

# LI, Mass. projects would be 1st in U.S

BY MARK HARRINGTON

Newsday Staff Writer

While large offshore wind farms have been spinning in Denmark for a half-dozen years, they have no U.S. counterparts - though that could change if proponents of two first-time projects off the coasts of Long Island and Massachusetts have their way.

The Long Island Power Authority and its contractor FPL Energy are pushing ahead with a plan to place 40 turbines off the South Shore between Jones Beach and Robert Moses State Park. The turbines, in an eight-square-mile array 3 1/2 miles to five miles from the shoreline, are expected to generate 140 megawatts of electricity - enough, LIPA says, to power 44,000 homes at peak capacity.

The project, with an estimated price tag of up to \$500 million (LIPA won't release the costs), has won a warm welcome from some environmentalists who say concerns about global warming make such renewable energy projects imperative. But others argue the wind farm isn't worth the high price tag, that the towers will desecrate a pristine view, disrupt navigation and fishing, kill migrating birds and devastate the sea bottom.

The federal Minerals Management Service,

which will oversee the project, is reviewing public comments to formulate guidelines for an environmental impact review of the project, and a study could commence next year. If all goes as LIPA plans - opponents have hinted at lawsuits to stop the project - it could be spinning off the coast by decade's end.

In Cape Cod, the Cape Wind project of 130 proposed turbines also is in the review stage by the Minerals Management Service, but high-profile opponents have worked hard to stall the project. Its proposed location 5.2 miles from the coast at Horseshoe Shoal in Nantucket Sound has drawn the ire of some high-profile politicians, including Sen. Edward Kennedy and Gov. Mitt Romney. Like LIPA's proposal, it was allowed to move forward before the Minerals Management Service completed a programmatic environmental impact statement for all offshore wind parks because of special provisions built into 2005 energy legislation, but political pressures are expected to keep a lively debate, and roadblocks, on the path for years to come. Backers want the project to be completed by 2008.

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