



## Department of Energy

Golden Field Office  
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DOE/EA 1652

### FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT for the WIND TECHNOLOGY TESTING CENTER BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

**AGENCY:** U.S. Department of Energy, National Renewable Energy Laboratory

**ACTION:** Finding of No Significant Impact

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), in coordination with the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC), conducted an Environmental Assessment (EA) that analyzed the potential impacts associated with the construction and operation of the proposed Wind Technology Testing Center (W TTC) in the Charlestown section of Boston, Massachusetts.

DOE, through its National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), proposes to provide funding and technical support through a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement with the MTC for the design, construction and operation of a Large Blade Test Facility, called the W TTC. The proposed blade testing facility would be capable of accommodating 90-meter long wind turbine blades for a full suite of static and fatigue tests. All discussion, analysis, and findings related to the potential impacts of constructing and operating the proposed W TTC, including the MTC-committed environmental protection measures, are documented in the Final EA. The Final EA is hereby incorporated by reference.

The proposed W TTC facility would consist of approximately 50,000 square feet, up to approximately 80 feet in height, containing three bays and office/shop space. These bays would be served by bridge cranes, a control booth, and doors high enough to allow roll-in access for large trucks and dollies. A lower section of the building would house offices, a fabrication shop and pump rooms, and sheltered storage for facility equipment. The building would meet or exceed requirements for sustainable design under Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Order 484, "Leading by Example - Clean Energy and Efficient Buildings". Initial staffing is expected to include a W TTC director, two senior test engineers, a facilities manager, design engineer, two technicians and one office manager. Additional employees may be added at a later date if the work load warrants.

The proposed W TTC site is located at 100 Terminal Street, in the Charlestown section of Boston. The site is a paved industrial port facility owned by the Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport), adjacent to the Mystic River portion of Boston Harbor. The site, known as the Boston Autoport, is currently a secure receiving yard for imported automobiles entering the U.S. as well as those that are exported. The current leased uses include the Autoport, and the International Salt Company salt stockpiling and salt mixing. The proposed W TTC building would occupy approximately one acre of the site, with a total leased area between two and five acres (including parking and a storage yard which could be used for future expansion). An additional 1.6-acre "blade turning easement area" would be required just outside the building's hangar doors to maneuver blades through the doors. There are two potential siting options for the W TTC, which are described in detail in Section 2.1.1 of the Final EA.

In accordance with applicable regulations and policies, DOE mailed a public scoping notice to approximately 90 Federal, State, and local government agencies, tribal governments, companies, individuals, and organizations, on May 16, 2008 providing 30 days to submit comments regarding the



EA's scope. In addition, DOE placed notices of the scoping process in local newspapers. Copies of the public scoping letters including the newspaper notice are presented in Appendix A of the Final EA. DOE did not receive any comments during the scoping period.

The Draft EA was distributed for a 30-day public review period to interested members of the public, and Federal, State, and local agencies, which ended on July 8, 2009. This allowed interested individuals to provide comments for DOE's consideration prior to any final decision on the proposed project. DOE received one comment letter on the Draft EA from the City of Boston Environment Department, which expressed strong support for the development of the WTTC at the Autoport site and confidence that the WTTC would be constructed and operated to the highest environmental protection standards. No revisions to the document were suggested. DOE did not receive any additional comments during the public review period.

**DETERMINATION:** DOE determines that providing funding and technical support to construct and operate the proposed WTTC in the Charlestown section of Boston, Massachusetts, would not constitute a major Federal Action significantly affecting the quality of the human or natural environment, as defined by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The MTC-committed environmental protection measures identified in the Final EA shall be incorporated and enforceable through DOE's funding award to the MTC. These measures include:

- MTC will implement a procedure for collecting spray water and debris from outdoor blade cutting.
- MTC will obtain a construction stormwater permit and follow construction Best Management Practices for stormwater pollution prevention.
- MTC will be covered by the Autoport's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan and permit when they are finalized. Specific stormwater pollution prevention measures will be developed as necessary to cover MTC-specific processes.
- MTC will ensure project compliance with the Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management polices as described in Appendix E of the Final EA.
- MTC will develop and implement a blade cutting operating procedure to minimize fiberglass-containing airborne dust.
- MTC will utilize Massport construction specifications and construction contractors will control construction-related air emissions through dust suppression and equipment Emission Control Devices (for diesel-powered construction equipment with horsepower [HP] ratings of 60 HP and above that are used on the project in excess of 30 days).
- MTC will obtain the services of a Licensed Site Professional to manage and oversee the removal of contaminated soils from the Activity and Use Limitation area during construction.
- All contaminated soil that is excavated will be segregated and staged on plastic sheeting to avoid contact with surface soils. The soil piles will be covered with plastic sheeting at the end of each work day and will be disposed at appropriate receiving facilities with all necessary manifest documentation.
- MTC will develop and implement a work plan for the safe handling and appropriate disposal of contaminated soil removed during the construction process.
- MTC will manage, test, and dispose of excavated soil consistent with Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and Toxic Substances Control Act regulations.
- MTC will develop a waste minimization program that includes recycling. MTC will investigate and implement ways to recycle otherwise discarded wind turbine blade materials.
- MTC will minimize traffic impacts and reduce road safety hazards by: obtaining appropriate permits for over-sized delivery trucks; ensuring that Federal, State, and local trucking guidelines are observed during blade transport; implementing modifications to intersections to allow oversized trucks to safely make necessary turns (including relocating several utility poles and

modifying an existing traffic light near the project site); and coordinating with City and State officials regarding any intersection modifications that may be necessary for transporting blades to and from the WTTC.

- In the event that potentially significant cultural materials or features are discovered during construction, MTC will obtain the consultation services of an archeologist to assess the significance of the findings.

The preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required and DOE is issuing this Finding of No Significant Impact.

Copies of the Final EA are available at the DOE Golden Field Office Public Reading Room website at [http://www.eere.energy.gov/golden/reading\\_room.aspx](http://www.eere.energy.gov/golden/reading_room.aspx) or from:

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