

# Review "favorable" to Cape wind farm

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The lead agency to review the proposed Nantucket Sound wind farm has released its final environmental report on the project. The review was characterized as "favorable" to the project by outgoing director of the U.S. Minerals Management Service, Randall Luthi.

"There is nothing in the (final environmental impact statement) to basically cause extreme alarms about the project," Luthi said.

The document is based on a draft report on the project that was released almost exactly a year ago, Luthi said during a teleconference announcing its release.

MMS - a division of the federal Department of Interior - took over the review of Cape Wind in 2005 after Congress decided to pass the lead responsibility for the project from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to Interior.

Luthi pointed out that the report is not a final decision on the project. A final "record of decision" marking Interior's approval of the project cannot be issued for 30 days after the final environmental report from MMS is released.

The timing of the record of decision puts the final approval of the project by the federal government in the hands of the incoming administration of President-elect Barack Obama, Luthi said.

The draft version of the report found minor or moderate impacts to the environment and public safety.

Opponents have called the review of Cape Wind rushed and incomplete while advocates for the project contend it is necessary to meet growing demand for clean, renewable energy to combat climate change.

A link to the report will be available on the MMS Web site sometime today, according to MMS officials.