

Cymie [posted here](#) about the hearings Interior recently held in on both coasts on offshore energy development of all stripes. True to the President's commitment to making renewable energy development a priority, shortly after those hearings Interior's Minerals Management Service  [finalized regulations](#) governing renewable energy development on the outer continental shelf. The regulations, developed under the authority of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, set out the terms on which leases, easements, and rights-of-way across the federal outer continental shelf will be granted for renewable energy projects.

The new regulations clear up at least some of the regulatory ambiguity that has plagued such projects. Of course many questions remain, including how federal OCS approvals will interface with state regulation of near-shore lands.

The rules were developed primarily with offshore wind in mind. A number of projects are already in various stages of development off the Atlantic Coast, the best known being [Cape Wind](#), which has an application pending. MMS and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission have also entered into a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) clarifying their respective authorities with respect to wave and ocean current energy, which had been the subject of a bureaucratic tussle. Wave energy projects on the OCS will need both a lease from MMS and a FERC license.