

# Corps fast wind farm hearing set

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Several hundred people spoke at recent hearings on the proposed wind farm, but few made specific comments on the draft report that was the focus of the hearings.

Nonetheless, Army Corps of Engineers officials said the comments were valuable, whether or not they reflected knowledge of the draft environmental impact report.

"We heard a lot of very good information," Corps spokesman Larry Rosenberg said of speakers at three hearings last week

on Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket and in Yarmouth.

The fourth and final hearing will be held at 7 p.m. tomorrow (speaker registration starts at 6 p.m.) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 77 Massachusetts Ave., Room 10-250, Cambridge.

Rosenberg said he expects those who have read the report, or the sections with which they are most concerned, will file written comments before the Feb. 24 deadline. The final impact report is due next summer or early fall.

"Some of the public did not quite grasp what they were being asked to do, but the Corps will listen to their concerns, and respond to what's in there," said Greg Watson, vice president of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, which organized a series of informational meetings on the proposal to build the nation's first off-shore wind farm.

The subject of last week's hearings was the Corps' 4,000-page, four-volume draft environmental impact statement on Cape Wind Associates' proposal to build a wind farm on 24-square-miles of Horseshoe Shoal in Nantucket Sound.

The draft report did indicate the project's environmental effects would be relatively short-

term and mild, and that it would have both economic (more jobs) and environmental (less air pollution) benefits.

The proposal calls for 130-turbines and an electric service platform with 40,000-gallons of oil in special transformers used to cool electricity as it is transferred to cables connecting the project to an onshore transmission facility.

The wind farm, which is estimated to cost \$800 million, is expected to produce, on average, 75 percent of the Cape's average energy demand.

Opponents argue that while wind power is good for the environment, the proposed location is not, and have urged federal and state officials to try to block the project.

Critics also say no projects for the outer continental shelf should proceed until there are more comprehensive federal laws in place to regulate where they go, where they don't go, and how the public is to be compensated for a private developer's use of public resources.

"From watching the (Yarmouth) hearing, it seemed that 90 percent of the speakers ignored the allegedly objective evidence they were being asked to comment on," said former federal environmental engineer Stephen Buckley of Chatham.

One reason, he said, is that people had done without facts on the project for so long, they have become accustomed to doing without them.

"Now, all of a sudden, there are 3,800 pages of facts, and it's too much to digest, especially if they already have strong feelings about it," he said.

Buckley urged people who want to influence the final report to at least read the 26-page executive summary, and to make their written comments as specific as possible.

## WebLink

[www.nae.usace.army.mil/  
projects/ma/ccwf/windfarm.htm](http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/projects/ma/ccwf/windfarm.htm)

To view the draft impact  
statement

## WIND FARM HEARINGS

■ The **final hearing** on the wind farm's draft environmental impact statement will be held **tomorrow at 7 p.m.** at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 77 Massachusetts Ave., Room 10-250, Cambridge.

■ On **Jan. 8, starting at 10 a.m.** at the **Tilden Auditorium at Cape Cod Community College**, the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative will sponsor a **public information meeting** with officials from the Army Corps of Engineers and other major players in

the wind farm review process. People will be able to submit written questions to be answered during the session.

■ **Public comments on the Draft EIS** can be sent to [wind.energy@usace.army.mil](mailto:wind.energy@usace.army.mil) or mailed to **Cape Wind Energy Project EIS Manager Karen K. Adams, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, Regulatory Division, 696 Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742-2751. Reference file # NAE-2004-338-1.**