

Company asks permit for offshore turbine

By [Nelson Sigelman](#)
Published: September 17, 2009

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Blue H USA, a Dutch-owned company that wants to anchor floating wind turbines some 20 miles southwest of Martha's Vineyard to harness offshore ocean winds, has applied for a permit from the U.S. Army Corps.



A prototype of the floating offshore wind turbine Blue H proposes to build. Photo courtesy Blue H

The company wants to anchor a demonstration unit on the outer continental shelf approximately 23 miles off Squibnocket Point in Chilmark and about 32 miles southeast of Block Island, R.I. according to the Army Corps.

Last March, company representatives unveiled a proposal to build a floating 120-turbine offshore wind farm in 167 feet of water, the first floating deepwater wind farm of its kind in the United States. The company said it would be capable of generating 429 megawatts of power.

The announcement coincided with a federal public hearing on Cape Wind Associates plan to place 130 wind turbines on Horseshoe Shoal in Nantucket Sound.

Blue H has adapted the technology developed by the oil industry for offshore oil drilling platforms, according to a company press release. Unlike a conventional wind turbine that rests on a pole or tripod driven into the sea floor, Blue H utilizes a submerged deepwater platform anchored to the sea floor.

The company claims that by utilizing this technique it can take advantage of stronger and less turbulent winds and help to address issues of visual impact. Turbines can be assembled on shore and towed offshore, and they are easily dismantled.

According to the Army Corps, the demonstration unit will consist of a semi-submerged deepwater platform that is held under the water by chains that connect the floating body of the platform to a counterweight located on the sea floor.

The deepwater platform will be submerged 66 feet below mean sea level. A tower with monitoring equipment will be mounted on the platform and will stand approximately 197

feet above the surface and will be equipped with red warning lights.

"The structure," the Army Corps said, "is for demonstrating the viability of deepwater offshore wind power, but will contain data collection equipment only, no wind turbine.

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This is why we should slow it down on the wind farms. The technology is still too new to place all of our trust and futures in it. These offshore floating turbines sound so much more promising from an environmental and visual standpoint. Let's give this one a fair hearing before we are stuck with old technology smack in the middle of our fisheries and YES beautiful ocean vistas.

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Posted by [chip Coblyn](#) on Thursday, 9/17/09 @ 5:49pm

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The technology is not that new. All across Europe, there are many wind farms that work perfectly fine. There are tons of wind farms in the US already, most out west in CA, AZ, etc. The real question is, will the people of MV, Nantucket, and the Cape be willing to accept a new concept? Will they be willing to move forward with the rest of the world?

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Posted by :/ on Thursday, 9/17/09 @ 11:15pm

I'm not convinced the islanders are unwilling to move forward. My guest is most like the idea of cleaner power. That said, I believe its the visuals that bother the people the most. I know when I'm on the beach or boating I like looking out to sea and seeing just a horizon with an occasional boat or ship going by, not a permanent ferris wheel.

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Posted by JB 007 on Sunday, 9/20/09 @ 2:03pm

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