Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries
PO Box 27 | 13 Atlantic Avenue
Stonington, ME 04681
Phone: 207.367.2708 | Fax: 207.367.2680
www.coastalfisheries.org

Island Ad-Vantages

THE VIEW FROM ATLANTIC AVENUE

August 13, 2020 – Last week the University of Maine and the partners that make up the Maine Aqua Ventis ocean wind energy initiative announced that two major national energy companies were investing upwards of $100 million in the next phase of development. The Maine Aqua Ventis research program began several years ago to design, test and deploy a wind turbine capable of harnessing wind in the deep off shore environment. The hallmark of its design, is that the structure floats and is moored in place and therefore could be deployed in deep water where there is a lot of wind. A subsidiary of the Mitsubishi company, called Diamond Offshore Wind, is joining with RWE Renewables to invest $100 million to build and deploy a full-scale, floating wind farm at an approved test site to the south of Monhegan Island. This site was selected several years ago along with several other places within Maine's 3-mile state limit for testing of ocean energy technology. In 2013, the University of Maine, led by the Advanced Structures and Composite Center deployed a scale model off of Castine. Since then, the group has been further refining the technology, and seeking investors to help finance the final phase of constructing a full-scale turbine that will be built at a mainland facility in Brewer and towed to the site near Monhegan where the turbines and blade structures will be added.

Throughout the development phases, the fishing community has expressed concerns about possible impacts to fisheries in the vicinity of these types of turbines. One aspect that continues to challenge this effort is how and where to link the turbine at its location to the mainland in order to connect it to the power grid. There are regulations in place that prevent the use of mobile gear including fishing nets and dredges from being used where undersea cables are installed. The route of the cable to the mainland is unknown at this time. Options for mainland connections that have been explored include Port Clyde, New Harbor, and even further down the coast near Boothbay Harbor. There are other questions about the technology including the affect of noise and electromagnetic fields on fish and lobster in the vicinity of the turbine and the cable. The company has hired Stonington's own Genevieve McDonald, a lobsterman and state legislator as fishing industry liaison. "As this project moves forward, its imperative the fishing industry has a seat at the table," said McDonald, continuing, "I am looking forward to coordinating stakeholder engagement."

Do you have a question about our fisheries? Send it to info@coastalfisheries.org or call 207.367.2708. Learn more about MCCF by visiting us online at www.coastalfisheries.org.

FISHERIES LOG

Prices to Harvesters in Stonington
Lobsters (shedders): $2.50/lb.
Bait (fresh pogies): $80/crt.
Fuel (diesel): $2.10/gal.

DISCLAIMER: figures collected Monday, August 10, 2020