

# Obama admin moves forward with first Calif. offshore project

**Jeremy P. Jacobs, Environment & Energy Publishing, 8-17-16**

The Obama administration yesterday took a significant step toward the first wind development off the coast of California.

Billing the move as part of President Obama's Climate Action Plan, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management sought to gauge public interest in a lease request for a 765-megawatt offshore facility.

Trident Winds LLC in January submitted its request to lease the approximately 68,000-acre area about 33 miles northwest of Morro Bay near San Luis Obispo.

BOEM and California have found that Trident is qualified for the lease. Now they are attempting to determine whether they should award it in a noncompetitive process, or if there are any other companies that are interested in the lease.

"This is a compelling opportunity that would assist California in meeting its ambitious and critically important renewable energy goals," said BOEM Director Abigail Ross Hopper. "We will continue our work with public and private stakeholders to create a path forward for sustainable energy development in the right places with the lowest conflicts offshore the Golden State."

California Energy Commissioner David Hochschild added that increased wind development, including offshore, will be critical as California seeks to accomplish its ambitious climate change goals.

"As California moves forward to meet 50 percent of the state's energy needs with clean, renewable energy by 2030, wind power will play an important role," he said.

Trident has proposed 100 floating foundations, each of which would support a single turbine that generates 7 to 8 MW. BOEM said that the electricity from the turbines would be transmitted to land with a single line.

The agency is also seeking comment on the environmental consequences of such a facility.

BOEM has awarded 11 commercial wind energy leases off the country's East Coast. It has received three bids for development near Hawaii as well as this one near California.