

MacMaster, Marianne

From: Rachel Herbener <rachelherbener@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2024 10:13 AM
To: ENR
Subject: Please don't pass Offshore Wind Sand Dune Bill

This message originates from outside the Maine Legislature.

Dear Committee on Environment and Natural Resources,

I oppose An Act Regarding Offshore Wind Terminals Located in Coastal Sand Dune Systems.

This bill evades current state law regarding sand dunes in order to authorize the Maine Department of Environmental Protection to grant a permit for the offshore wind port on Sears Island in an ecologically important coastal sand dune system.

I completely support an offshore wind facility, but on Mack Point. I am thankful that the state of Maine is actively promoting "green" energy. But my head is exploding. Coastal sand dunes are a crucial element in this effort, and the state is considering removing them? This is staggeringly stupid and irresponsible, especially when the facility could be built at Mack Island without destroying protective dunes.

If this revision passes, the proposed Sears Island offshore wind manufacturing, assembling and launching facility would entirely destroy a 2023-mapped sand dune near the jetty and threaten another sand dune just north of the proposed facility. According to Maine Geological Survey, cooperating with the Maine Coastal Program and NOAA, both of these Sears Island sand dune areas "... can reasonably be expected to become part of a coastal wetland in the next 100 years." Coastal sand dune systems not only provide important habitat for both adjacent upland and marine species, but are the first line of defense in mitigating climate impacts.

There are no coastal sand dunes on Mack Point.

This bill highlights the inadequate planning by the State as it relates to siting offshore wind projects, sets a dangerous precedent for future impacts from any development to coastal ecosystems, and runs counter to the efforts of the State and local communities to address the climate crisis.

Please do not support this bill.

Sincerely,
Rachel Herbener
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Belfast