

Can Google Save the Offshore Wind Industry?

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Unlike [New Jersey wind projects](#), which are struggling to get off the ground, a Google-backed wind grid is advancing through the regulatory process. The undersea transmission line would transmit power from wind generators off the coast of New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia and would be the first such project in the United States.

The [U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management \(BOEM\)](#) recently announced a finding of "no competitive interest" for the proposed Mid-Atlantic offshore wind energy transmission line. The decision clears the way for the company, Atlantic Grid Holdings, LLC, to move the project forward.

Before proceeding with the review of this project, BOEM had to determine whether there were other developers interested in constructing transmission facilities in the same area. Following the 60-day open comment period, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management concluded, "There is no overlapping competitive interest in the proposed right-of-way grant area off the Mid-Atlantic coast for offshore wind energy transmission line."

If other developers had expressed interest in the same area, an auction would have been needed to determine who should be granted the right-of-way. Instead, the next step in the approval process will be the environmental impact statements.

The right-of-way would be located on the Outer Continental Shelf, located 12 to 15 miles off the coasts of New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia. The corridor would be 200 feet wide, centered on the cable with additional widths at the hubs and is anticipated to extend about 300 miles.

Once Atlantic Wind obtains all of the necessary approvals, the line will still take approximately ten years to construct. Nonetheless, this is still a great step forward because it shows companies are interested in developing the infrastructure needed to foster offshore wind development.

For further discussion of the regulatory hurdles faced by New Jersey wind projects, please see Scarinci Hollenbeck's recent blog post, [Will Regulatory Hurdles Leave New Jersey Wind Farms Blowing in the Breeze?](#)