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To-day we are resuming our monthly series from across the Atlantic. Marine Renewables News does not seek to impose an editorial view on those that contribute to its pages. We do not believe that there is any absolute truth in this world. We also know that what works for Europe may not work for the USA and vice versa. Doug Faulkner's special value to us is precisely in that difference of perception.

One of the main questions we want to explore in these monthly articles is whether the U.S. will chart a radically different path forward from Europe in the development of marine renewables industries. Or, to put it more directly, can marine renewables grow in America without substantial central government subsidies? We believe the answer is yes and will strive to show to European readers in particular how that might occur in a peculiarly American mix, which draws on the power of private-public partnerships, involving industrialists, financiers, trade associations and non-governmental organizations working with the states and federal governments.

Maybe it will be seen in hindsight to be a case of "same but different" in America versus the European model, with individual state governments through their renewable power mandates and compensation systems largely just replacing direct payments from the central authorities. Or, just maybe, will it more come to resemble that classic Aesop's Fable about the tortoise and the hare, as the American side builds up slowly from a later start to overtake the early European lead in at least some of the marine renewables sectors? Time will tell, but we will tell the tale as it unfolds, from all angles, warts and all.

To that end, this month sees some new features spotlighting political and regulatory news as well as companies and organizations active in the marine renewables sector.

### Headlines Highlights

From Washington, DC:

The U.S. Interior Department announced on 17 June the availability for commercial wind energy leasing of more than 742,000 acres, approximately 12 miles offshore Massachusetts. This will be the largest in federal waters and will almost double the amount of acreage for offshore wind development. The announcement triggers a sixty-day comment period, which will be formally considered before the final sale notice. The Department has previously awarded five commercial wind energy leases off the Atlantic coast and expects to auction sites offshore Maryland and New Jersey later this year.

Interior also announced a few days later that it will review a request for a research lease from The Northwest National Marine Renewable Energy Center at Oregon State University to build a test site about five miles off the coast to study utility-scale wave energy devices. Interior shares jurisdiction with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission over marine hydrokinetic energy. This is a first.

The U.S. Congressional Research Service published on 10 June "Federally Regulated Offshore Wind Power: Milestones During the 113th Congress". Highlights of the report include:

- Federal policies are starting to result in proposed projects and auctions for offshore wind development rights.
- Public interest stems from concerns about states' renewable portfolio standards.
- For almost a decade the Secretary of the Interior has balanced two missions in administering the build-out of offshore wind power: diversifying U.S. energy options versus protecting the environment, the traditional economy and human lives in coastal waters.

- A perception is growing that existing permitting obligations might be “more sensibly” coordinated. Numerous laws address the various aspects of a new wind farm and three agencies in the Interior Department have some responsibilities for managing and leasing federal offshore wind.

- Both Republican and Democratic Members of Congress have expressed frustration over the slow pace of offshore wind energy development, but so far this has resulted in “little, if any, consensus” over how to speed it up. Obviously this an obstacle to progress.

### **From Ohio:**

Republican Governor John Kasich on 13 June signed without comment controversial legislation to freeze his state’s mandate for renewable energy, giving a two-year pause for study. The compromise bill passed the Ohio legislature by wide margins, despite heavy pressure from those wanting full repeal and those favoring continuation of the status quo, with battle lines scrambling conventional assumptions about private sector views. Dozens of manufacturers publicly urged the Governor to let the requirements stand, in contrast to the stance of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce and the utility First Energy urging repeal. The mighty Ohio and other rivers as well the great Lake Erie lap the state’s shores, with their untapped marine renewable potential.

The Ohio legislation originally passed in 2008 calling for 12.5% of the state’s energy from renewable sources and a reduction in energy consumption by 22% by 2025. More than half of the fifty states have such mandates but there are many political struggles being waged around the country to restrict or expand them. While Colorado, for example, last year doubled the requirement for renewable energy from some rural cooperatives, renewable energy advocates are concerned about broader freezes or even rollbacks in other states after the Ohio decision. That could undercut progress in developing national marine and other renewable resources, and underlines the important role that the states will play in the way in which marine renewables develop.

### **A Company to Watch**

Deepwater Wind is building a portfolio of offshore wind projects across multiple technologies and geographic areas. Its Block Island Wind Farm is a 30 MW project located off the coast of Rhode Island. The fixed foundation project has received approvals to construct from the state and expects final federal approvals this summer. Block Island is expected to be America’s first operating offshore wind farm in 2016. Alstom will supply five 6 MW turbines (the same turbines as planned for Dominion’s Virginia offshore wind demonstration project, discussed in last month’s article.)

Deepwater announced plans last month to develop the first-ever offshore wind farm in Oregon waters, the world’s first commercial project to use floating foundations. Deepwater earlier had entered into an agreement with Principle Power for the 30 MW project. The U.S. Department of Energy awarded this West Coast project \$47 million to support its engineering, permitting and public outreach.

Deepwater has also proposed supplying over 200 MW to Long Island, New York, as an initial phase of a larger project located in a thirty-year lease area in federal waters on the Outer Continental Shelf. Deepwater Wind acquired this 256 square mile site in 2013. The site is capable of being interconnected with multiple electric markets, including New York, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. It has the capacity for over 1,000 MW and Deepwater Wind plans to develop the site in phases over multiple years, beginning with the 200 MW supply to Long Island.

### **Associations on the Front Lines**

The Clean Energy Group focuses its marine renewable work in the Offshore Wind Accelerator Project. The Project will:

1. Work with individual states on developing their processes to promote offshore wind;
2. Work with multiple states on regional strategies to increase information-sharing, joint procurement, supply chain and siting decisions;
3. Work on developing new finance tools and mechanism for the huge capital needed to scale up offshore wind;
4. Continue to communicate ideas and policy developments;
5. Work with leading European and UK policy makers for sharing their lessons learned with U.S. counterparts.

Source: Doug Faulkner for Marine Renewables News