

October 12, 2023

1st Division Commissioner Aaron Newman
2nd Division Commissioner Greg Dale
3rd Division Commissioner Steven Kullman
4th Division Commissioner Craig Benson
5th Division Commissioner Patrick Higgins
Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District
601 Startare Drive
Eureka, CA 95501
Via email

RE: Item # 11.a. Receive Status Update Regarding Humboldt Bay Offshore Wind Heavy Lift Marine Terminal Project

Dear esteemed Commissioners:

On behalf of the Redwood Region Climate and Community Resilience Hub (CORE Hub)¹, I thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments to the Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District (Harbor District) on October 12 agenda item 11.a.: *Receive Status Update Regarding Humboldt Bay Offshore Wind Heavy Lift Marine Terminal Project*.

1. Introduction

As a start, we are a community deeply connected to and reliant on the natural world. We are devastated by the harm we see to Humboldt Bay and other natural resources and support immediate action on climate change. We are committed to working in partnership with the Harbor District to develop and fund a state-of-the-art Wind Terminal that uses best available technology for achieving zero-emission goals to maximize climate benefits, includes safeguards to protect against increased risk of sex-trafficking and Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP), prevents degradation of fisheries and the environment, protects cultural resources, and brings infrastructure, regenerative economic and other benefits to our region.

We are pleased to see that the District has included an agenda item for update on the Wind Terminal project. We are concerned that the District has not provided an update or formal response to NOP comments or to the serious concerns raised in writing by several Tribal Nations, community based organizations, and other partners regarding MMIP. We hope that the Wind Terminal agenda item will

¹ The CORE Hub was established by regional leaders in climate resilience, mitigation, and adaptation and is based at Humboldt Area and Wild Rivers Community Foundation, serving California Counties of Humboldt, Del Norte, and Trinity, as well as Curry County in Oregon. The service area also includes 26 Tribal Nations and Indigenous Territories.

discuss measures the District will take to address MMIP, as the risk of MMIP was brought up in comments from Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria, the Blue Lake Rancheria, California Center for Rural Policy, Changing Tides Family Services, College of the Redwoods, CORE Hub, the Hoopa Valley Tribe, Humboldt County Association of Governments, Northern California Indian Development Council, Peninsula Community Collaborative, Peninsula Community Services District, Redwood Community Action Agency, Selkie Land and Sea, Sierra Club North Group of the Redwood Chapter, Surfrider Foundation Humboldt, 350 Humboldt, the Yurok Tribe, and multiple other parties.

We also hope that the District uses this opportunity to discuss a community agreement for the Wind Terminal. The District passed “[Resolution No. 2023-05 concerning offshore wind development off the West Coast of the United States and around Humboldt Bay](#)” over eight months ago. That resolution directed staff to: “*8 d) support and/or participate in negotiations of community benefits agreements or similar agreements related to community benefits, workforce development, procurement, and mitigation of impacts, with offshore wind development leaseholders and other project developers, participants, interested parties, and affected communities which advances the District's goals for Humboldt Bay and the regional vision and roadmap for offshore wind development which will be developed.*” To date, we have not had an update on how the Harbor District staff or others are supporting community agreements around the Wind Terminal (other than the PLA). In addition to the Harbor District, the County of Humboldt passed a resolution² supporting CBAs for offshore wind and related development, including supporting the efforts of the CORE Hub and its partners. In addition to local commitments, the California Coastal Commission—a key regulator—has recommended a CBA for offshore wind and other developers.³ Similarly, key federal agencies, such as the Department of Energy include requirements for community benefit plans and agreements in order to be eligible and competitive for funding, while all federal infrastructure funding, given requirements around Justice⁴⁰ and Executive Orders around environmental justice, Tribal Nations and climate, will consider engagement and benefits to affected communities, and will be supported by a community benefits agreement.

We are pleased that District Staff will update on the MEGA grant application, which includes \$6 million for community benefits. While this seems like a good step forward and we are interested in learning more, we do not see this as a substitute for an agreement binding a developer to commitments to our community and about the project itself.

CORE Hub and multiple other parties brought up the values of a community agreement in NOP comments. A strong, enforceable community agreement is an important vehicle for providing confidence to the community around issues raised around developer conduct in the community, and project design, operations and decommissioning. CORE Hub and partners are advocating for a community agreement which includes terms to address: community infrastructure services; community leadership, engagement and decision-making; cultural and environmental protections; Tribal leadership

² Humboldt County [Resolution No.22-140](#)

³ Coastal Commission's conditional concurrence was based on an expectation that future “developers of offshore wind infrastructure would identify and address environmental burdens affecting environmental justice communities in the region, ensure protections for safety of Native American Tribes and local communities, and develop community benefits packages, agreements, or other mechanisms to ensure that benefits are provided to affected communities.”

and ownership; climate resilient design; community safety; regenerative economic development; and fisheries and mariculture protections. These agreements and terms are no substitute for a strong environmental review process, and we continue to ask, as raised in our comments, for an environmental review process in compliance with CEQA, with the lease approval after the completion of the CEQA process.

Specifically, we request the Harbor Commission:

1. Commit to responding to Tribal Nations and community based organizations regarding the need for policies to prevent and respond to issues related to MMIP, and define how the District will incorporate these policies in the wind terminal project (protections in a lease, a CBA, or a District-wide policy), including as a condition of Lease approval.
2. Commit to addressing community needs and concerns in an executed community agreement, with key terms in the Wind Terminal lease agreement, as a condition of Lease approval.

These requests are made in the spirit of partnership to ensure the project moves forward in a way that grows community trust and support. We know that is your commitment and appreciate your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions or would like to discuss the content of this letter - katerinao@hafoundation.org or 707.267.9902

Thank you for your leadership and partnership.

Sincerely,



Katerina Oskarsson
Executive in Residence, CORE Hub

CC: Larry Oetker, Executive Director
Chris Mikkelsen, Deputy Executive Director
Rob Holmlund, Director of Development