

**OFFSHORE WIND, RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL FISHERMAN
MITIGATION MEASURES DEVELOPMENT**

OCEAN CITY WORKSHOP REPORT

To: Brian Hooker, BOEM

From: Peggy Farrell, Ecology and Environment

Date: February 6, 2013 (4:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.)

Location: Ocean City Free Public Library
1735 Simpson Ave.
Ocean City, NJ

RE: Development of Mitigation Measures to
Reduce Conflicts between Wind
Industries and Fishermen – Ocean City
New Jersey Stakeholder Workshop



ATTENDEES

Name	Agency
Glenn Arthur	New Jersey Council of Diving Clubs
Joe Bilinski	NJ Department of Environmental Protection
Peter Clarke	NJ Marine Fisheries Administration
Ed Cairns	Diving/Charter Industry
Kris Ohleth	Atlantic Wind Connection
John DePersenaire	Recreational Fishing Alliance
Dan Renshaw	SeaBreeze Energy
Stephen Geiger	Arcadia Wind
Jeff Normant	NJ Marine Fisheries Administration
Rhonda Jackson	Fishermen's Energy
Ben Riker	Fishermen's Energy
Joe Skutlin	U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary
Brian Hooker	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
Bill Daughdrill	Ecology and Environment, Inc.
David Trimm	Ecology and Environment, Inc.
Sarah Bowman	Ecology and Environment, Inc.
Peggy Farrell	Ecology and Environment, Inc.
Jennifer Harris	Ecology and Environment, Inc.
Stephanie Moura	SeaPlan

OVERVIEW

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is developing best management practices (BMPs) and mitigation measures for reducing use conflicts within portions of the U.S. Atlantic Outer Continental

Shelf (OCS) that may be used by the wind energy industry and fishermen. The purpose of the regional stakeholder workshops is to engage fishermen and wind energy developers (plus interested agency representatives) in dialogue that would result in development of BMPs and mitigation measures that would be beneficial to both parties and relevant for inclusion in future BOEM NEPA analyses. The outreach workshops do not discuss any specific wind energy development projects, but rather describe general types of practices or studies that could be implemented as mitigation for wind energy development. As projects are proposed, there will also be opportunities for site-specific mitigation measures. This document constitutes the Outreach Report from Ocean City, New Jersey stakeholder workshop.



MEETING SUMMARY

The seventh stakeholder workshop occurred in Ocean City, NJ on Tuesday February 6, 2013 at 4:00 p.m. at the Ocean City Free Public Library. The Atlantic coast of southern New Jersey contains several ports of call for a large diversity of fisheries, and is close to an offshore WEA. Located on the coast, Ocean City New Jersey was identified as a good location for a stakeholder meeting being located between Atlantic City and Cape May.



Workshop attendees were greeted upon arrival and asked to sign in. Participants were directed to browse the visual displays placed around the room and sit in the stadium seating for the initial presentation from BOEM. The meeting started at 4:15 pm when Stephanie Moura, the meeting facilitator, welcomed attendees and asked each participant to introduce themselves. She then briefly discussed the format for the meeting so that attendees had an understanding of the agenda and meeting rules. This was followed by an introduction of Brian Hooker, BOEM Biologist, who opened the meeting with a PowerPoint presentation that included:

- Different stages of offshore wind facility development.
- Purpose of the workshops.
- Vessel Trip Report and local Vessel Monitoring System data.
- Known fishing and wind energy questions and concerns.
- Current Best Management Practices required by BOEM.
- A description of BOEM's Environmental Studies Program.
- Various opportunities for input.

Following the presentation, Ms. Moura requested that participants come down to the front of the room and sit at two different tables for the remainder of the meeting, the majority of which was spent in discussion during two breakout sessions. Breakout Session #1 began directly after the presentation from BOEM. Each table represented a breakout group. Groups worked on identifying issues of concern from their perspective, utilizing the list of issues identified from the previous workshops as a guideline. A 15-minute break was held at 6:00 pm.

Breakout Session #2 followed the break and focused on formulating mitigation measures that could be employed during offshore wind energy development to reduce impacts. Utilizing the handout as a guide, each group identified potential management strategies that would alleviate some of their concerns. At 7:15 pm Ms. Moura asked each table facilitator to identify the key points that were discussed in each group and after the final report out, requested feedback and comments from the participants on the workshop format and content. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.



IDENTIFICATION OF CONCERNS

Table 1 lists issues and concerns regarding offshore wind development identified at the Ocean City Workshop.

Table 1: Ocean City, New Jersey Workshop Issues and Concerns

<p>Exclusion Zones and Access</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charter boats want to extend their seasons and are concerned about where the base of operations will be for offshore wind developers. • Fishermen are concerned about access through the Barnegat Light area. Skill is required to navigate through the egress there because of the wave formations. Commercial fishermen already experience limited access to this area by the size of their draft, and this would not be an ideal point of access for the offshore wind industry. • How will fishermen maneuver through a wind farm? • What will scour around the turbine towers and the cables be like? • Will BOEM consolidate the corridors of cables going onshore, to and from an offshore wind facility? If so, this will inhibit clam fishing in an area to avoid the cables. A minimum 6 ft. burial requirement is too shallow. • How will BOEM avoid pushing user groups out of these areas? • Recreational diving sector would like not just access to wind farms but also moorings once the foundations have become artificial reefs. • Being excluded in general is a primary concern. Fishermen want to be able to anchor inside the wind farm, not just transit through. • Developers present were fine with fisherman access to a wind farm, but were concerned about burying cables deep enough. • Thought that turbine foundations would become diving sites.
<p>Communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developers indicated that they need assistance in knowing how to best reach fishermen and who to contact because the industry is decentralized.

Siting Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where exactly will the wind turbines be located? • Commercial fishermen are concerned because it appears that access to the port at Cape May would be out of bounds to them if offshore wind is developed there. • What is the size of the vessel that would be used for maintenance of offshore wind facilities? • How will the density of turbines constructed in a wind farm affect ocean currents? • What will the concentration of turbines be offshore NJ? • Developers would like better information about operational needs of different fisheries (e.g., How deep do draggers penetrate the substrate, etc.?) to assist with certain design criteria, such as how deep to bury cables. • A wind developer may not want to share detailed micro-siting data with fishermen because it is a confidential and competitive process.
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buried cables could be an issue with the clam fishermen potentially uncovering it during their fishing operations. The surf clam diggers have cable jumps and can go through telecom fields. Clam diggers will only impact the first 6 – 12 inches of sediment. • What kind of monitoring will be occurring in the wind farm? What if there is a mechanical failure? • How will turbines be marked and lit?
EMF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will fish, sharks, and rays be affected by EMF? • What is the EMF AC voltage that would be emitted by an offshore wind cable? If the cable is buried, this perhaps wouldn't be an issue, but it is a concern if they become unburied. • Will potential effects from EMF negate the benefits from the habitat created by the turbine structures? • Marine debris from construction is a concern.
Marine Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will increased vessel traffic from offshore wind affect marine mammals, fish, and fish habitat during construction and pile driving? • Fish will want to escape from pile driving activities. • The sand offshore NJ is hard-packed and is good for construction, but it also has a very productive biological area which is good for clam diggers. • What will be the effects on the biological resources offshore? What are the impacts during construction and operation?
Liability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is concern that if offshore wind cables were damaged by offshore users, there would not be coverage similar to the protection under the Telecommunications Act.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Table 2 contains potential BMPs suggested at the workshop in Ocean City.

Table 2: Ocean City, New Jersey Workshop Best Management Practices and Mitigation Measures

Project Design, Navigation, and Access	
Studies and Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider developing fish farms (e.g., in the area of the wind farm or even attached to offshore structures) as mitigation for the loss of fisheries in other areas. • Investigate communication protocols within the oil and gas industry in the Gulf as examples. Find out other communication methods used other than Notice to Mariners. • Look into the Port Access Route Study by the USCG, and if it isn't adequately covering the fishing industry, then a new study should be done. • Look into the current situation with trawling and communications cables.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research communication methods with landowners and stakeholders for land-based wind facilities.
Siting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marine spatial planning should play a part in the siting of WEAs and individual wind farms; this planning effort considered other high value uses such as shipping.
Navigational Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Color-code the offshore wind farm structures to create a navigational guide for fishermen (i.e., follow blue turbines to go to Ocean City, follow red turbines to go to Atlantic City). • Require developers to put cell towers within the offshore wind farm. • Require a navigational risk assessment, which will help developers identify and collect data on fishing locations and transit areas.
Cabling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require developers to monitor post-construction for EMF. • Shielding the cables will mitigate any impacts from EMF. • Minimize areas where cables come onshore so trawlers can continue operations and not be concerned about damaging a cable. • Develop contingency plans to ensure cables won't be spaced too close together. Avoid a "spaghetti" complex of cables within the wind farm. • Require developers to design cable-free pathways through a wind farm. • Create north-south corridors through the wind farm that are cable-free that would follow the typical fishing path for commercial draggers in the region. • Design wind farms with the electrical nodes/converter stations placed landward so that less heavy cable is laid going to shore. This could create less interference with the fishing industry. • Mandate that the turbines be constructed in a grid formation to keep the cable connection plans simple. Locate the nodes strategically so that less cable is used overall. This may be difficult and more expensive for the developer up front, but this will create fewer impacts to users offshore. • Cables may not need to be buried as deeply where there is harder bottom. The hard bottom will cover over the cables and will be hard to remove.
Safety, Liability, and Insurance during Operations	
Gear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developers should work with clam diggers and deal with the possibility of cables becoming uncovered during their operations. In NJ the hardness of the sediment varies depending on the shoal. The jets from a clam digging operation scoop the sediment about 12 inches below the surface and liquefy it. If a digger goes through an area multiple times, a cable buried 6 feet under the substrate may be uncovered.
Natural Resources	
Impacts to Fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offshore wind developers should hire fishermen and use their boats for development and/or maintenance. • There should be a common set of expectations as to whether trawling will be allowed. • Consider leaving the scour and foundations in place when decommissioning because they will be artificial reefs.
Stakeholder Engagement	
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developers that use local resources to source operations and for maintenance would garner local support from the commercial fishing industry. • Require a communication plan to communicate with commercial fishermen. • Hold a public comment period for every offshore wind farm development. • Work with state committees (such as fish and wildlife) to convene fishermen committees so people can be informed of offshore wind development projects as much as possible. Work the state agencies and committees to facilitate communication. The state could be the main point of contact for information because they will be heavily involved anyway. • There are 4 main commercial fishing co-ops and 3 main recreational associations in

	<p>NJ whose leadership can get messages out quickly/broadly to fishermen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NJ recreational fishing permit system gives the state the ability to contact individual permit holders with important information. • Appoint one “offshore Point of Contact” from the state to facilitate effective communication and coordination with the fishing industry. • Reactivate the currently defunct committee of fishermen and marine cable interests to serve as a cross-industry node for communicating between and within the fish and wind communities throughout all phases of wind farm construction. • Get all stakeholders involved in the process as early as possible. • Create an ongoing committee of stakeholders, convened by the developers, which meet to discuss issues and updates. • Developers should manage and facilitate periodic project updates and meetings. • Communication tools may vary depending on the different stages of development. • Leverage existing government and non-profit list-servs to provide information. The state has contact information for all registered fishermen, so does the Recreational Fishing Register. • Work with the fishery councils to provide information. • Send out email notifications of closures and current issues. • Social media and texts are a good way to communicate.
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SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE WORKSHOPS

Suggestions from all previous workshops were taken into account for the Ocean City, New Jersey meeting. Each table facilitator continued to clearly explain the purpose of each breakout session so that the distinction between the two sessions was clear. Facilitators devoted special attention when leading the groups during the second breakout session in trying to formulate usable, concrete mitigation measures.

Participants at previous workshops requested to see information that is more local and applicable to their immediate area. Therefore, updated and more local information was included in the BOEM PowerPoint presentation. For example, local Vessel Trip Report and Vessel Monitoring System data were presented for the immediate areas offshore New Jersey and within the New Jersey WEA. New Jersey commercial and recreational fishing maps were also presented including surf clam, scallop, and quahog grounds. The BOEM website link was given to participants and Mr. Hooker invited additional submission of comments or questions. Several attendees commented that they enjoyed being part of the workshop and that these meetings are a good first step in communicating with the fishing industry. Many expressed thanks in finally knowing who to contact within BOEM with questions and comments.

