



# TOWN OF YARMOUTH

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BOARD OF  
SELECTMEN

TOWN  
ADMINISTRATOR  
Daniel M. Knapik

January 23, 2018

Secretary Matthew A. Beaton  
Attn: MEPA Office (Ms. Purvi Patel)  
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs  
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900  
Boston, MA 02114

Re: Vineyard Wind Connector Project (EEA# 15787)

Dear Secretary Beaton:

The Town of Yarmouth has been identified by the Vineyard Wind Project as a potential location for the landing of the project's high voltage electric cable. The proposed site is Lewis Bay with a landing location at New Hampshire Avenue which is a residential neighborhood. As proposed, the cable then would generally be buried within the Town right-of-way underneath a number of streets, eventually making its way to a substation in Barnstable. The Board of Selectmen, on behalf of the Yarmouth Conservation Commission, and a number of Town residents respectfully submit to your office for review the following questions:

1. The Town requests that the applicant fund a study of the Lewis Bay area in order to develop a baseline of its current state of health and to assist in a proper post project remediation plan and development of a monitoring plan. The Town would like to have an independent study performed which would expand and update previous studies done in 2007 and 2009. The past studies concluded that Lewis Bay was a nitrogen-impaired ecosystem in regard to: water quality, bottom vegetation, benthic animal communities, eelgrass, flushing, and sediment accretion;
2. The Town requests that the applicant fund an independent study that updates a 2010/2011 Army Corps of Engineer's study pertaining to the existing conditions, the tributaries, flushing and retention of tidal waters throughout the watershed including the Hyannis Outer Harbor and how planned project dredging will impact the watershed;
3. The Town requests that the applicant fund an independent study related to characterizing the present and post construction condition of the bay scallop population and its fishery. There appears to be no data on impact studies on bay scallops associated with the jet plowing installation process, maintenance, repairs and decommissioning of the transmission lines, electromagnetic impacts, substrate temperature increase and habitat loss. The scallop fishery is an intricate part of the commercial and recreational fishery activity that the Town has worked diligently to improve its productivity;
4. The Town requests that the applicant fund an independent study related to the impacts on the recreational and commercial boating and fishing industry. The shallowness of the water and varying substrate depth may leave the cable at a depth of 8-10' from this activity. The effects and potential impacts of magnetic field interference on navigation equipment is not known;

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5. The Town requests that the applicant fund a habitat restoration plan and effects related to shellfish beds. The plan should provide information on the present condition of the habitat and document the steps needed to improve and then maintain the bay scallop, quahog, soft-shelled clam and oyster habitat. Additionally, any loss of habitat resulting from the project the Town would insist on compensation for that loss. The plan should account for the baseline conditions, installation, maintenance activities and decommissioning;
6. The Town requests that the applicant fund or the state require an independent study evaluating the three potential landing locations and routes, identifying hazards both to the environment and to the population, impacts on property values and a plan to mitigate these impacts if found. The study should address the various costs associated with each route, the environmental impacts and the impacts to the recreational and commercial boating/fishing industry. The three routes are: a route and landing through Lewis Bay, a route and landing at Great Island, and a route and landing in Barnstable;
7. The state (and the Town) requests that the applicant undertake all reasonable measures to avoid cable impacts, minimizing of cable breaks, and provide for the analysis related to the safety measures and options. This may include requiring the applicant to bury the cable deeper than proposed, provide a protective cover on the cable that will have a life expectancy as great as the cable, if not longer;
8. The Town requests that the state require the applicant to utilize environmentally safe materials and liquids for the project. The Town would like for the state to require that the applicant report the materials list to the Town prior to the start of construction;
9. The Town requests that the state require the applicant to disclose the potential unintended consequences of installation of ocean/land based transmission lines. Further, the Town requests that the state require the applicant develop a plan for mitigation and bear the costs associated with any mitigation;
10. The Town requests that the state require the applicant to participate in the evaluation and costs associated with any required dredging or restoration work as part of any Lewis Bay related project; and
11. The Town requests that the state require the applicant to report all impacts to the Town including how the project would affect the locating of future utilities in the area of the cable path, roadways, water lines, other electric lines, natural gas lines, and sidewalks along the intended route.

Sincerely,



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Chairman, Yarmouth Board of Selectmen