

Downeast Wind Project Sound Complaint Response & Resolution Protocol

Overview

As a key element of permitting, Downeast Wind submitted a pre-construction Sound Level Assessment to the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) that provided predictive three-dimensional model calculations demonstrating that sound emissions from turbine operations would comply with sound level limits as set forth in the Maine DEP Site Location of Development Rules, Chapter 375 §10, Section I, *Sound Level Standards for Wind Energy Developments*.

Pursuant to these Rules, Downeast Wind will implement the following Protocol for receiving and addressing sound complaints from local residents that may occur at any time during Project operations. The purpose of this Protocol is to inform local residents on how to report a sound complaint and to ensure that each sound complaint is fully documented and resolved in a consistent manner. In addition, this Protocol provides guidelines for implementing corrective action as warranted to ensure that the Project is operating within the applicable sound level limits.

To meet this objective, this Protocol establishes guidelines for reporting, documenting, investigating, responding to, and providing notification to Maine DEP, of sound complaints associated with Project operations. This Protocol is in addition to the Operations Sound Testing that will be conducted as required by Section I of Chapter 375 §10 and as set forth in the Site Location of Development Order for the Project.

Receiving and Responding to Sound Complaints

Downeast Wind has established a 24-hour telephone number, an email address, and a mailing address for receiving complaints concerning sound levels from the Project. This contact information and reporting procedures have been sent to the Maine DEP, posted at the Project Site, local municipal offices, and mailed to all landowners within one mile of the Project.

In the event a sound complaint is received via this contact information, Downeast Wind will follow this procedure:

1. Information from the complainant shall be recorded by Project personnel who are familiar with this complaint process and the attached Complaint Record Form. This Form is used to document relevant information such as time of day or night, characteristics and duration of the sound, complaint location, complainant contact information, and weather conditions at the time of the complaint. A sound complaint can be received 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by Downeast Wind by the reporting method preferred by the affected party.
2. Project personnel shall supplement the reported complaint information with additional details such as identification of nearby wind turbines, power production, meteorological conditions (hub height and surface wind speeds and direction, precipitation, icing), and site conditions (foliage, ground cover) during the time period of the complaint.

3. Within three business days of receiving the complaint, Downeast Wind shall investigate the complaint, notify Maine DEP of the complaint, and take one or more of the following actions to better understand the details of the complaint.
 - a. Investigate the nearby turbine(s) that likely prompted the complaint to evaluate potential upset or specific operating conditions or settings that might have increased sound levels.
 - b. Engage with a qualified acoustical consultant to review the complainant's information to determine if there is a reasonable chance that the sound levels at the complainant's location could exceed the Maine DEP sound level standards under conditions present at the time of the complaint. The acoustic consultant can make this determination remotely by reviewing predictive model calculations and extrapolating operational sound measurements to the complainant's location.
 - c. Visit the complaint location and/or contact the complainant to better understand the complaint and evaluate site conditions during the complaint period and mitigation options that may resolve the complaint.
4. Based on review by a qualified acoustical consultant, if there is a reasonable chance that the sound levels at the complainant's location could exceed the applicable sound limits, or if the Maine DEP directs Downeast Wind to do so, then sound level measurements shall be conducted at or near the complaint location as appropriate. Sound measurements in response to a complaint should be made under the site and operating conditions similar to those at the time of the complaint, if practical, and otherwise shall follow the procedures as set forth in Section I (8) Measurement Procedures of Maine DEP Chapter 375§10. These measurements would include instrument settings and data required to determine the presence of short duration repetitive (SDR) and tonal sounds. To expedite compliant response testing, site and wind conditions can be determined from observations by qualified personnel at the measurement location in lieu of deploying a 10-meter wind sensor to measure surface wind. The schedule for sound measurements is dependent on forecasted wind and weather conditions that meet the specific sound testing requirements of the Maine DEP. Favorable forecasts often take several weeks to meet the specified measurement conditions. Downeast Wind will provide periodic updates to Maine DEP concerning the status of complaint sound testing.
5. Downeast Wind shall compile all information related to the complaint, response actions, and describe short-term actions already taken or recommended to resolve the complaint. This information shall be submitted to Maine DEP within three business days of completing the complaint investigation. Upon request, Downeast Wind will provide available information to Maine DEP concerning the findings and status of a complaint, or determine if any additional actions are warranted.
6. If complaint investigation, including sound level measurements, indicate that Project sound levels have the potential to exceed the applicable sound level limits, including appropriate penalties for SDR and tonal sounds, Downeast Wind will take necessary corrective actions to achieve compliance with the sound limits. This includes submittal of a mitigation plan to the Maine DEP for review and approval within 60 days of a determination of sound level non-compliance that describes the proposed action to achieve sound compliance.

Downeast Wind Project
Sound Complaint Response & Resolution Protocol

Downeast Wind will maintain a log of all sound complaints received including the response action taken and resolution of each complaint. Complaint locations and key information regarding specific complaints will be plotted on a project area map to evaluate complaints for a consistent pattern of site, operating and weather conditions. Any patterns of complaint conditions will be compared to the Maine DEP compliance protocol for operations sound testing to determine whether testing under additional site and operating conditions is warranted. If so, a sound testing plan will be developed that addresses the locations and the conditions under which a pattern of complaints has occurred.

Upon concurrence with Maine DEP, Downeast Wind will conduct additional operations sound testing in accordance with the site and operating conditions of the complaint response testing plan. If sound level measurements indicate that Project sound levels can exceed the applicable sound level limits, including appropriate penalties for SDR and tonal sounds, Downeast Wind will take necessary corrective actions to reduce Project sound levels and conduct additional sound testing to demonstrate that these corrective actions achieve compliance with applicable sound limits.

Procedure Implementation

This procedure and the Sound Complaint Record Form including the 24/7 complaint number will be mailed to landowners within one mile of the Project and will be available on the Downeast Wind web site.

In consultation with Maine DEP, Downeast Wind will schedule initial compliance sound testing to occur at least one month after the start of commercial operations but within the first year of routine operations so that complaint information can be incorporated into the sound testing plan as appropriate.

Downeast Wind Project Sound Complaint Record

For Internal Use:
Complaint Tracking No.

To report a sound complaint, please call the 24-hour Complaint Line at _____ or complete this form and email to: _____.

Complainant Name:

Address and Phone Number(s):

Complaint Location – Address and Directions:

Date, time and duration or periods of excessive sound events:

Description of sound events—relative amplitude, source of annoyance, steady or fluctuating, low/mid/high or mix of frequencies/pitch, noticeable vibration, indoor or outdoor, and specific location:

Description of other audible sounds from sources outside and inside the dwelling or complaint location:

Other Comments:

Downeast Wind will complete the Form by providing the following information

Operator Name and Title:

Date and time of call or form completed:

UTM Coordinates of Complaint Location:

Nearest turbine and distance to complaint location (including mapping of the complaint location on project area map):

Power output (kW), hub wind speed and nacelle direction of closest 3 turbines during sound event(s):

Local/surface weather conditions—cloud cover, precipitation, icing, surface wind speed and direction, temperature, and relative humidity:

Ground conditions – field, wooded, snow/depth, foliage, frozen:

Results of Site Review (Include Site Sketch on Reverse):

Results of Turbine(s) Inspection:

Other Comments:

Operator Signature:

Reviewed by Operations Manager

Print

Sign/Date