



**OCS Scientific Committee Meeting May
2014**

Endangered Atlantic Sturgeon Habitat Use in Mid-Atlantic Wind Energy Areas

**SDP Page Number: 207
Regional Ranking: 1**

Brian Hooker

Biologist

Atlantic Office of Renewable Energy Programs

brian.hooker@boem.gov





Atlantic Sturgeon Habitat Use

BOEM Information Need:

Atlantic sturgeon were listed as an endangered species in 2012. Studies indicate that Atlantic sturgeon overwinter in areas where offshore wind and sand extraction may occur. Thus occurrence/habitat use information is essential for proper impact analyses.

Date Information is Required:

As soon as practicable. BOEM will begin assessing construction and operations plans for offshore wind as soon as 2018. Marine mineral leases are ongoing.

Atlantic Region

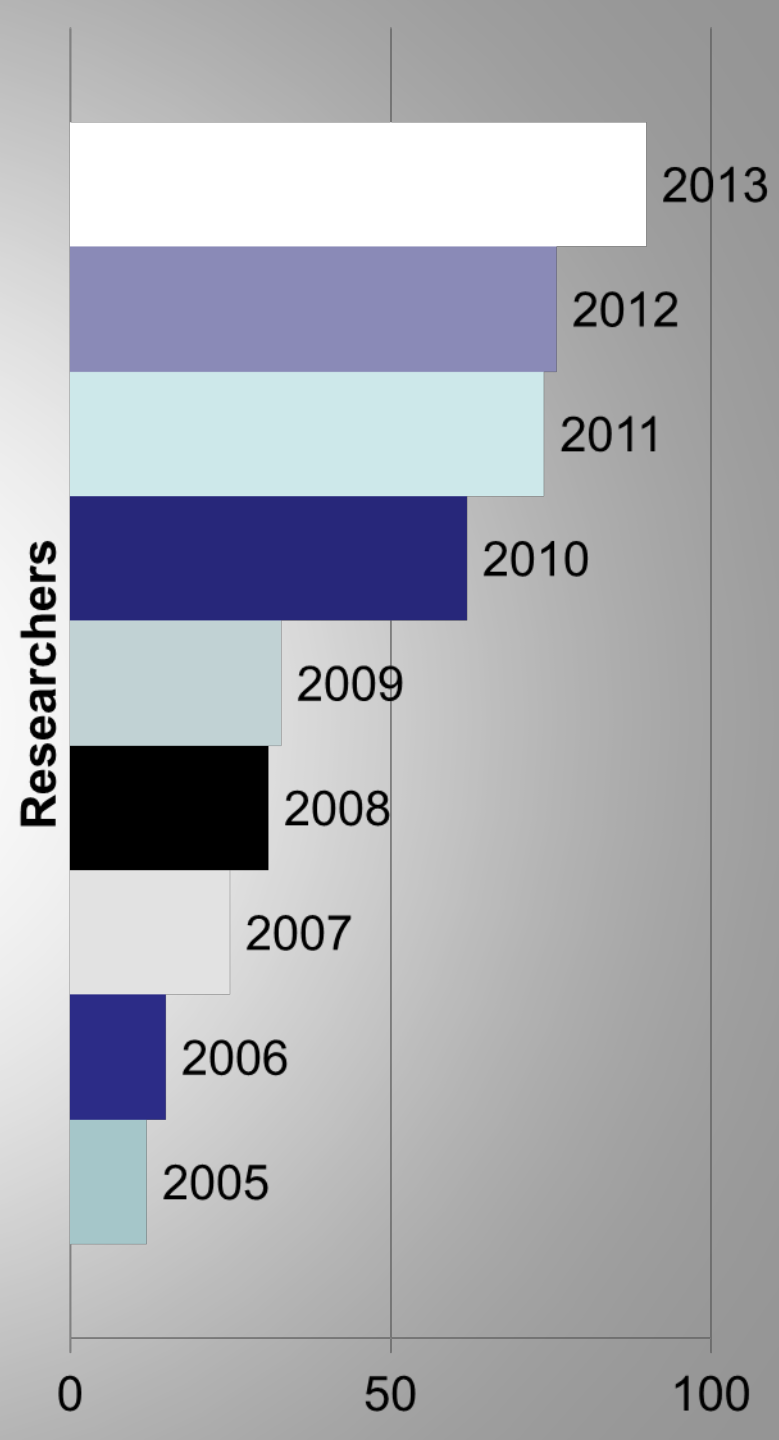
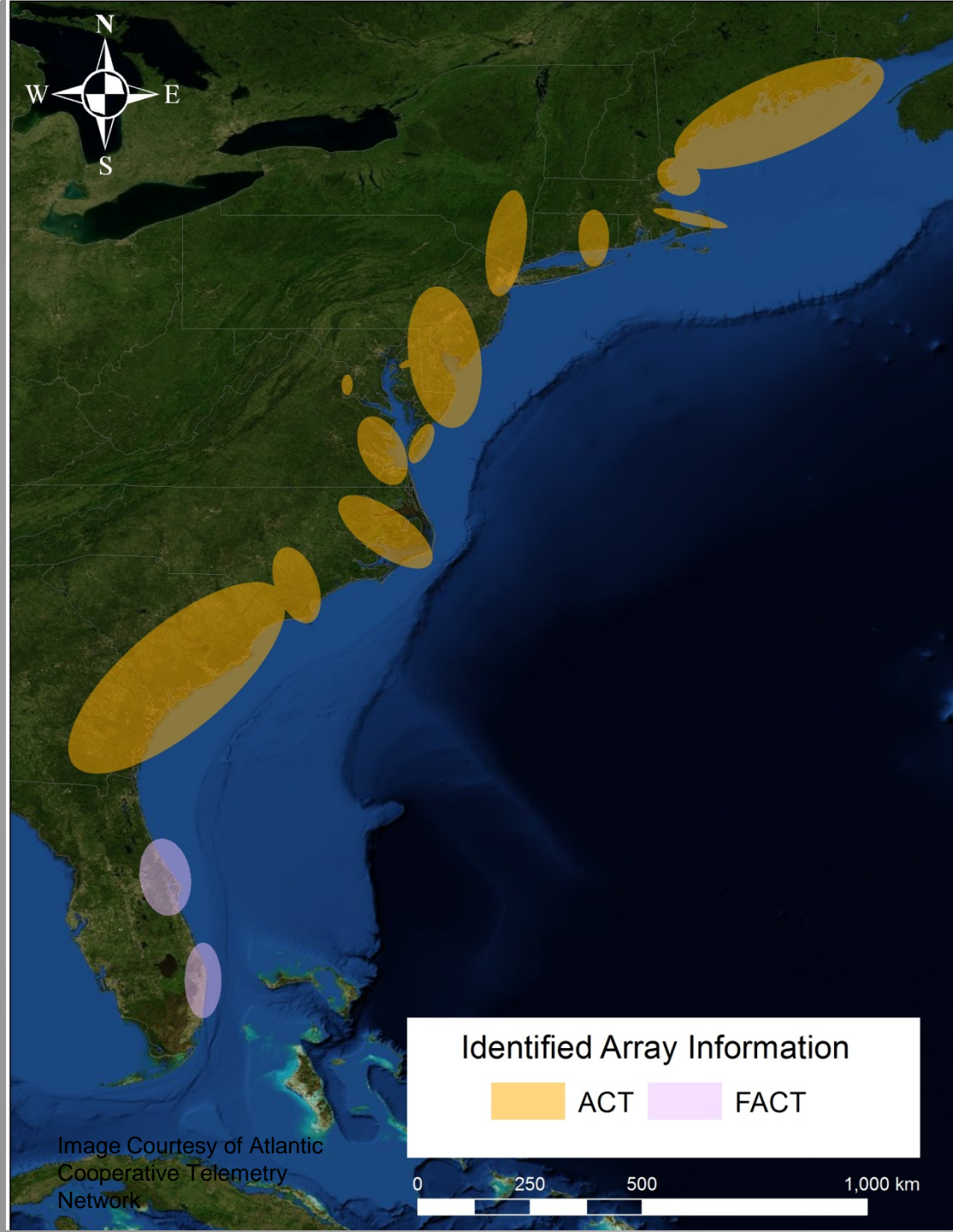
Background:

A) Relationship with Previous and Current Work/Efforts

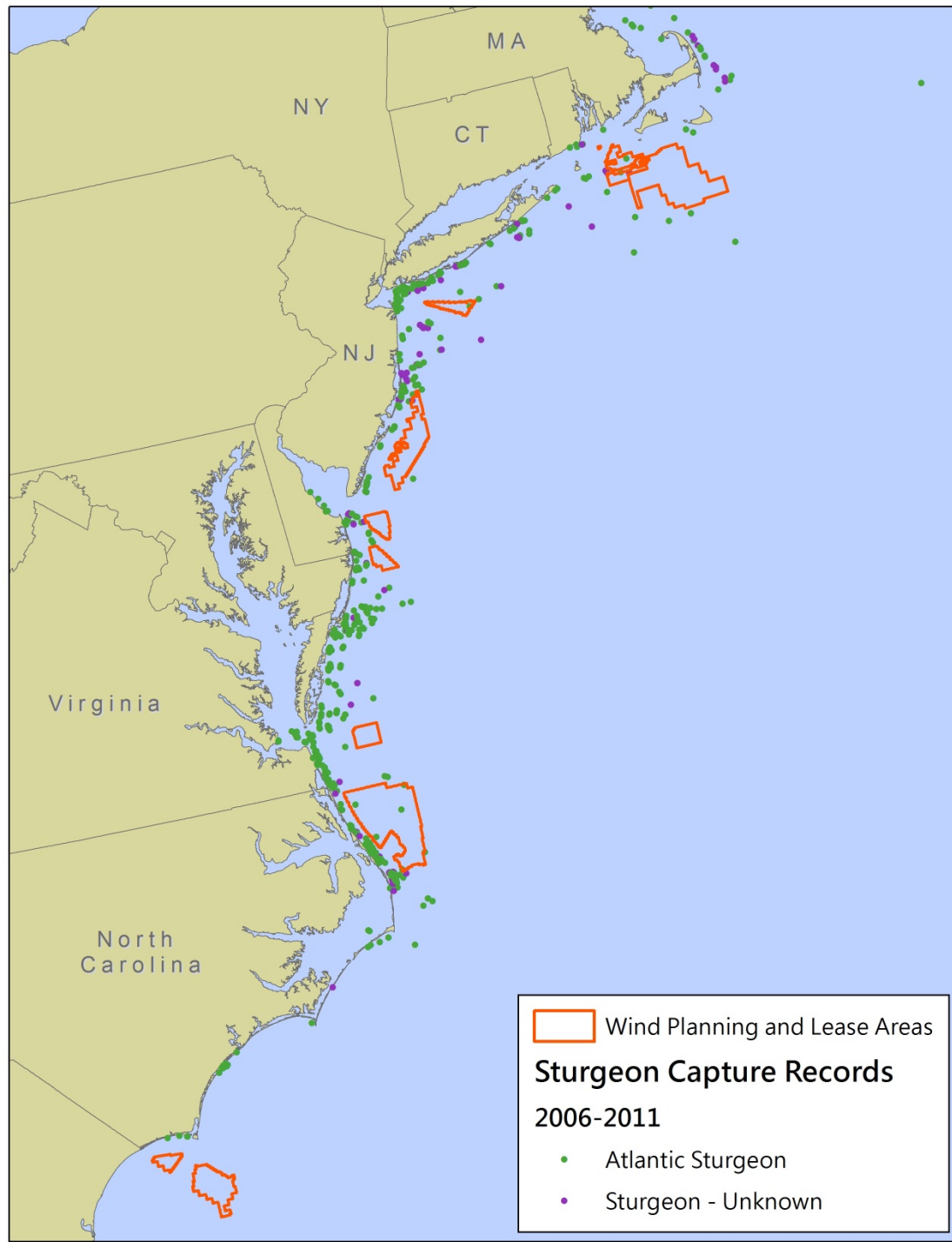
BOEM intends to work closely with collaborators through the Atlantic Cooperative Telemetry Network (e.g. Navy, NOAA, VIMS, Delaware State, University of Maryland, East Carolina University, etc).

BOEM will concentrate effort on offshore (>3 miles) areas and habitat linkages. Current efforts are concentrated closer to shore.

Atlantic Region



Northeast Fisheries
Observer Program
and Northeast
Monitoring and
Assessment
Program Capture
Records 2006-2011
(Data provided by
NMFS/GARFO).



Study' s Objectives:

The objective of this study is to provide information on the seasonal patterns of occurrence and habitat use as well as explore the underlying causal mechanisms for Atlantic sturgeon habitat selection in and around wind energy planning areas and sand borrow sites.

Atlantic Region

Study's Methods:

By leveraging efforts within the Atlantic Cooperative Telemetry Network the study will:

1. Determine the seasonal presence/absence of endangered Atlantic sturgeon in and around the project areas in the North and Mid-Atlantic Planning Areas.
2. Characterize the habitat use (including habitat type including biological and physical characteristics) and feeding grounds of Atlantic sturgeon.
3. Identify any migration corridors for Atlantic sturgeon.

Atlantic Region

Questions?

