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Wind developers are rallying support

Offshore wind power has gotten off to a slow start in New Jersey, but that has not stopped the developers of an ambitious plan to transmit the electricity generated by giant turbines from moving forward with their multi-billion dollar project.

The developers of the Atlantic Wind Connection, which envisions building a seabed transmission backbone linking offshore power generators to onshore customers, are rallying political support for the project, casting it as a cost-effective solution that will make New Jersey the center of the nation's offshore power industry. So far no power generators have endorsed Atlantic Wind's plan to tie their turbines, which would be located a dozen or so miles offshore, to the grid. They are skeptical of the project's need and cost, which would be added to electricity rates. "They're pushing their project, and they're trying to come up with reasons to approve it," said Stefanie Brand, the New Jersey rate counsel, who acts as the state's public advocate. "I think at this point it's premature."

Atlantic Wind, which envisions eventually tying together offshore turbines from Virginia to New Jersey, this month, recast the first phase of its plan as the New Jersey Energy Link, a 189-mile-long line that would connect wind farms off southern New Jersey to consumers in the northern part of the state. It selected Bechtel, the international engineering firm, to design the \$1.8 billion project.

The transmission line's first segment would connect to the grid at a substation called Cardiff, near Pomona, Atlantic County, to the area about 12 miles offshore that the federal government has identified as the best location for offshore wind.

The cost for the first leg, which would include landfalls and power converters in Cardiff and at its northern terminus in Hudson County, would cost \$1.3 billion. A third connection at a substation called Cedar in Ocean County would be built later.

For every 1,000 megawatts of offshore power, the developers would need to install a hub on an ocean platform to convert the electricity to DC power. The hubs would be slightly smaller than a football field and about 10 stories high, and would cost about \$500 million each, Mitchell said.

The converters would be built on land before they are floated out to sea, so the prospect of long-term local manufacturing jobs is another selling point for Atlantic Wind.

Electricity Pricing – Jan 29, 2012

	On-Peak	Off-Peak
2013	\$.03665	\$.02467
2014	\$.03976	\$.02671
2015	\$.04224	\$.02839

LMP Electric Price

Time Period	Average per Kwh
Jan, 2012	\$.03043
Feb, 2012	\$.02963
Mar, 2012	\$.02894
April, 2012	\$.02659
May, 2012	\$.02816
June, 2012	\$.03089
July, 2012	\$.04303
Aug, 2012	\$.03112
Sep, 2012	\$.03034
Oct, 2012	\$.02829
Nov, 2012	\$.03327
Dec, 2012	\$.03081
Jan1 – Jan 28, 2013	\$.03160

Extended Temperature Forecast:

Chicago Area

	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
High	60	45	18	17	30
Low	44	14	5	17	25

