

Paul Foley

From: William Lake [lake.williamt@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, March 15, 2019 4:39 PM
To: Paul Foley; Lucy Morrison
Subject: Supporting the Vineyard Wind Connector

Dear Mr. Foley and Ms Morrison:

I have written previously to urge the Commission to act favorably on the Vineyard Wind Connector, as it is an essential part of the Vineyard Wind project. The project is a critical step to slow human-induced climate change, which if left unchecked will cause far more serious environmental harm than any local impacts the wind farm may have.

I write again now to address more specifically the issues that some have raised about possible impacts of the cable itself.

Concerns that have been expressed about cable installation and cable burial are, to my mind, overstated and ignore the measures that are being undertaken to minimize any impacts. Any effects of the cable installation on the benthic habitat will be minor and short term, as the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) has concluded. Sediment suspension will be very short term and localized; and the cables will be buried using modern technology to minimize impacts and ensure that the cables reach the minimum burial depth. The minimum burial depth of five feet will avoid interfering with dragging by commercial fishermen.

Vineyard Wind has worked with fishermen, among other stakeholders, to minimize impacts on local fisheries by adopting restrictions on on the time of year of cable laying.

Concerns expressed about possible EMF impacts on sea life once the cable is operational ignore the fact that we have experience with four cables that connect our island to the mainland and two that connect Nantucket to the mainland. Cable shielding and burial depth have proven to make any EMF impacts negligible to minor, as BOEM has concluded in its Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

In short, as with the Vineyard Wind project itself, any possible local impacts of the cable have been identified, and steps are in place to minimize those impacts. A long-term monitoring program will be in place to make sure that the safeguards are effective. While attention is being — and should be — given to the local impacts, those impacts must be kept in perspective by contrasting them to the far more drastic impacts threatened by climate change. The Vineyard Wind project, with its connecting cable, is an important step to address the existential threat that climate change caused by fossil fuel burning poses to our island, our oceans, and the world.

I hope the Commission will act promptly to approve the Vineyard Wind Connector, as time is of the essence in slowing climate change.

Thank you for your service and your consideration of these important issues.

Sincerely,
William Lake
Aquinnah