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**To:** [Paul Foley](#)  
**Cc:** [Lucy Morrison](#)  
**Subject:** DRI-688 Vineyard Wind Undersea Cable  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 19, 2019 5:33:15 PM

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March 19, 2019

Paul Foley  
DRI Coordinator  
Martha's Vineyard Commission  
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Cc: Lucy Morrison, [morrison@mvcommission.org](mailto:morrison@mvcommission.org)

To the Commission:

I write today in support of the DRI-688: Vineyard Wind Undersea Cable, Edgartown. I am a former Professor of Earth and Environment at Boston University and a full-time resident of Edgartown.

I have reviewed the EEA#15787 Vineyard Wind Connector: Final Environmental Impact Report, submitted to the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs on December 17, 2018, and the document Vineyard Wind Connector: Martha's Vineyard Commission Development of Regional Impact dated January 23, 2019.

Both of these documents are thorough and complete in their assessment of environmental impacts of the Vineyard Wind Connector, including the portion of the Connector that will pass through Edgartown waters under the purview of the Commission.

The DRI document carefully analyzes the various types of benthic environments that the Connector cables will pass through and determines that the impacts will be minor and short-term, limited to the installation and burial of the cables. The vessels laying the cable will take due care to notify mariners of their presence on the site as well as through media. Right whales will be unaffected by the vessels as they move very slowly while laying the cable.

Two routes are considered, and the best one will be chosen as studies continue up to the time of installation.

The cables will be buried to a minimum depth of 5 feet and will remain out of reach of boating and fishing activities. Where hard bottom conditions do not permit this depth, the cables will be armored with large concrete plates to protect them. Cables will be monitored over the long term for the life of the project.

The cables themselves are solid and do not contain fluid. Electric fields that are observed by power lines on land are fully absorbed by water and buried cables present no electrical hazard to marine organisms. The magnetic field generated by the cable is one one-hundredth of the natural magnetic field of the Earth and is too weak to affect migrating fish and marine mammals.

Based on my appraisal of these documents, I believe that the Connector will have only minor impacts during the cable-laying process and no longer term impact on Edgartown waters or marine activity after cable burial is complete.

The Connector is an essential part of the Vineyard Wind Project, which will provide 84 powerful wind turbines to generate more than 800 MW of carbon-free, renewable energy -- enough to power over 400,000 homes in Massachusetts. This power will reduce emissions of CO2 by 1.6 million tons per year, as well as significantly ease regional air pollution by NOx and SO2. Since our global climate is rapidly changing in the face of increasing atmospheric concentrations of CO2 and other greenhouse gases, the project will make a very significant contribution to moderating climate change.

My wife Kristi, also an Edgartown resident, joins me in support of the Connector and the Vineyard Wind Project.  
We urge the Commission to approve this Development of Regional Impact.

Sincerely yours,

Alan H. Strahler  
Kristi S. Strahler

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