

Vineyard Wind partners with US bubble curtain supplier to boost sustainable energy initiatives



Vineyard Wind, a joint venture between Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners (CIP) and Avangrid, have announced a pilot programme to deploy and test a secondary bubble curtain during foundation installation through a partnership with ThayerMahan, a firm that specializes in seabed surveys, acoustic mitigation and monitoring and other maritime related services, with facilities in

Connecticut and Massachusetts. The US\$5 million in funding comes from Vineyard Wind's Industry Accelerator Fund, which is administered by the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC).

As part of the agreement, ThayerMahan will move its headquarters for its bubble curtain acoustic mitigation product line to New Bedford, sharing part of the Foss Marine Terminal. ThayerMahan, partnered with the world leader in big bubble curtain technology Hydrotechnik-Luebeck (HTL), has committed to hiring locally for a wide array of positions, from deckhands to data scientists. The firm has already established a training/internship programme with UMass Dartmouth, in addition to agreeing to assembly and manufacturing operations for future projects in New Bedford. Once this partnership is executed, ThayerMahan will be the first American company to provide bubble curtain services to the US offshore wind industry.

Setting the stage for rapid offshore wind expansion

"Our agreement with ThayerMahan ensures that, for the first time, a US-based company will perform the service of providing a bubble curtain mitigation system for an offshore wind project," said Vineyard Wind CEO Klaus S. Moeller. "We believe this is the first step in providing US firms with experience in this new industry and that it sets the stage for rapid expansion in the coming years, particularly in our hometown of New Bedford."

"The deployment of this bubble curtain by ThayerMahan marks another milestone in the construction of this nation-leading project and demonstrates offshore wind's potential to create local jobs and economic impact," said Avangrid CEO Pedro Azagra. "We are proud to come to this agreement with a local maritime services firm that will help us deliver on the successful, environmentally responsible installation of this project and launch the offshore wind industry in the United States."

Absorbing and dampening sound

A bubble curtain, which consists of large, perforated hoses and specialized air compressors, is designed to absorb and dampen sound during foundation installation. The hoses are placed on the seafloor around the monopile before being filled by compressed air. Once the hoses are inflated, the air escapes through the perforations and creates a barrier of bubbles that reduces noise.

The operations will be conducted from the *Northstar Navigator*, a vessel that will be operated out of the Port of New Bedford.

"We are proud to support Vineyard Wind in the construction of the United States' first large-scale offshore wind farm," said ThayerMahan chair and CEO Michael Connor. "We appreciate the support of Massachusetts Clean Energy Center in establishing a world-class noise mitigation capability in New Bedford that will serve construction efforts throughout the region. We continue to hire motivated workers who want to be a part of an effort that helps deliver a sustainable energy future."

"We are thrilled to see ThayerMahan bring its innovative solutions and acoustic mitigation operations base to New Bedford, and we commend it for its commitment to building a local workforce. This is yet another first for Massachusetts' offshore wind industry and cements our growing leadership," said MassCEC CEO Jennifer Daloisio. "MassCEC is proud to support Vineyard Wind's Industry Accelerator Fund, which is catalysing local innovation and job creation in the Commonwealth's growing offshore wind industry."

Future job opportunities

"We're very happy to welcome ThayerMahan's world-leading autonomous maritime solutions to New Bedford's growing ocean cluster and

to see the company's commitment to hiring local," said Jennifer Downing, executive director of the New Bedford Ocean Cluster (NBOC). "ThayerMahan's partnership with UMass Dartmouth is particularly exciting, as it will help to prepare our local workforce for future job opportunities as the company continues to expand its operations in New Bedford. We are once again seeing an exciting first for US offshore wind unfold in the Port of New Bedford, further solidifying Massachusetts and New Bedford as a leading hub for the industry."

Vineyard Wind recently submitted its first annual report to the state, which was compiled by UMass Dartmouth and Springline Research Group. The report found that Vineyard Wind more than doubled early estimates for the number of jobs created and dollars invested.

An 800MW project located 25 kilometres off the coast of Martha's Vineyard, Vineyard Wind will generate electricity for more than 400,000 homes and businesses in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, create 3,600 full-time equivalent (FTE) job years, save customers US\$1.4 billion over the first 20 years of operation, and is expected to reduce carbon emissions by more than 1.6 million metric tons per year, the equivalent of taking 325,000 cars off the road annually.



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(Image courtesy: Vineyard Wind)

<https://www.hydro-international.com/content/news/vineyard-wind-partners-with-us-bubble-curtain-supplier-to-boost-sustainable-energy-initiatives>
