

To: Martha's Vineyard Commission
From: Edgartown Energy Committee
Subject: New England Wind 1 Connector
Date: July 13, 2022

This document provides public comment for the July 14, 2022, MVC public hearing regarding a permit by Park City Wind for the installation of the New England Wind 1 Connector in Muskeget Channel within Edgartown waters. Although the Edgartown Energy Committee has not yet met to approve this letter by vote, its members have individually endorsed its contents.

The Edgartown Energy Committee wholeheartedly supports the Connector Project because it is essential to bringing very large amounts of renewable electric power to our New England grid. This renewable power, in turn, will allow Edgartown and other island towns to meet their energy goals of 100% renewable electricity and an end to fossil fuel burning by 2040. These goals were adopted at the 2021 Edgartown Town Meeting and by other island towns at town meetings in 2020 and 2021. While Island solar may contribute around 15% of the island's renewable power by 2040, we cannot reach our goal without drawing renewable power from offshore wind through the New England power grid.

Power from the three offshore wind projects in development off Martha's Vineyard will require at least three sets of undersea power cables passing through Muskeget channel. The first of these, the Vineyard Wind 1 Connector, was approved and permitted through an extensive federal- and state-driven stakeholder process associated with development and siting of the Wind Energy Area in federal waters. Its corridor was fully vetted by the EPA, MEPA, and BOEM. The New England 1 Connector will lie within the same corridor although at a distance from the Vineyard Wind 1 Connector. Installation and burial methods of the New England 1 Connector will be the same as those used and approved for the Vineyard 1 Connector. A third connector is also anticipated by Mayflower Wind in the near future.

There are many reasons to move from energy provided by fossil fuel burning to renewable energy. The first is simply that renewable energy is cheaper than fossil fuel energy. The dollars saved on fuel costs will keep more dollars in the people's pockets to spend on other goods and services. Second, electricity is quieter and more efficient – electric cars and heat pump heating systems are obvious examples. Third, no air pollution is emitted by renewable electric energy. Diesel engines and fossil fuel burning power plants create a high premature death toll from lung heart diseases as well as infant mortality. Fourth, extraction of fossil fuels leads to land and water pollution from hydrocarbon leaks, drilling disasters, and coal waste disposal with profound effects on both human communities and ecosystems.

Continued burning of fossil fuels also releases greenhouse gases to the atmosphere, creating climate change to which our island is extremely vulnerable. Sea level rise will erode our beaches, bluffs, and dunes. Our fin fisheries will be affected by the loss of salt marsh fish nurseries and our shellfish will be affected by ocean acidification. Climatic extremes of heat, drought, and resulting fire will affect our vulnerable populations of young and old as well as our

island farmers and their bounty. Climate change will touch every part of every island community in undesirable ways.

Our island is small and its direct impact on health, environment, and global climate change through substituting local solar renewable energy for fossil fuel burning will be small. But we can multiply that impact many times over by doing our part to bring vast amounts of offshore wind energy directly to our state and region and indirectly to our island. Our part today is to permit the New England 1 Connector to join the Vineyard 1 Connector in Muskeget Channel, and we urge you to do so in the strongest terms.

Edgartown Energy Committee Members

Jack Ensor

Alan Strahler

Bonni Widdoes