



STATE OF WASHINGTON
— OFFICE OF GOVERNOR JAY INSLEE —

September 18, 2024

Washington Coastal Marine Advisory Council
C/O Casey Dennehy
Marine Policy Associate
Washington State Department of Ecology
P.O. Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600

Dear Members of the Washington Coastal Marine Advisory Council:

I appreciate the Washington Coastal Marine Advisory Council (WCMAC)'s continued engagement and work on the issue of offshore wind. Input from the WCMAC has been instrumental as I have considered how best Washington state can proceed on the issue.

Climate change is harming our oceans and those who depend on them. From ocean acidification to sea level rise and coastal flooding, our marine ecosystem and Coastal Tribes and communities are today bearing the cost of historic pollution. To effectively combat climate change, Washington state, and our nation more broadly, need a significant amount of new clean energy generation. While I believe that Washington should pursue offshore wind as a potential clean energy source, treaty-protected tribal resources and the marine ecosystem must be protected. As such, I have decided to pursue next steps on offshore wind that advance our research and understanding of its potential ecological impacts so that information can be incorporated into planning and siting decisions.

I have heard the WCMAC's concerns and cautions on potential impacts of offshore wind, and I respect and value the call for additional scientific research prior to leasing and building these projects. Moreover, the *Gridworks* report submitted to my office ("A Proposed Offshore Wind Engagement Framework for Washington State") elucidates that more work remains before Washington is ready to invite a federal planning and evaluation process on offshore wind. I also understand that while our state urgently needs to develop new clean energy sources, offshore wind is not yet economically competitive with other zero-emission resources in our state. It is with this understanding that I have decided not to request a federal offshore wind planning process at this time. Instead, I believe that Washington state will be best off pursuing additional research and state preparation prior to inviting a formal federal planning and evaluation process.

To that end, I intend to advance a collaborative research effort focused on understanding the potential impacts of offshore wind on the marine environment and identifying strategies to avoid, minimize, and if necessary and deemed appropriate, mitigate those impacts. I am asking my senior staff to work with Tribes, agencies and researchers to develop a budget proviso to advance offshore wind research efforts for possible inclusion in my proposed 2025-2027 budget. I remain hopeful that by bringing together Tribes, researchers, the fishing industry, and offshore wind technology companies, we can better understand the environmental impacts of offshore wind projects and identify ways to have projects co-exist with thriving ecosystems.

In addition, I have asked my staff to explore and vet a budget proviso directing relevant state agencies to synthesize and report on state authorities applicable during a federal leasing process for offshore wind facilities. Such a report will ensure that the state has a comprehensive and thorough understanding of our jurisdictional authorities.

Lastly, I believe that Washington state has a unique opportunity to support the Biden-Harris Administration's offshore wind goals by furthering our participation in the offshore wind supply chain. By leveraging our skilled workforce, advanced manufacturing capabilities and deepwater ports, Washington is well suited to manufacture offshore wind parts and materials. This opens immense opportunity for our state to support and benefit from offshore wind projects currently in the planning pipeline. Over the remainder of my administration, my office will engage with other West Coast states, the federal government, Tribes, and others to help realize and lay the groundwork for this opportunity. I welcome the WCMAC's participation in this effort.

To further discuss these topics, please contact my Senior Policy Advisor on Environment and Water, Carrie Sessions at carrie.sessions@gov.wa.gov or (253) 290-1126.

Thank you again for your engagement and work on offshore wind.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Inslee", written in a cursive style.

Jay Inslee
Governor