

HISTORY OF PEOPLE FOR OFFSHORE WIND ENERGY RESOURCES

The Delaware Legislature approved a 200 MW Bluewater Wind offshore wind project in 2008. The Bluewater Wind company was subsequently purchased by Babcock and Brown, and then by NRG. Studies conducted by NRG led to cancellation of the project in 2011. Statutory provisions for offshore wind power expired, according to Gov. Carney's offshore wind working group report described below.

Governor Carney authorized an offshore wind workgroup through Executive Order 13. It met from October of 2017 through June of 2018. Its purposes were to "study how Delaware can participate in developing offshore wind, identify ways Delaware can benefit economically and environmentally from offshore wind power, and make specific recommendations for Delaware to move forward in offshore wind power development." The workgroup's members were a diverse group, chosen from government, industry, and the public. A broad range of offshore wind presentations was made throughout the life of the group, including cost analyses, health and climate effects of offshore wind, PJM renewable integration, offshore wind job opportunities, etc. The final report recommended a "wait and see" approach to offshore wind.



[Read Report](#)

On July 27, 2020, Willett Kempton, University of Delaware Professor of Marine Science and Policy, visited a meeting of the members of the League of Women Voters of New Castle County, where he discussed the state of offshore wind power on the East Coast. Prof. Kempton described the advantageous price point of offshore wind, the economic opportunities that a Delaware offshore wind project would provide, and the clean energy it would bring to the state. He pointed out that there was no one currently championing offshore wind.

Following the Kempton presentation, **Peggy Schultz, Portfolio Chair for Climate Change and Energy for the League of Women Voters of Delaware, initiated a series of meetings with environmental leaders in the state,** in order to discuss the possibilities of an offshore wind project for Delaware. She proposed that a coalition of organizations be formed, in order to champion the cause of offshore wind in Delaware, with herself as Facilitator. Charlie Garlow suggested that the coalition be named People for Offshore Wind Energy Resources (POWER). For several months a local environmentalist served as Co-Facilitator, but she chose to step down from the position to dedicate her time to other growing responsibilities. Ms. Schultz served as Facilitator until May, 2026.



The first meeting of the new coalition of organizations supporting an offshore wind project for Delaware took place on August 10, 2020. Early participants included Ms. Schultz, Pat Todd, and Mary Douglas of the League of Women Voters of Delaware; Beth Chajes of Citizens Climate Lobby; Marc Weiss of Global Urban Development, Charlie Garlow of the Delaware Electric Vehicle Association; and Dustyn Thompson, John Irwin, and Sherri Evans-Stanton of the Delaware Chapter of the Sierra Club.

The first project of the new coalition was a sign-on letter to the Governor, requesting that the Governor take action to promote offshore wind for Delaware. Although the Governor never responded to the letter, signed by 30 organizations, the letter set in motion Delaware's third effort to bring offshore wind to the state. [Click here for a link to the letter.](#)

The group agreed on its initial Mission statement:

"To pass state legislation in support of an offshore wind project for Delaware in order to provide a greater measure of renewable energy for the state, to provide jobs appropriate to the project, and to reduce air pollution. The process will be inclusive and will encourage public comment in all matters at every step which deals with subjective decision-making."

The Special Initiative for Offshore Wind (SLOW), led by Kris Ohleth, had earlier written peer-reviewed reports for Massachusetts and New York, followed by the successful implementation of offshore wind projects for both states. POWER urged the SLOW to write a similar report for Delaware. **The SLOW was firm in its expectation that it could do such a report only with an express invitation from our Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) and from both houses of the General Assembly.**



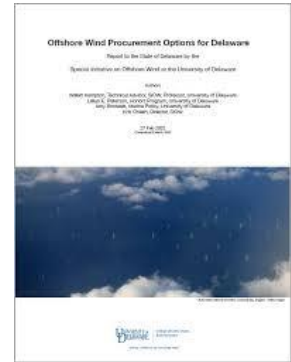
On April 14, 2021, DNREC sent a letter to the SLOW, urging preparation of a scholarly report on a possible offshore wind project for Delaware. <https://offshorewinddelaware.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/DNREC-letter-to-SLOW-4-15-2021.pdf>



On May 5, 2021, the Senate Environment and Energy Committee and from the House Energy Committee sent a letter to the SLOW, urging preparation of a scholarly report on a possible offshore wind project for Delaware. [Read Letter](#)

On November 4, 2021, The Climate Action Plan was released by DNREC and the Governor. The plan was basically a play-book for the state on how to mitigate and adapt to climate change. It was a significant waymark in the development of support for an offshore wind project. In December of 2025 the plan was updated. [Read Plan](#)

On February 27, 2022, the report, “Offshore Wind Procurement Options for Delaware,” was released. It was prepared by the SLOW, and written <https://dnrec.delaware.gov/climate-coastal-energy/renewable/offshore-wind/> by Willett Kempton, Lillian E. Peterson, Amy Bosteels, and Kris Ohleth. This document was something of a how-to manual, providing information on costs, technical issues, etc. It was instrumental in bringing offshore wind to the attention of the Delaware legislature. [Read Document](#)



On June 8, 2023, Gov. John Carney signed SB 170, a bill directing DNREC to work with PJM to study the transmission impacts of offshore wind development, to work with neighboring states on offshore wind transmission, and to study and report back to the Governor and the General Assembly on a process for procuring offshore wind power. The bill's main sponsor was Sen. Stephanie Hansen. This bill implemented many of the suggestions of the SLOW report. [Read Bill](#)

On August 3, 2023, Gov. John Carney signed SB 99, the Climate Change Solutions Act, a bill based on Delaware’s Climate Action Plan of 2021. The bill's main sponsor was Rep. Debra Heffernan. It includes a statutory requirement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050, based on 2005 emissions data. [Read Bill](#)



In September, 2023, several active supporters of an offshore wind project for Delaware were invited to serve as the Core group, or steering committee for POWER, meeting monthly between POWER meetings. The Core group works out policy and ways in which POWER might serve as an offshore wind educator.

On September 5, 2024, Gov. John Carney signed SB 265, the Delaware Energy Solutions Act, a bill directing the State Energy Office to develop one or more offshore wind energy solicitations to purchase up to 1,200 MW of offshore wind power. <https://legis>. The bill's primary

sponsor was Sen. Stephanie Hansen. This was a major bill in the fight for offshore wind. [Read Bill](#)

At each of the steps described above that required legislative action, **members of POWER actively lobbied members of the legislature** to help them to understand the virtues of the particular legislation. POWER developed an offshore wind slide show that aided in these efforts. Mark Nardone, POWER, and National Wildlife Federation staff authored a POWER fact sheet that also helps to share POWER's message. When a surge of offshore wind protesters began to loudly condemn the US Wind project during its local permitting process, POWER members showed up for a counter protest, using Jill Gaumer's rich store of protest signs. The Sierra Club led the wind supporters.



Throughout the legislative activity described above, **an active corps of writers urged the public's support of the particular bill through letters-to-the-editor and op-eds.** Leading these efforts were Beth Chajes, Mark Nardone, and Peter McClean.

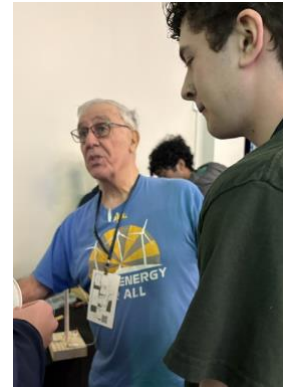
Initially, the educational function of POWER was served partly through public meetings held in-person. Topics covered were an overall look at offshore wind power, a review of polling and public perceptions of offshore wind, and an exploration of the offshore wind job situation. Presenters included Kris Ohleth, Mike Dunmyer, Jeremy Firestone, and Sam Salustro.



Subsequent to those in-person meetings, a wide range of offshore wind issues have been discussed at monthly virtual POWER meetings, open to the public. Speakers for these meetings have included Willett Kempton (SLOW), Helen Rose Patterson (NWF), Sam Schecht (NWF), Lori Murphy Lee (PJM), Mike Dunmyer (US Wind), Kris Ohleth, (SLOW), Capt. Paul Eidman (fisherman), and others.

Another arm of POWER's educational function is its **tabling activity.** Displays on the benefits of offshore wind and on the

dollar savings Delawareans could achieve through offshore wind, help to share our message with visitors to a variety of events: the YES, U.D.'s Earth Day, U.D.'s Ag Day, Dover Days, the Delaware River and Bay Authority World Environment Day, Coast Day, and Newark Community Day. At the 2026 Youth Environmental Summit, POWER not only tabled, but it also gave a presentation on offshore wind that was divided into 3 sections: 1) a slide show on offshore wind by Marissa McClenton; 2) a wind turbine construction activity devised and led by Larry Ryan, and 3) a generator demonstration, using moving students, led by Peggy. (At an earlier YES, POWER presented a slide show on offshore wind.)



On January 20, 2025, POWER found itself in something of a holding pattern, when the new Federal Administration announced that no new offshore wind permits would be issued. POWER spoke in support of the local US Wind project's right to begin construction on its Maryland project, as US Wind fought several local efforts to decide otherwise.

In May of 2026, POWER members approved the updated Purpose: POWER (People for Offshore Wind Energy Resources) advocates for offshore wind projects and supporting infrastructure that benefit Delawareans; in addition to creating local jobs and reducing pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, these projects further the development of a cost-effective and reliable supply of electricity to help meet rapidly increasing energy demands. Guided by the best available science, POWER works to educate, combat misinformation, and promote informed, inclusive public discourse.

Marissa McClenton of the Sierra Club and Mark Nardone of the Delaware Nature Society, graciously agreed to become Co-Facilitators of POWER when Peggy

moved out of the state in May of 2026.

