

CRMC, international team to research wind turbines

The CRMC will be overseeing a 28 month research project examining the engineering of the Block Island Wind Farm’s jacketed support structure. The results of this study will be utilized in many other wind farm applications worldwide.

The Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), agencies of the U.S. Department of the Interior, have identified a gap in the industry knowledge base with regard to the design and operation of offshore wind infrastructure in the Atlantic. In order to close this gap, BSEE has awarded a team of engineers and other specialists led by the CRMC, in cooperation with the University of Rhode Island’s (URI) Ocean and Civil Engineering Department, Tufts University and the Norwegian Geotechnical Institute (NGI), a commercial project, the Block Island Wind Farm operated by Ørsted U.S. Offshore Jacketed Wind farm support structures, as currently used in the offshore oil and gas industry, are a popular option for use in mid-depth (30 - 60 meters) offshore wind farms. Data from this study will assist BSEE, BOEM and CRMC to develop regulatory recommendations for this rapidly developing U.S. industry.



Block Island Wind Farm turbine 1

Wind farm support structures based on water depth, cost, seafloor characteristics, enforceable policies, and construction noise, among other factors.

“Monopile support structures are the dominant technology for existing offshore commercial wind farms installed in shallower water,” said David Ciochetto, an ocean engineer at the CRMC, and manager for the research project. “Jacketed structures are rarely used in wind farms in Europe; these structures are more common to offshore oil platforms. It’s not the same application, though, as a wind turbine is designed to extract 40 to 50 percent of the wind energy exerted on it so we are dealing with a much different interaction of the structure with the environment. We’re not certain how these structures will react throughout their operational life to the forces of the wind experienced off the Atlantic coast with fewer upwind obstacles and more frequent hurricanes.

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CRMC issues 2017-2018 Rights-of-Way report

The Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) has released its 2017-2018 annual report on rights-of-way in the state, “Designation of Public Rights-of-Way to The Tidal Areas of The State.”

From July 2017 through June 2018, the CRMC continued its ongoing efforts to discover and designate public rights-of-way to the tidal areas of Rhode Island, under its legislative mandate (RIGL 46-23-17). Beginning in 1978, this mandate tasked the Council with identifying and designating all public rights-of-way to the shore. To meet this charge, the CRMC created a Rights-of-Way Subcommittee. The report details actions of the subcommittee, as well as legal proceedings stemming from these activities and subsequent actions of the Council.

The CRMC is in the process of extensively researching five potential rights-of-way in the Buttonwoods Fire District in Warwick. This information was submitted by a fire district resident, who has contended that Andrew Comstock Road, Buttonwoods Avenue, Promenade Avenue, Claflin Road, and Lorna Avenue have been accepted by the City of Warwick and lead to the shore, making them candidates for designation as CRMC rights-of-way.

Staff and legal counsel agreed that evidence submitted by the Warren Harbor Commission supported the designation of Bridge Street, Beach Street, Baker Street, and Riverview Drive, and the Council designated all four by a unanimous vote.

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