



THE WOODS HOLE RESEARCH CENTER

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Woods Hole Research Center supports Cape Wind proposal

Comments made by Dr. Kilaparti Ramakrishna, Woods Hole Research Center at the Public Hearing, 7 December 2004, Mattacheese Middle School, West Yarmouth, Massachusetts on the Cape Wind Energy Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement Environmental Impact Report (EOEA File #12643) & Development of Regional Impact (JR #20084)

Good evening and thank you for the opportunity to present our views on this important issue. My name is Kilaparti Ramakrishna. I am the Deputy Director of the Woods Hole Research Center, an independent research institution dedicated to science, education and policy with a focus on global warming. Our work ranges from a major role in international treaties on climate, forests and biodiversity, to research in the Amazonian rainforest, in the forests of Siberia and Central Africa, to North American forests with a focus on the forested and coastal regions of New England, and the study of land use change on Cape Cod.

While our research focus is global, we try to find solutions that work at local level. With wind energy, we can do just that: mitigate global warming and reduce local air pollution. The Woods Hole Research Center supports this innovative potential for clean renewable energy for two reasons. First, the world is facing a crisis of climatic disruption that requires a substantial abandonment of fossil fuels. Potential independence from fossil fuels and all their attendant environmental and health problems can be forged starting with support of wind energy. Second, wind power is not new to Cape Cod. Centuries ago, Cape Cod relied on coastal winds to drive its economies of fishing and farming. Today we are looking to tap these winds again with the wind farm that will provide 75% of the Cape's annual electricity to support our local economies of tourism, recreation, fishing, business, education, and scientific research.

Due to the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and the resulting climatic disruption, our judgment is that wind energy is one of the few solutions we have in reducing reliance on fossil fuels. Our Director, George Woodwell, wrote several years ago, "If we have a world that is not working..., as we do with climatic disruption, we look for solutions....We look to the sum of local actions in restoring the integrity of nature to make a world that works."

The Center has withheld judgment on Cape Wind's proposal until now. After thorough review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the staff and trustees of the Woods Hole Research Center have concluded that the proposal is sound and offers every basis for proceeding with the project. The Cape Wind Energy Project is an excellent example of what can be done now to make the transition to renewable energy production without further significant environmental costs. It will stand as a model of progress by the U.S. in meeting its global obligations to reduce greenhouse gases and a model of leadership and compromise by the residents of Cape Cod to reduce air pollution.

While we do not normally take institutional positions on matters such as these, what the Cape Wind proposal seeks to do is so consistent with the mission of the Woods Hole Research Center – we could not BUT take an institutional position in favor of it.