

**ATTACHMENT 7-10**

Wood's Hole Oceanographic  
Institution Letter of Support



## WOODS HOLE OCEANOGRAPHIC INSTITUTION

December 12, 2017

Mr. Thomas Brøstrom  
Co-Chairman and President  
Bay State Wind LLC  
100 Oliver Street, Suite 2610  
Boston, MA 12201

Dear Mr. Brøstrom,

The Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) has developed the capability to acoustically detect the occurrence of vocalizing baleen whales in near real time from autonomous platforms (gliders and buoys). This innovative technology can be used to aid in mitigating the impacts of industrial activities on endangered baleen whales, such as the North Atlantic right whale, by alerting industry of the presence of whales within a general area of several miles of the platform. The system cannot detect silent animals or vocalizing whales that are outside of its detection range, but when baleen whales are detected by the system, it is nearly 100% correct.

Mitigating impacts of industrial activities on endangered baleen whales is very important, and this is particularly true for the North Atlantic right whale. This species currently numbers only around 450 whales, and the population has been in decline for the past 7 years. Right whales visit the Massachusetts Wind Energy Area regularly during fall, winter, and spring, and can be present in the area in summer as well. There are several risks to the whales from activities associated with the development of wind farms, including ship strikes from survey, support and construction vessels, and exposure to noise from pile driving and other intense industrial noises. Wind energy development companies can and should use all means available to them to minimize these risks. This can be accomplished by restricting or ceasing all industrial activities when whales are encountered near those activities by any of a complementary suite of detection methods used in concert, including (1) shipboard and aerial surveys, (2) observers on survey, support and construction vessels, and (3) the WHOI near real-time acoustic detection system.

WHOI recognizes that Bay State Wind plans to fund a study to evaluate the use and application of a DMON buoy and a Slocum glider in the Bay State wind lease area and adjacent potentially affected waters. Detection information will be supplied by WHOI to Bay State Wind and other stakeholders via email or text, and it will also be available through the Whale Alert app and via the publicly available website [dcs.whoi.edu](https://dcs.whoi.edu).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Baumgartner', with a stylized, cursive script.

Mark Baumgartner  
Associate Scientist  
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution