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Save LBI Calls Out EPA for Approving Clean Air Permit for Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind Project

BEACH HAVEN, NEW JERSEY, October 21, 2024 – Save Long Beach Island, an organization of citizens dedicated to protecting our oceans and New Jersey Shore communities, today issued a stern rebuke of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)’s decision to grant a Clean Air Act permit for the massive Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind South project less than 9 miles off the coast of the sensitive Brigantine National Wilderness Area and Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge.

In a filing with the U.S. EPA’s Environmental Appeals Board, which is a prerequisite to pursuing legal intervention, Save LBI contends construction and operation of a planned 200 wind turbines, each three times the height of the Statue of Liberty, will degrade air quality and visibility and impact vegetation in a unique and pristine natural environment that is subject to stringent air-quality requirements under the Clean Air Act.

Save LBI also filed the required 60-day notice of its intent to sue the U.S. EPA on August 6, 2024.

“The EPA’s Region II Office has flouted protections afforded to the Brigantine National Wilderness Area under the Clean Air Act in approving the Atlantic Shore’s air-permit application and allowing construction and operations activities to move forward,” said Bob Stern, president and co-founder of Save LBI.

Stern, a Ph.D. engineer who managed the U.S. Department of Energy’s office overseeing environment protection related to energy programs, maintains the EPA ruling is flawed on several fronts, including:

1. The State Implementation Plan for Regional Haze, which is intended to reduce air pollution that causes visibility impairment, is not valid here because it does not take into consideration the air pollutants created by activities associated with the construction and operation of offshore wind projects.

2. The air-quality modeling done by Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind is unacceptable because it fails to describe basic features of the pile driving activity being modeled, including the type and dimension of the enormous foundations being driven into the seabed and the energy and time it takes to embed those foundations.

3. The credibility of Atlantic Shores' air-quality modeling is further diminished, and therefore unacceptable, for failing to describe or reference any study of turbine component failure rates and the air pollutants emitted by the vessels, engines, and other equipment needed to remove and replace or repair failed components. In July, the Vineyard Wind project off the coast of Nantucket provided a stark example of [how wind turbines can fail when a 350-foot-long turbine blade spontaneously collapsed during testing off the coast of Nantucket](#) and how long it can take to remediate the damage done. Observational data from the operation of smaller wind turbines suggests that major repair and replacement activities could be quite frequent throughout the year.

The Brigantine and Forsythe wildlife preserves are home to one of New Jersey's largest nesting colonies of Piping Plovers and other bird species that depend on its salt marshes for survival, including the vulnerable Black Rail and Saltmarsh Sparrow, which breeds solely in salt marshes. In 1977, Congress acknowledged the uniqueness of the Brigantine Wilderness Area by designating it a Class I area and granting it special air-quality and visibility protections under the Clean Air Act.

"The Clean Air Act is designed to regulate air emissions from all sources to protect public health and the environment," Stern said. "The agency must be held accountable and explain to the public how this approval protects the Brigantine National Wilderness Area."

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About Save LBI

Save Long Beach Island (Save LBI) is an organization of citizens and businesses on and off the Island working together to protect the ocean and Long Beach Island and neighboring communities from the destructive impact of this wind project, and perhaps others in the future. As a not-for-profit, non-partisan entity, we do not endorse any political candidates but vigorously pursue policies and actions that protect the Island and surrounding communities. The organization is led by Beach Haven resident Bob Stern, a Ph.D. engineer with experience in environmental law who previously managed the U.S. Department of Energy's office overseeing environment protection related to energy programs and projects.

Save LBI is fighting to stop this ill-conceived project. Please visit SaveLBI.org to join the fight and consider making a donation.



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