

SITING ANALYSIS FOR HULL, MASSACHUSETTS OFFSHORE WIND ENERGY PROJECT: STUCK BETWEEN A ROCK AND A CRUSTACEAN

*Glendon Barnes, Mark D. Driscoll, Carol Wasserman, Jonathan Alvarez,
and Meghann Murray, ESS Group, Inc.*

The purpose of the proposed Hull Offshore Wind Energy Project is to provide the Town of Hull, Massachusetts with an emission-free, renewable power source that will promote energy diversity and independence, provide resources through the production and sale of renewable energy credits, promote price stability, displace emission generated through fossil-fuel firing, and empower Hull to continue in its role as a municipal leader in the Commonwealth's Municipal Climate Protection Partnership. One of the first, and perhaps the most crucial step in the planning of this, and perhaps any offshore project, is the completion of a robust Siting Analysis to determine what physical and ecological restraints exist within the Project Area. For the Hull Offshore Wind Energy Project, several independent studies were undertaken to further elucidate the benthic and sub bottom conditions in the offshore area adjacent to Nantasket Beach. These studies included geophysical/geotechnical characterizations, benthic invertebrate sampling and a benthic habitat / lobster habitat characterization. Research on federal, state and local restrictions and jurisdictional limits was also conducted to determine an appropriate location for the project. Heavily utilized shipping channels, FAA height restrictions and municipal waters boundaries were all taken into consideration in the Siting Analysis. The results of these studies enabled the project proponent to alter the proposed Wind Turbine locations so as to maximize beneficial subsurface geology, while simultaneously avoiding environmentally and commercially sensitive habitats and jurisdictionally infeasible locations.