

**Press Release, Save Long Beach Island Inc.**

For Immediate Release  
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**Another dead whale and deafening silence from the responsible federal agencies.**

**Save LBI released today an interim report describing in detail the noise levels and distances from offshore wind survey vessels where elevated noise levels can be expected to influence and potentially harm marine mammals**

**The facts and science point toward the noise generated from the high intensity devices used on these vessels as a possible cause of the recent deaths. The key findings of the report are presented below.**

**We repeat our plea to the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to organize a team with the acoustic and marine mammal skills and knowledge, and independence, to do a thorough and transparent analysis of the potential causes.**

**The key findings of the report are:**

- Based on the Coast Guard's Local Notice to Mariners of January, 23 there were at least six vessels doing geotechnical surveys off the New Jersey coast during the December/January time frame when five whales washed ashore. Another dead whale was spotted by a survey vessel survey on January 28<sup>th</sup>, about 12 miles off Long Beach Island.
- The noise levels and distance ranges above the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) criteria for whale behavior disturbance for approved vessel surveys have been underestimated. The NMFS estimated that noise levels above their general 160 decibel criteria would only exist a **tenth of a mile** from the vessel. Using documented measured noise source levels, a generally accepted noise dissipation rate, and a noise-level criteria to avoid disturbance more relevant to baleen whales, that distance **increases exponentially to 13 to 34 miles**, depending on device settings.
- The noise from the vessel survey devices is not likely to cause permanent hearing damage to whales in the vicinity unless they got very close to the vessel, so that damage would not show up on post-mortem examinations, even if it was looked for.

- However, the noise levels are sufficient to create extended ranges, 13-34 miles, where the whale's behavior will be disturbed, potentially leading to serious outcomes.
- The situation calls for a prompt, full and transparent investigation by those with the skills and independence to reach fact and science-based conclusions.
- The NOAA and BOEM response to the episode has not provided relevant and sufficient justifications to dismiss the matter, and the agencies should create the team necessary to do the investigation.

**The Interim Report is available on our website, [SaveLBI.org](http://SaveLBI.org), under the caption titled Project Details and Presentations,**