



DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

33 CFR Part 165

[Docket No. USCG-2015-0227]

RIN 1625-AA00

Safety Zone, Block Island Wind Farm; Rhode Island Sound, RI

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard proposes to establish a 500-yard safety zone around each of five locations where the Block Island Wind Farm (BIWF) wind turbine generator (WTG) foundations will be constructed in the navigable waters of the Rhode Island Sound, RI, from July 1 to September 30, 2015. These safety zones are intended to safeguard mariners from the hazards associated with construction of the BIWF WTG foundations. Vessels will be prohibited from entering into, transiting through, mooring, or anchoring within these safety zones while construction vessels and associated equipment are present, unless authorized by the

Captain of the Port (COTP), Southeastern New England or the COTP's designated representative.

DATES: Comments and related material must be received by the Coast Guard on or before [**INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER**]. Requests for public meetings must be received by the Coast Guard on or before [**INSERT DATE 21 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER**].

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments identified by docket number USCG-2015- 0227 using any one of the following methods:

(1) *Federal e-Rulemaking Portal:*

<http://www.regulations.gov>.

(2) *Fax:* 202-493-2251.

(3) *Mail or Delivery:* Docket Management Facility (M-30), U.S. Department of Transportation, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001. Deliveries accepted between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except federal holidays. The telephone number is 202-366-9329.

See the "Public Participation and Request for Comments" portion of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section below for further instructions on submitting comments. To avoid duplication, please use only one of these three

methods.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have questions on this proposed rule, contact Mr. Edward G. LeBlanc, Waterways Management Division at Coast Guard Sector Southeastern New England, telephone 401-435-2351, e-mail Edward.G.LeBlanc@uscg.mil. If you have questions on viewing or submitting material to the docket, call Cheryl Collins, Program Manager, Docket Operations, telephone 202-366-9826.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Table of Acronyms

BIWF	Block Island Wind Farm
FR	Federal Register
NTM	Notice To Mariners
WTG	Wind Turbine Generator

A. Public Participation and Request for Comments

We encourage you to participate in this rulemaking by submitting comments and related materials. All comments received will be posted without change to <http://www.regulations.gov> and will include any personal information you have provided.

1. Submitting comments

If you submit a comment, please include the docket number for this rulemaking (**USCG-2015-0227**), indicate the specific section of this document to which each comment

applies, and provide a reason for each suggestion or recommendation. You may submit your comments and material online (via <http://www.regulations.gov>) or by fax, mail, or hand delivery, but please use only one of these means. If you submit a comment online via <http://www.regulations.gov>, it will be considered received by the Coast Guard when you successfully transmit the comment. If you fax, hand deliver, or mail your comment, it will be considered as having been received by the Coast Guard when it is received at the Docket Management Facility. We recommend that you include your name and a mailing address, an e-mail address, or a telephone number in the body of your document so that we can contact you if we have questions regarding your submission.

To submit your comment online, go to <http://www.regulations.gov>, type the docket number [USCG-2015-0227] in the "SEARCH" box and click "SEARCH." Click on "Submit a Comment" on the line associated with this rulemaking.

If you submit your comments by mail or hand delivery, submit them in an unbound format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying and electronic filing. If you submit comments by mail and would like to know that they reached the Facility, please enclose a stamped, self-

addressed postcard or envelope. We will consider all comments and material received during the comment period and may change the rule based on your comments.

2. Viewing comments and documents

To view comments, as well as documents mentioned in this preamble as being available in the docket, go to <http://www.regulations.gov>, type the docket number (USCG-2015-0227) in the "SEARCH" box and click "SEARCH." Click on Open Docket Folder on the line associated with this rulemaking. You may also visit the Docket Management Facility in Room W12-140 on the ground floor of the Department of Transportation West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

3. Privacy Act

Anyone can search the electronic form of comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You may review a Privacy Act notice regarding our public dockets in the January 17, 2008, issue of the Federal Register (73 FR 3316).

4. Public meeting

We do not now plan to hold a public meeting. But you

may submit a request for one, using one of the methods specified under **ADDRESSES**. Please explain why you believe a public meeting would be beneficial. If we determine that one would aid this rulemaking, we will hold one at a time and place announced by a later notice in the Federal Register.

B. Regulatory History and Information

The Coast Guard has not promulgated a rule regarding construction of the BIWF WTG foundations.

C. Basis and Purpose

The legal basis for the proposed rule is 33 U.S.C., 1231; 46 U.S.C. Chapter 701, 3306, 3703; 50 U.S.C. 191, 195; Pub. L. 107-295, 116 Stat. 2064; and Department of Homeland Security Delegation No. 0170.1, which collectively authorize the Coast Guard to establish safety zones.

This rule is necessary to provide for the safety of life and navigation, for both workers and the boating public, within the vicinity of the BIWF in Rhode Island Sound, RI.

D. Discussion of Proposed Rule

The Coast Guard proposes to establish a 500-yard safety zone around each of five locations where the BIWF WTG foundations will be constructed in the navigable waters of the Rhode Island Sound, RI, from 1 July to 30 September

2015. Locations of these platforms are:

<u>Platform</u>	<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
WTG 1	41° 7.544'N	71° 30.454'W
WTG 2	41° 7.196'N	71° 30.837'W
WTG 3	41° 6.886'N	71° 31.268'W
WTG 4	41° 6.612'N	71° 31.747'W
WTG 5	41° 6.383'N	71° 32.259'W

These safety zones are intended to safeguard mariners from the hazards associated with construction of the BIWF WTG foundations. Vessels will be prohibited from entering into, transiting through, mooring, or anchoring within these safety zones while construction vessels and associated equipment are present unless authorized by the COTP, Southeastern New England or the COTP's designated representative.

E. Regulatory Analyses

We developed this proposed rule after considering numerous statutes and executive orders related to rulemaking. Below we summarize our analyses based on 13 of these statutes or executive orders.

1. Executive Order 12866 and Executive Order 13563

This proposed rule is not a significant regulatory action under section 3(f) of Executive Order 12866, Regulatory Planning and Review, as supplemented by Executive Order 13563, and does not require an assessment of potential costs and benefits under section 6(a)(3) of

that Order. The Office of Management and Budget has not reviewed it under that Order.

We expect the adverse economic impact of this proposed rule to be minimal. Although this regulation may have some adverse impact on the public, the potential impact will be minimized for the following reasons: Although these safety zones will be in effect from 1 July 2015 to 30 September 2015, vessels will only be restricted from the zones during periods of actual construction activity; the BIWF is located approximately three miles offshore of Block Island and the safety zone are only 500-yards in radius centered on the five BIWF WTG foundation locations, allowing plenty of room for vessels to pass without having to divert a long distance around the construction areas.

Notification of BIWF construction activity and the effective enforcement periods of the associated safety zones will be made to mariners through the Rhode Island Port Safety Forum, and local and broadcast NTMs.

2. Impact on Small Entities

The Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980 (RFA), 5 U.S.C. 601-612, as amended, requires federal agencies to consider the potential impact of regulations on small entities during rulemaking. The term "small entities" comprises small businesses, not-for-profit organizations that are

independently owned and operated and are not dominant in their fields, and governmental jurisdictions with populations of less than 50,000. The Coast Guard certifies under 5 U.S.C. 605(b) that this proposed rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

This proposed rule would affect the following entities, some of which might be small entities: owners or operators of vessels intending to enter, transit, moor, or anchor within 500 yards of the five BIWF WTG foundation construction locations.

If you think that your business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction qualifies as a small entity and that this proposed rule would have a significant economic impact on it, please submit a comment (see **ADDRESSES**) explaining why you think it qualifies and how and to what degree this rulemaking would economically affect it.

3. Assistance for Small Entities

Under section 213(a) of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-121), we want to assist small entities in understanding this proposed rule so that they can better evaluate its effects on them and participate in the rulemaking. If the rulemaking would affect your small business, organization,

or governmental jurisdiction and you have questions concerning its provisions or options for compliance, please contact the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**. The Coast Guard will not retaliate against small entities that question or complain about this proposed rule or any policy or action of the Coast Guard.

4. Collection of Information

This proposed rule would call for no new collection of information under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501-3520).

5. Federalism

A rule has implications for federalism under Executive Order 13132, Federalism, if it has a substantial direct effect on State or local governments and would either preempt State law or impose a substantial direct cost of compliance on them. We have analyzed this proposed rule under that Order and have determined that it does not have implications for federalism.

6. Protest Activities

The Coast Guard respects the First Amendment rights of protesters. Protesters are asked to contact the person listed in the "For Further Information Contact" section to coordinate protest activities so that your message can be

received without jeopardizing the safety or security of people, places or vessels.

7. Unfunded Mandates Reform Act

The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1531-1538) requires Federal agencies to assess the effects of their discretionary regulatory actions. In particular, the Act addresses actions that may result in the expenditure by a State, local, or tribal government, in the aggregate, or by the private sector of \$100,000,000 (adjusted for inflation) or more in any one year. Though this proposed rule would not result in such expenditure, we do discuss the effects of this rule elsewhere in this preamble.

8. Taking of Private Property

This proposed rule would not cause a taking of private property or otherwise have taking implications under Executive Order 12630, Governmental Actions and Interference with Constitutionally Protected Property Rights.

9. Civil Justice Reform

This proposed rule meets applicable standards in sections 3(a) and 3(b) (2) of Executive Order 12988, Civil Justice Reform, to minimize litigation, eliminate ambiguity, and reduce burden.

10. Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks

We have analyzed this proposed rule under Executive Order 13045, Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks. This rulemaking is not an economically significant rule and would not create an environmental risk to health or risk to safety that might disproportionately affect children.

11. Indian Tribal Governments

This proposed rule does not have tribal implications under Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, because it would not have a substantial direct effect on one or more Indian tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian tribes, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities between the Federal Government and Indian tribes.

12. Energy Effects

This proposed rule is not a "significant energy action" under Executive Order 13211, Actions Concerning Regulations That Significantly Affect Energy Supply, Distribution, or Use.

13. Technical Standards

This proposed rule does not use technical standards. Therefore, we did not consider the use of voluntary consensus standards.

14. Environment

We have analyzed this proposed rule under Department of Homeland Security Management Directive 023-01 and Commandant Instruction M16475.1D, which guide the Coast Guard in complying with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321-4370f), and have made a preliminary determination that this action appears to be one of a category of actions which do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment.

A preliminary environmental analysis checklist supporting this determination is available in the docket where indicated under **ADDRESSES**. These safety zones are intended to safeguard mariners from the hazards associated with wind farm construction activity. Vessels will be prohibited from entering into, transiting through, mooring, or anchoring within these safety zones while construction vessels and associated equipment are present unless authorized by the Captain of the Port (COTP), Southeastern New England or the COTP's designated representative. It

appears that this action will qualify for Coast Guard Categorical Exclusion (34)(g), as described in figure 2-1 of the Commandant Instruction.

We seek any comments or information that may lead to the discovery of a significant environmental impact from this proposed rule.

List of Subjects

33 CFR Part 165

Harbors, Marine safety, Navigation (water), Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Security measures, Waterways.

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Coast Guard proposes to amend 33 CFR part 165 as follows:

PART 165--REGULATED NAVIGATION AREAS AND LIMITED ACCESS AREAS

1. The authority citation for Part 165 reads as follows:

Authority: 33 U.S.C. 1231; 50 U.S.C. 191; 33 CFR 1.05-1, 6.04-1, 6.04-6, and 160.5; Department of Homeland Security Delegation No. 0170.1.

2. Add §165.T0227 to read as follows:

§165.T0227 Safety Zone, Block Island Wind Farm; Rhode

Island Sound, RI

(a) Location. Areas within a 500-yard radius of the following five positions are safety zones:

<u>Platform</u>	<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
WTG 1	41° 7.544'N	71° 30.454'W
WTG 2	41° 7.196'N	71° 30.837'W
WTG 3	41° 6.886'N	71° 31.268'W
WTG 4	41° 6.612'N	71° 31.747'W
WTG 5	41° 6.383'N	71° 32.259'W

(b) Enforcement Period. From 1 July to 30 September 2015, vessels will be prohibited from entering into any of these safety zones, when enforced, during construction activity of five Block Island Wind Farm (BIWF) wind turbine generators (WTG) located in the positions listed in 2(a) above.

(c) Definitions. The following definitions apply to this section:

Designated representative. A "designated representative" is any Coast Guard commissioned, warrant or petty officer of the U.S. Coast Guard who has been designated by the Captain of the Port, Sector Southeastern New England (COTP), to act on his or her behalf.

(d) Regulations. (1) The general regulations contained in 33 CFR 165.23 as well as the following regulations apply to the safety zones established in conjunction with the construction of the Block Island Wind Farm; Rhode Island

Sound, RI. These regulations may be enforced for the duration of construction.

(2) Vessels may not enter into, transit through, moor, or anchor in these safety zones during periods of enforcement unless authorized by the Captain of the Port (COTP), Southeastern New England or the COTP's designated representative. Vessels permitted to transit must operate at a no-wake speed, in a manner which will not endanger construction vessels or associated equipment.

(3) Failure to comply with a lawful direction from the Captain of the Port (COTP), Southeastern New England or the COTP's designated representative may result in expulsion from the area, citation for failure to comply, or both.

Dated: April 1, 2015.

J. T. Kondratowicz,
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard,
Captain of the Port Southeastern New England.

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