

## CStaff

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**Sent:** Tuesday, April 25, 2023 8:52 PM  
**To:** lturner@crmc.ri.gov  
**Cc:** cstaff1@crmc.ri.gov  
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My name is Corey Wheeler Forrest. I am a 4th generation Portsmouth resident and 3rd generation commercial fisherman and fish dealer out of Sakonnet Point. Along with my 2 brothers, my son, my daughter, and my niece, we all grew up working in our family's fishing business.

A few weeks ago, I attended my first wind farm meeting in Little Compton. Hundreds showed, including news reporters, and a noticeable police presence. Community involvement: a chance for community members to voice their questions and concerns, was supposed to be the key objective according to the event's team of experts. YET, they held the microphone for the entire night. While they educated us, we were to write our questions on note cards to hand over and we were NOT permitted to speak freely at all. When it was finally our turn, we were out of time. THEY chose what question would be answered from those notecards. Many of us walked out.

One of the experts who spoke that night was a graduate school Professor of Oceanography at URI. He said he was asked there to speak about whales. We listened to him talk about whales, specifically the endangered right whale. We waited for him to mention the impacts installing and operating wind turbines would have on whales or any marine life for that matter. In fact, He did NOT mention the wind farms at all.

I could not help but feel that I had been part of a one-sided argument pushing an agenda akin to a pharmaceutical company pushing a drug, except they left out the fine print and long-term, long-list, of potential side-effects that are often worse than the ailment, like, "death".

Every commercial fisherman I know, including myself, is an environmentalist and conservationist to the core. It is our future. Hard work, perseverance, and fighting for what we do and love brings us here. The fact that "HOPE" is our Ocean State's motto is essential.

In the most basic sense, we are working with nature and feeding people but in reality, the fishing industry is a giant machine with lots of working parts. Commercial and recreational fishing, charters, processors, retail dealers, service and supply, wholesalers, and tackle shops make up over 3000 jobs, and over 500 million gross sales in Rhode Island. The east coast is home to New Bedford, the largest grossing port in the US, and the Fulton Fish Market, the 2nd largest fresh seafood market in the world. New England and the Atlantic states create 2 billion dollars in economic value and tens of thousands of jobs. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

concluded in a study that the adverse effects of offshore wind farms on commercial fishing would be “major”.

Not only Rhode Island fishermen, but fishermen up and down the east coast, are dependent on the migratory path of fish along the coastline- fish, like striped bass, scup, sea bass, bluefish, squid, fluke, butterfish, bonito - to name a few. My own family’s fishery is unique to Rhode Island, and it’s been around for 200 years. How will 1400 square miles, 900,000 acres, 1.5 times the size of Rhode Island, of ocean industrialization: construction, heavy vessel traffic, thousands of wind turbines, going to affect our fisheries and the migrations we all depend on?

U.S. fishermen are required by law to adhere to the strictest rules and regulations. According to fishwatch.gov “The United States is a recognized global leader in sustainable seafood, ... U.S. seafood must be caught according to fishery management plans that consider social and economic outcomes for fishing communities; prevent overfishing, rebuild depleted stocks; minimize by-catch and interactions with protected species; and identify and conserve essential fish habitat.”

Just like the laws that govern and make our fisheries sustainable, shouldn’t the windfarms be required to adhere to those same standards? To consider the social and economic outcomes? To consider the significant impact to our culture and irreversible damage to the marine ecosystem?

South Coast Wind is planned to get approved by this January, Revolution Wind by October, Sunrise Wind by November. That’s only 3 of 9 companies coming to our coastline. The pace of off-shore wind development is moving fast relative to the large-scale, long-term environmental impacts that need to be researched. This process is being rushed and many of us are just learning about it. What does it say about us, the Ocean State, if we turn our pristine waters into an industrial park? What will we say to our children? Our grandchildren?

If you have any “HOPE” for Rhode Island, please consider what’s at stake.

Thank you,  
Corey Wheeler Forrest