

because public access to the refuge is prohibited, however, the KOP is set at a location overlooking bluffs along the west-southwest edge of the island.

Rating panel members indicated that open water from the shoreline to the horizon dominates the existing view. The landscape’s pristine, unspoiled character was noted as was the fact that the lack of regular use of this resource by the public, and limited access by the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head must be considered in the assessment. Rating panel scores for the existing conditions photograph(s) ranged from 11.3 to 15.3 (average = 12.6), which is consistent with a Partial Retention classification.

Proposed Project

The geospatial data for Nomans Land Island do not include lidar coverage and therefore the viewshed analysis does not account for vegetative screening, and thus likely overstates potential Project visibility as a result of the bare-earth conditions included in the analysis. It is anticipated that the island’s interior would likely include some level of vegetative screening and that the bluffs surrounding the northern portion of the island present the highest degree of potential Project visibility.

With the proposed RWF in place, the WTGs can be seen on the horizon in the center of the view. The WTGs appear as gray vertical lines against the yellow backdrop of the sky that look out of character with the vast extent of open water. The portions of the towers on the right side of the scene are partially screened from view by the curvature of the earth, but an OSS and the bulk of the WTGs, including full rotors and nacelles, are visible. **The nearest WTG would be 8.8 miles (14.2 km) west-southwest of this KOP. Rating panel members noted that the RWF turbines, dominate the view, are new focal points, and present strong contrast with the sky at the horizon line. One panel member noted the OSS is in clear view and appears to be suspended over the water’s surface.**

Rating panel members’ VIA scores ranged from 10.0 to 13.0 (average score = 11.4). These scores indicate an average reduction of 1.2 point in comparison to the existing view, with individual rating panel members indicating reductions that ranged from 0.3 to 2.3. With the RWF in place, the KOP score remains in the Partial Retention class (see Table 3.2-66).

Considering the compatibility, scale contrast, and spatial dominance factors that influenced the visual impact rating at this KOP, panel ratings indicated that the WTGs were generally compatible with landform, vegetation, and land use, and somewhat compatible with water resources and user activity (see Table 3.2-67). Scale contrast similarly was minimal for landform, vegetation, and land use, but moderate for water resources and user activity. Considering spatial dominance, panel ratings suggest that the WTGs are subordinate to landform, vegetation, and land use, and co-dominant with water resources and user activity. Based on the anticipated compatibility, scale contrast and spatial dominance impacts of the RWF it is anticipated that the Project visibility from this KOP will be consistent with VTL 5 because it *“is not large but contrasts with the surrounding landscape elements so strongly that it is a major focus of visual attention, drawing viewer attention immediately and tending to hold that attention. In addition to strong contrasts in form, line, color, and texture, bright light sources such as lighting and reflections! and moving objects associated with the study subject may contribute substantially to drawing viewer attention. The visual prominence of the study subject interferes noticeably with views of nearby landscape/seascape elements.”* (Sullivan et al., 2013).

Table 3.2-66 – Average Visual Impact Ratings – NL01

	KAC	RCS	JMG	WLK	Average
Existing	11.3	12.3	15.3	11.3	12.6
Proposed	11.0	11.7	13.0	10.0	11.4
Change	0.3	0.6	2.3	1.3	1.2