



November 17, 2009

The Honorable Ken Salazar
Secretary
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar:

As you know, Cape Wind continues to hang in the permitting balance. President Obama and you have been working hard to implement your commitment to clean energy and stopping global warming. But as the administration and the world gear up for next month's meeting in Copenhagen, action approving the Cape Wind project would speak louder than words.

To this end, I join Congressman Markey in urging you to complete the permitting process for Cape Wind in time for next month's United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark. This would serve as a clear indication from our federal government that offshore renewable energy is a priority in this country.

As you know, Cape Wind is still in federal regulatory review limbo after eight years of rigorous environmental and permitting review that has demonstrated that its environmental benefits will almost certainly outweigh its impacts. As the Obama administration's contribution to this delay creeps up on a year, the need for final approval becomes ever clearer. The delay is slowly eroding the confidence of investors and developers and undermining the President's efforts to lead the world towards a global agreement on climate.

The decision on Cape Wind now rests within your department in the hands of the National Park Service as the Service assesses claims by two local Native American Tribes that Nantucket Sound should be designated a Traditional Cultural Property. NRDC has a long, proud history of working with Native American Tribes and was encouraged when President Obama recently invited over 500 Tribes to the White House. We trust that you will give these claims the due process they require, but you must do it quickly and find a way to move the project forward.

The U.S. has watched as other countries have continued to forge ahead in their successful development of offshore renewable energy. It is evident that the technologies for the successful deployment of offshore renewable energy exist, however

the U.S. has yet to permit a single project in federal waters. Getting the process right is critical to advancing these technologies in a robust and environmentally sustainable way.

We understand that Cape Wind is the first project to get to this stage, that the law has changed since the project started, and that assessing the balance between the project benefits and any potential impacts does require careful consideration. But the process should not take eight years.

It is a new day in Washington. We have courageously moved towards establishing a new era of energy and environmental priorities in this country as indicated in the passage of the 2007 energy bill, American Reinvestment and Recovery Act and the Waxman-Markey American Clean Energy and Security Act. The Department of Interior has been an important part of this progress moving forward and finalized regulations for offshore renewables in general and launching important planning efforts for onshore renewables on federal lands.

Nevertheless as we look forward to Copenhagen and read the steady flow of new science suggesting that global warming is happening faster than we ever expected, we cannot underestimate the challenge that remains in front of us. While a tremendous amount of work remains to be done, with respect to offshore wind in America, further delay is inexcusable. It can be done, and the time to act on the Cape Wind permit is now.

Thank you for your attention on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frances Beinecke". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "F" and "B".

Frances Beinecke
President