



**For Immediate Release
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CAPE WIND PERMIT APPROVAL USHERS IN NEW ERA IN LARGE-SCALE RENEWABLE ENERGY OVERSIGHT

Salem, MA – March 7, 2011 – The US Army Corps of Engineers’ recent approval of the Cape Wind project represents the culmination of a process lasting nearly a decade and including many new and evolving regulatory requirements, and even new agencies. The proposal to site 130 3.6-Megawatt wind turbines south of Cape Cod in the shallows of Nantucket Sound was unprecedented, with no project having blazed such a trail through the forest of complex policy and permitting hurdles. No similar project had previously been proposed in the US and the technical, social, environmental, and economic issues presented novel challenges for the government agencies responsible for ensuring its rigorous and balanced review. Along the way, many related factors changed: oil costs spiked, wars began, regional power outages occurred, infrastructure vulnerability was studied, and climate change projections drew international concern. All these factors appeared to favor rapid execution of large-scale renewable energy projects.

Meanwhile, prominent individuals opposed the project for aesthetic reasons, the military raised concerns about impacts on surveillance and navigation, bird strikes mounted at other wind farms, and a host of other questions and uncertainties raised objections to the first proposed maritime wind farm in the United States. To address these evolving issues, regulators needed to devise new approaches, tap specialized skill sets, and pioneer new decision-making methods. Having established this precedent, the recent [Cape Wind approval](#) has set the stage for other maritime wind power projects to proceed more rapidly in the future, with knowledge of the path towards regulatory approval.

Bioengineering Group supported the US Army Corps of Engineers as a contractor performing key tasks during the federal review process required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). With a seasoned team of planners, scientists, engineers, and facilitators that had been supporting renewable energy projects around the country, this Massachusetts-based firm brought more than local regulatory experience, they delivered well-rounded knowledge of the impacts, both positive and negative, of related projects, and a framework for organizing information and communicating effectively in order to facilitate understanding of complex and sometimes emotional topics. Bioengineering Group was able to draw on their extensive aquatic habitat restoration expertise to coordinate a constructive public response that led to incorporation of some beneficial modifications to the original design. One key feature of the plan, as approved, involves management of the submerged footings and adjacent erosion control and stabilization measures to serve as artificial reef systems to boost local habitat productivity while performing essential engineering functions. The firm has assessed renewable energy resources, planned renewable energy projects, and associated mitigation measures for solar, hydro, geothermal, and wind power. Their interdisciplinary practice has allowed them to effectively coordinate with FERC, regulators in many states, utility companies, and diverse stakeholder groups. Much of their work on the Cape Wind project occurred behind the scenes as the on-call contractor to perform needed actions when Army Corps personnel needed additional technical expertise, industry knowledge, or capacity.

Wendi Goldsmith, CEO of Bioengineering Group noted “Cape Wind is already an icon in the energy world, even though it has not yet been built. Since it was first proposed it has drawn powerful opposition and passionate endorsements. We are very proud to have supported the federal review process as this significant project pursued approvals. Our firm has a definite bias toward supporting renewable energy, as I disclosed to Karen Adams of the Regulatory Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New England District when she placed the first phone call seeking our help. We stand ready to aid other similar projects as large-scale renewable power generation becomes widespread.”

Bioengineering Group’s staff members have not only worked on the largest offshore wind project in the US, Cape Wind, but additionally consulted on other onshore and offshore wind projects in various states. Additionally they have worked on the largest concentrated solar power project in the

US, the Nevada Solar One project in Boulder City, NV. They have addressed permitting concerns over birds and bats for Midwestern wind farms, which tap the vast generation potential of the “wind belt” in that region. They have addressed engineering and conservation issues connected to the largest tidal power facility in North America, the Annapolis Royal facility in Nova Scotia. For the Department of Defense, they have provided engineering services, scientific research competency, and policy expertise to guide the development of varied forms of renewable energy on military installations in multiple states, in fulfillment of the objective to promote energy security and more resilient power grids for the country’s armed forces.

About Bioengineering Group



Founded in 1992, Bioengineering Group has been a pioneer in the field of ecological restoration and the application of sustainability principles to site planning, development, renewable energy, and water management. The firm is a well-known leader in ecologically sensitive development and public infrastructure work, applying a tailored interdisciplinary approach to large-scale site planning, development, and ecosystem restoration projects. The firm provides design, environmental consulting, and sustainable site planning for private corporations, institutions, and local and federal governments on small- to large-scale projects. Distinguished by their interdisciplinary staff of ecologists, scientists, engineers, and landscape design professionals, Bioengineering Group is uniquely positioned to rigorously guide projects toward sustainable outcomes. The firm has worked with many municipalities, states, and government agencies to provide innovative site engineering and landscape architectural design; parks and greenways planning and design; integrated water management assessment and design; river and coastal restoration and flood risk reduction; wind, biomass, solar, geothermal, and hydropower siting and development; as well as plan review, environmental permitting and remediation.

For more information about Bioengineering Group, visit www.bioengineering.com.

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