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Concerns with Offshore Wind Development Tribal Leader Talking Points White House Tribal Nations Summit 2023

Summary

In response to continued concerns voiced by Tribal Nations regarding the speed and trajectory of the permitting and development of offshore wind projects—currently, primarily in the waters off of the East and West Coasts—USET SPF, along with partners, National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) recently passed resolutions calling for the Secretary of the Interior to issue a temporary moratorium on the current Bureau of Ocean and Energy Management (BOEM) scoping and permitting process and allow time to enact a new Nationwide Programmatic Agreement for all currently proposed and future offshore wind projects and guide a new scoping and permitting process under BOEM.

[The resolutions](#) call for a moratorium on the permitting and development of offshore wind energy until the process can be restructured to be inclusive of avoidance measures, minimization of impacts, and the integration of Indigenous Knowledge for [all Tribal Nations](#), as infrastructure development will impact us all. Consistent with the Administration's commitment to Indian Country and "the whole of government" approach, the process must provide full mitigation through the completion of comprehensive and transparent procedures to appropriately protect Tribal Nation religious, cultural, environmental, and sovereign interests. We believe that the Administration's goals of developing clean energy and increasing Tribal co-management opportunities can and must be harmonized. Indeed, Tribal Nations have extensive experience in navigating the deployment of federal infrastructure in a way where multiple interests are satisfied and our cultural heritage is preserved. We are committed to exploring solutions with our federal partners that will benefit both Tribal Nations and the Administration's offshore wind deployment goals.

Following the passage of the resolutions, there have been several meetings between Tribal Nations, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, and the Department of the Interior, including Secretary Haaland. However, to date, we have not seen meaningful action from the Administration. We continue to support Tribal Nations as they navigate this issue and stand ready to compliment further efforts to ensure clean energy development occurs without negative impacts to our sovereignty, cultural sites, and ways of life.

Talking Points/Recommendations

- We urge the Secretary of the Interior to issue a temporary pause (moratorium) on the current Bureau of Ocean Energy Management scoping and permitting process and allow time to enact a new Nationwide Programmatic Agreement for all currently proposed and future offshore wind projects and guide a new scoping and permitting process under the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management.
- The new Nationwide Programmatic Agreement must be inclusive of avoidance measures, minimization of impacts, integration of Indigenous Knowledge, and provide full mitigation through completion of comprehensive and transparent procedures to appropriately protect Tribal environmental, cultural, and sovereign interests.
- The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management and the Administration must support shared Tribal jurisdictional authority over and Tribal management of offshore renewable energy activities, aimed at empowering Native communities through socio-economic benefits such as job opportunities, revenue sharing, power purchase agreement and support for Tribal energy development projects.

Because there is Strength in Unity