded the form to the District Coordinator for processing.

The new automated ASP is an application within the Army Knowledge Online (AKO) website where AKO users can upload suggestions for consideration for adoption. When the suggestion enters the ASP system it is automatically assigned a unique identifier (number) for tracking purposes for both the suggester and various ASP role players.

The ASP application is located on the AKO website or at https://armysuggestions.army.mil/services/asp/asp home.cfm. Anyone with a valid username and password can submit a suggestion independently or as a group, view policies and regulations, create reports, and search for suggestions. At the ASP homepage all those involved in the process of submitting or working a suggestion can use the page to access and work his/her part of the process. The new system only recognizes AKO email and therefore users must forward their AKO mail to their Corps mailbox in order to receive actions in the ASP.

How the Process Works. By clicking on the ASP icon on the district Intranet, users will be able to access an online guide that provides detailed instructions on how to complete each step of the ASP application.

Also available is a slide presentation that provides an overview of the ASP process including an example of the various suggestion screens.

There is also a link that will take users directly to the AKO portal.

We need to hear from you. You know more about the specific details of your job than anyone else. This special knowledge places you in an ideal position to make suggestions for improvement. Submit your ideas now. For more information contact Lorraine Cronin, 978-318-8826.

WE Committee sponsors 'spooky' Halloween celebration

The District WE Committee sponsored a Halloween costume contest and pumpkin carving contest for team members in late October and generated quite a few laughs in the process.

Mary Christopher, of Information Management Office, took first place in both events with her swashbuckling pirate costume and her specially carved pumpkin with the Corps castle logo expertly carved as the pumpkin face. She won two $15 gift certificates from the WE Committee store and other gifts for taking first place in both events.

Richalie Griffith, of Engineering-Planning Division, captured second place in the costume contest with her "Bucket of Slime" costume, and Rose Schmidt, of Engineering-Planning Division, took third place as a Virginia Tech Hoakie, winning a $10 gift certificate and $5 gift certificate respectively from the WE Committee store and other gifts. Both costumes had the audience laughing.

Other participants included a Red Sox fan which included a painted face (Carol Charette, Engineering-Planning Division,), a 1960s-era hippie (Kevin Kotelly, Regulatory Division), and an unidentified burn-out with long shaggy blond hair and toy guitar.

Carol "RBI" Charette, Rose "Cyber" Schmidt, Kevin "Munchies" Kotelly, Mary "Lost Gold" Christopher, Tommy "Slash" Koning, and Richalie "Muckster" Griffith take a moment to ponder the candy intake capacity of a Superfund site prior to remedation.

Proposed view from Hyannisport, Mass.

Image from the Draft EIS courtesy of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Cape Wind Energy Project Draft EIS Released

continued from page 1

index and many technical appendices.

Based on the EIS scope of work developed in 2002, the environmental and public interest factors addressed in the Draft EIS include: geology; physical oceanography; benthic and shellfish resources; finfish and commercial/recreational fisheries; protected marine species; terrestrial ecology, wildlife, and protected species; avian resources; coastal and freshwater wetland resources; water quality; cultural and recreational resources/visual; noise; transportation and navigation; electrical and magnetic fields; telecomm- unications systems; air and climate; and socio-economics.

"The Corps has been working closely with federal, state and local agencies, and the public in developing the Draft EIS," Col. Koning said. "Through the scoping hearings and public meetings since the spring of 2002, 17 sites were identified by the public and cooperating agencies as possible alternatives."

Five screening criteria were used to evaluate those alternatives: availability of renewable energy (i.e. wind power classification); ISO New England grid connection availability (connection point, transmission/ distribution lines, efficiency/ capacity); available land or water area; engineering constraints (constructability, geotechnical conditions, water depths); and legal/ regulatory constraints (i.e. endangered species, shipping channels, etc.).

"Working with the cooperating agencies, the Corps determined it needed to take a more flexible, subjective approach to developing representative sites for the alternative analysis," Col. Koning said. "A strict pass/fail screening process would not work. The National Environmental Policy Act allows the Corps to limit alternatives to a reasonable number so that the EIS can compare the alternatives. We narrowed that list of 17 sites to four alternatives using these screening criteria."

"The Draft EIS/EIR now evaluates and compares those sites to provide a better understanding of what a proposed wind energy project will mean to the region," Col. Koning said.

The Corps, with cooperating agency consultation, determined reasonable sites that cover the spectrum of: 1) Shallow water off-shore site; 2) Deeper water off-shore site; 3) On-shore site; 4) Two or more smaller sites combined to achieve the intended purpose and need.

"Using that flexible concept, the Corps selected four alternatives that were carried forward for more detailed review in the wind energy project EIS," Col. Koning said.

The onshore alternative is MMR – the Massachusetts Military Reservation in Bourne on Cape Cod, Mass.; the shallow water alternative included three possible configurations – the applicant's preferred alternative of Horseshoe Shoal, and also Tuckernuck Shoal, and Hankerchief Shoal, Mass.; and the combined locations are New Bedford Harbor, Mass., and a reduced footprint at Horseshoe Shoal.

The area south of Tuckernuck Island, Mass., is the deeper-water site.

"Using representative samples gave us a basis for comparison," Col. Koning said. "We were better able to determine what the relative merits were of each type of alternative site. This process ensured that we did what was required in accordance with the intent of NEPA and for the public interest determination of this wind energy project review as required by our regulations."

The next step in the environmental review process will be that the general public will review the Draft EIS and provide their comments and concerns to the Corps.

Public hearings are scheduled: on Monday, December 6 at 6 p.m. (registration to begin at 5 p.m.) at the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School on Edgartown Road, in Oak Bluffs, Mass.; on Tuesday, December 7 at 7 p.m. (registration to begin at 6 p.m.) at the Mattacheese Middle School at 400 Higgins-Crowell Road in West Yarmouth, Mass.; on Wednesday, December 8 at 6 p.m. (registration to begin at 5 p.m.) at the Nantucket Community School at 10 Surfside Road in the Mary P. Walker Auditorium in Nantucket, Mass.; and on Thursday, December 16 at 7 p.m. (registration to begin at 6 p.m.) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Room 10-250 at 77 Massachusetts Ave. in Cambridge, Mass.

"The Corps of Engineers will carefully consider all comments received on the Draft EIS," Adams said.

These comments and concerns will be reviewed, analyzed and addressed and that will lead to the Final EIS scheduled to be completed in 2005.

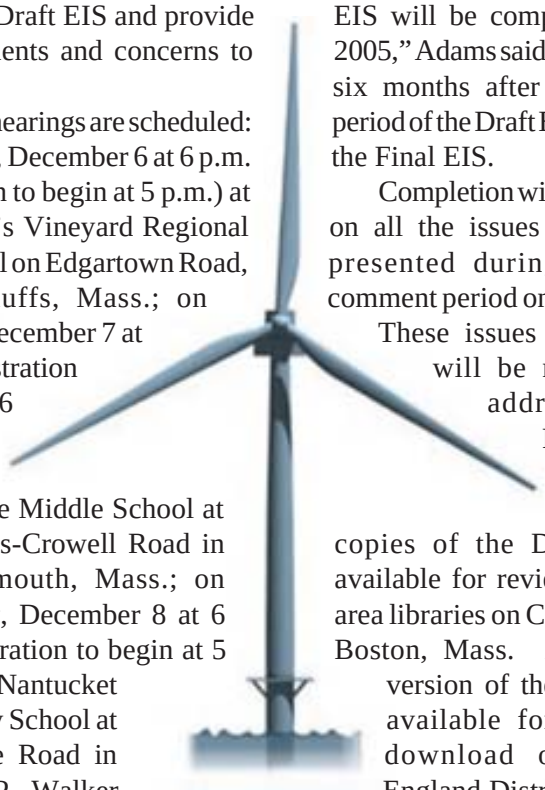
Following review and input the Corps will prepare a Final EIS. When the Final EIS is completed, 30 days later the Corps can prepare a Record of Decision (ROD). The ROD documents the results of the NEPA process.

The Corps can then make a determination on whether to issue a permit, permit with special conditions or deny a permit to Cape Wind on its proposed wind energy project.

"If we stay on the current schedule, we anticipate that the Final EIS will be completed in mid-2005," Adams said. "It takes about six months after the comment period of the Draft EIS to complete the Final EIS.

Completion will really depend on all the issues and concerns presented during the public comment period on the Draft EIS. These issues and concerns will be reviewed and addressed in the Final EIS."

Hard copies and CD copies of the Draft EIS are available for review at 32 local area libraries on Cape Cod and in Boston, Mass. An electronic version of the Draft EIS is available for review and download on the New England District website.



National Environmental Policy Act guides Corps' Public Process

The Corps of Engineers permit program is subject to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

NEPA requires federal agencies to, "include in every recommendation or report on proposals for legislation and other major federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, a detailed statement by the responsible official on:

"the environmental impact of the proposed action;

- "any adverse environmental effects which cannot be avoided should the proposal be implemented;

- "alternatives to the proposed action;

- "the relationship between local short-term uses of man's environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity, and;

-"any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources which would be involved in the proposed action should it be implemented."

Prior to issuing a permit, the Corps must prepare either an Environmental Assessment and a "Finding of No Significant Impact" or determine that an EIS is necessary.

Next steps in EIS process

The Corps of Engineers will carefully consider all comments received. Following review and input the Corps will prepare a Final EIS. Thirty days later the Corps can prepare a Record of Decision that documents the results of the NEPA process.

Dredging up the past . . .

Posing for their 1990 annual staff portrait are (from left top): Bill Scully, Lt. Col. Stan Murphy, Dick Reardon, Warren Nordman, Dick Carlson, (center) Capt. Don Ouellette, Bill McCarthy, Rich Bogachyk, Capt. Bill Gavazzi, Charlie Coe, Vyto "Andy" Andreliunas, Capt. "Steve," Joe DiGiovanni, "Buz" McDonald, Carol Petrow, Marie Pinede, Col. Dan Wilson, Joe Ignazio, Ann Dogherty and Stan Rankin.

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