



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

Legislation Text

File #: 22-615, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Supervisors

From: County Administrative Office

Agenda Section: Consent

SUBJECT:
Offshore Wind Supply Chain and Worker Readiness

RECOMMENDATION(S):
That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct staff to engage with local community partners to explore and vet opportunities and obligations surrounding the development of local supply chains and the preparedness of the workforce for offshore wind; and
2. Authorize the County Administrative Officer to submit, on behalf of the county and Board of Supervisors, letters of support and requests for funding related to the development of local supply chains and the preparedness of the workforce for offshore wind.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:
Economic Development (1120275)

DISCUSSION:
California maintains a vision of becoming carbon neutral by 2045. This vision has been adopted by state agencies as being necessary in order to sustain prosperity for future generations and to protect the State of California's interests.

In 2020, Governor Newsom furthered this position by signing Executive Order N-82-20 which called for a comprehensive and collaborative strategy to protect climate-vulnerable communities, defend biodiversity, achieve carbon neutrality, and to improve public health, safety, and economic prosperity pertaining to climate change mitigation.

Offshore wind (OSW) has been widely recognized as a tangible and viable vehicle for meeting these climate goals and remains a topic for communities that requires further engagement, research and review. It has been projected California may be able to supply over 100% of its 2004 state electricity consumption through offshore wind sites in waters less than 30 meters in depth at locations within 50 nautical miles offshore.

On Jan. 11, 2021, the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) issued a News Release announcing the availability of findings for the Humboldt Wind Energy Area (WEA) which is located approximately 20 miles off Humboldt County, California.

BOEM also plans to offer an OSW lease sale as early as 2022 within a 399-square-mile area of the coast of California. This lease area includes the coastline of Humboldt County which has been identified as having top wind speeds and ideal wind conditions to accommodate the state's OSW goals. The county would benefit by taking a proactive and exploratory stance on offshore wind now by working with local employers, stakeholders, and its community members, to engage in conversations and dialogue designed to ready the region's workforce to meet California's pressing and emergent OSW demands.

Two studies, one by the UC Berkely Labor Center titled "California Offshore Wind: Workforce Impacts and Grid Integration" and another by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) titled, "Creating the Clean Energy Economy. Analysis of the Offshore Wind Energy Industry", demonstrate that early stakeholder engagement by public agencies is key.

Therefore, staff recommends that your Board direct County Administrative Office and Economic Development staff to engage with community partners, partner agencies, and OSW stakeholders to explore and vet the opportunities and obligations surrounding the development of local OSW supply chains as well as the preparedness of the workforce and to return to your Board within 90 days with additional recommendations.

Staff also recommends that your Board authorize the County Administrative Officer to submit, on behalf of the county and Board of Supervisors, letters of support and requests for funding related to the development of local supply chains and the preparedness of the workforce for offshore wind.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Actual costs are unknown at this time. This action would result in staff time incurred by the County Administrative Office and Economic Development Division to participate in meetings and discussions with offshore wind community partners and local stakeholders. Staff recommends that your Board approve staff time for this activity until staff can return in 90 days with an updated report on associated costs and potential revenue sources or funding requests.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

This action supports your Board's Strategic Framework by supporting business, workforce development and creation of private-sector jobs .

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Includes and is not limited to the County of Humboldt Local Workforce Development Board, Humboldt County Workforce Coalition, Cal Poly Humboldt, California Center for Rural Policy, Humboldt State University Sponsored Programs Foundation, Humboldt County Office of Education, College of the Redwoods, Humboldt Bay Harbor District, Schatz Energy Research Center, Redwood Coast Energy Authority, Redwood Region Economic Development Commission, Arcata Economic

Development Corporation, Humboldt Area Foundation, North Coast Small Business Development Center, Building and Construction Trades Council of Humboldt, Operating Engineers Local #3, The Northern California Tribal Chairmen's Association, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, local environmental and fisherman's associations, etc.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Board Discretion

ATTACHMENTS:

IEDC Report on OSW

UC Berkeley Report on OSW

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: N/A

Meeting of: N/A

File No.: N/A