

Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management Marine Minerals Program

Central Atlantic Sand Management Working Group Meeting/Webinar  
March 31, 2014, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

## Summary

### I. Introduction

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) convened the Central Atlantic Sand Management Working Group (SMWG) on March 31, 2014 at the New Hanover County Government Human Resources Training Room in Wilmington, North Carolina. There were 66 meeting participants (26 in person and 40 by webinar), representing a variety of interests and organizations, including federal, state, and local agencies, academic and research organizations, environmental groups, and consulting firms. The list of meeting participants is included as **Appendix A**.

The meeting purpose was to:

- Exchange information and updates on progress since last Working Group meeting;
- Discuss funding opportunities, research efforts, coastal projects, and challenges; and
- Promote communication between BOEM, localities, states, other Federal agencies, educators, specialists, regulators, policy makers, and end-users

As part of BOEM's collaborative engagement, this meeting was webcast to support remote participation. The webinar was recorded, and is available to the public at the following link:

<http://kearnswest.adobeconnect.com/p1n8po0sy6j/>. The meeting agenda is attached as **Appendix B**, and the presentations from the meeting are available on the BOEM website: <http://www.boem.gov/Marine-Minerals-Program/>.

This meeting summary document summarizes key outcomes and next steps from the meeting. It is not intended to be a detailed transcript. The meeting was facilitated by Kearns & West (K&W).

### II. Overview of the Marine Minerals Program

Jennifer Rose, Physical Scientist in BOEM's Leasing Division, and Eric Poncelet and Elana Kimbrell, Facilitators with Kearns & West, welcomed the group, asked for introductions in the room, and read the names of the webinar participants. They reviewed the agenda, as well as brief meeting ground rules.

Jeff Reidenauer, Chief of the Marine Minerals Branch at BOEM, provided an overview of the Marine Minerals Program (MMP). The MMP acts as a steward of Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) resources including sand and gravel, which are used for beach nourishment and habitat and wetland restoration. By federal law, BOEM must lease these resources to federal, state, and local governments without charging a fee. The MMP seeks to coordinate the sustainable and responsible use of OCS resources by managing them within a regional, national, and multi-use context, with the assistance of sand management working groups. The MMP also conducts environmental assessments of their leases, conducts studies to improve decision-making, and develops policies for managing the resources. Demand for OCS sand and gravel has increased over recent years because of greater frequency and intensity of storms, resulting in a rising need for beach nourishment and a decrease in volume of sand available in state waters.

BOEM staff noted that the last meetings of the Central Atlantic Sand Management Working Group were August 7, 2012 in Wilmington, NC, and August 8, 2012 in Charleston, SC. BOEM plans to hold a follow-up to this meeting by webinar in fall 2014.

Questions/Discussion:

- **Rehandling of sediment.** A meeting participant asked BOEM to confirm that the MMP also addresses the re-handling of sediment. BOEM confirmed that they do, and noted an example of this is in the Florida regional lease.
- **Cooperative agreements.** A meeting participant inquired about the status of the state cooperative agreement proposals. BOEM responded they have reviewed all proposals and are still in the process of responding to them.
- **Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) for OCS Data Acquisition.** A participant asked how many contracts will be awarded under the BAA. BOEM staff responded that they envision awarding one contractor to complete the work. Participants also expressed concern about how to mesh timelines between BOEM's Broad Agency Announcement geophysical and geological surveys and the Cooperative Agreements with the states, which are trying to identify data needs. BOEM responded that the contractor will work with the states to determine where to conduct geophysical and geological surveys. Participants suggested that the state points of contact for the cooperative agreements would be good contacts to provide to the contractors, as well as the state geologists, in some states. The contractor will be required to develop a data acquisition plan and to share its data publicly.

**III. Decision-Making Science**

Jen Culbertson, Oceanographer, and Doug Piatkowski, Physical Scientist, both in BOEM's Division of Environmental Assessment, provided an overview of their environmental studies program, which includes more than 40 ongoing site-specific or programmatic studies, and their proposed Fiscal Year 2015 (FY15) studies.

Questions/Discussion

- **Location/jurisdiction of studies.** A participant asked whether BOEM conducts any studies that partially include state waters. BOEM responded that some study areas are interconnected ecologically across state and federal waters, so they do include state waters. In general, however, BOEM does not propose studies in locations where they wouldn't potentially be leasing federal resources.
- **Baseline data.** A participant noted that baseline data should be a priority, and it would be beneficial to coordinate work on this across federal agencies. BOEM concurred that baseline data is a priority. Some of their studies do involve baseline data (such as in Florida) as well as collaboration with other agencies (e.g., regional tagging efforts with NASA and the Navy). The BOEM representatives agreed that gathering more baseline data would be beneficial, but competing for funding is always an obstacle. One meeting participant pointed out that if BOEM were able to charge a fee for leasing offshore resources, this could help obtain funds for studies acquiring baseline data.
- **Larval transport.** A participant asked whether BOEM studies include larval transport. BOEM confirmed they do (they mentioned the Canaveral Shoals study as an example). Another participant asked about cusped shoals and whether these are studied, as that is relevant to

North Carolina. BOEM confirmed they are studying the potential impacts of dredging on this type of shoal.

- **Atlantic sturgeon.** A meeting participant asked if BOEM is coordinating with NOAA regarding the potential designation of critical habitat for the Atlantic sturgeon. BOEM stated they are trying to coordinate with all interests related to the Atlantic sturgeon, and a study has been proposed for FY15 by BOEM's Renewable Energy Program that might be helpful with mitigating impacts.
- **Process for funding studies.** A participant asked BOEM to describe the process used for deciding which studies to fund. BOEM noted that the decision-making process can change year-to-year and is currently evolving. Typically, it includes developing study profiles and compiling a Studies Development Plan, which is then reviewed by Subject Matter Expert teams within BOEM. There is a comment and revision period, after which BOEM Headquarters reviews the plan, obtains feedback on certain studies from the OCS Scientific Committee, and then the Studies Chiefs make a final decision. Another participant asked whether ideas proposed at a recent Governors' South Atlantic Alliance Meeting, which were included in BOEM's Environmental Studies Portfolio, have been funded. BOEM responded that they would have to follow up on this, although even if they projects weren't funded this year, that doesn't mean they won't be funded in the future.

#### IV. OCS Opportunities and Investments

Ms. Rose gave an update on Hurricane Sandy projects (funded through disaster relief appropriations), which involve geological and geophysical (G&G) data acquisition (the BAA discussed previously), cooperative agreements with 13 East Coast states, as well as environmental assessment, monitoring, and outreach. She noted the cooperative agreements are being conducted in two phases: (1) assessing state needs and existing data; and then, after the BAA has mostly been completed, (2) providing BAA data to states to help them delineate the sand resources.

#### Questions/Discussion

- **Hurricane Sandy Funding.** A meeting participant asked whether all Hurricane Sandy funding has to be spent within 24 months. BOEM clarified the requirement is 24 months after funds are obligated.
- **BAA G&G data acquisition (continued discussion).**
  - A meeting participant asked about the geography of the data acquisition. BOEM explained it is 3-8 nautical miles offshore, where dredging is typically economically feasible. It was suggested BOEM consider studying and gathering baseline data (during the same season that dredging would occur) for areas farther out than 8 miles, since resources are getting harder to find and dredging will likely occur farther out more often.
  - Participants reiterated that the G&G data acquisition may be coordinated with state mapping activities depending on the interaction between the contractor and the state.

#### V. Central Atlantic Projects

Dr. Culbertson and Ms. Rose gave an overview of current projects in the Central Atlantic, including several examples of regional sediment management, and programmatic essential fish habitat (EFH) consultations.

- **Wallops Island, VA.** One meeting participant expressed disagreement with BOEM's characterization of the physical disturbance to the Wallops Island shoal associated with their research project as minimal. BOEM clarified this was meant in the context of the entire shoal

complex. The participant asked if the borrow sites at Wallops Island are monitored to determine infilling rates. BOEM confirmed that they are usually monitored, and on Unnamed Shoal A, benthic recovery is usually examined as well. BOEM also added that one of the goals of programmatic consultations is to examine various sand feature recovery rates and utilize this information to minimize EFH impacts. BOEM would like to categorize sand resources by habitat type and provide best management practices for each type.

- **Longer lease terms.** A participant suggested that longer lease terms would be desirable. BOEM concurred, as BOEM management is currently considering extending them (as is being considered in the Florida regional lease pilot project).
- **Cooperative agreements.** One meeting participant asked how the lead for each cooperative agreement will be able to coordinate across and understand all of the state's sand resource needs. A meeting participant from the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources offered that North Carolina has a Beach and Inlet Management Plan, and they will coordinate with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the consultant, Eastern Carolina University, Geodynamics, and others.
  - ***Next step: BOEM to follow up with USACE-Wilmington to respond to the question of how the Cooperative Agreements will integrate the coastal needs of each state (Jeffrey Waldner is the BOEM lead for this, and he was not present at the meeting).***
- **BAA G&G data acquisition (continued discussion).**
  - The group further discussed the timing of the cooperative agreements and the BAA. BOEM explained it will take time for the BAA data acquisition to occur, and there will be some overlap between this and the first phase of the cooperative agreements.
  - Participants asked whether states will be able to participate in the BAA data collection. BOEM responded that this will depend on the contractor. BOEM also reiterated that the data acquired will be made available to the states.
  - Participants noted that many sand resources are outside the 3-8 nautical mile geography focus of the BAA. BOEM reiterated that this was the area decided on and evaluated through their NEPA process, and it is where the majority of dredging occurs.
- **The South Atlantic Regional Biological Opinion (SARBO).** One meeting participant asked if BOEM foresees any permitting issues arising out of potentially conflicting information between the forthcoming SARBO and BOEM study results. BOEM staff generally deferred to the National Marine Fisheries Service on this topic, but noted that new information is one of the triggers for reinitiating consultation.

## VI. Wrap Up / Topics for Next Meeting

Ms. Rose reviewed the main topics BOEM presented, and Dr. Poncelet gave an overview of some of the main points made by participants during the meeting, including: a desire for more baseline data and better coordination on studies between federal agencies; a request for studies of local shoals; a concern about the two year Hurricane Sandy funding timeline; a request for the list of state POCs for the cooperative agreements; and a suggestion that longer lease terms and shorter approval periods would be desirable.

Ms. Rose then reminded the group there will be an update by webinar in about 6 months, and she asked the group for specific suggestions of what they would like to discuss on that webinar. She noted that BOEM currently plans to hold another in-person Central Atlantic SMWG meeting in one year.

Suggested Ideas and Topics for Webinar (Fall 2014)

- Include representatives from BOEM's Renewable Energy Program (in response to the question raised about moving wind energy areas slightly closer in, so that states can share in revenues). It would be useful to discuss how the Renewable Energy Program coordinates with the MMP, and how the wind energy areas and existing/potential borrow sites will be managed in parallel.
- Give presentations on findings from BOEM studies.
- Discuss how to transfer information from BOEM's studies to those who can use it in decision- and policy-making. BOEM noted that it is considering holding an Information Transfer Meeting as well.
- Provide a brief summary of activities underway through the cooperative agreements.
  - ***Suggested Next Step: BOEM consider developing an informational document about the status of the cooperative agreements in advance of the webinar.***
- Review lease agreements in detail (BOEM suggestion).
- Share experiences across states regarding the dredging of mineral sands.

## VII. Summary of Next Steps

1. BOEM to follow up with USACE - Wilmington to respond to the question of how the Cooperative Agreements will integrate the coastal needs of each state.
2. BOEM to consider developing an informational document about the status of the cooperative agreements in advance of the next Central Atlantic SMWG webinar.
3. BOEM to provide summary and presentation from this meeting.

### **List of Appendices:**

- A. Participant List
- B. Meeting Agenda

#### **Contact Information**

General Email: [marineminerals@boem.gov](mailto:marineminerals@boem.gov)

Jeffrey Reidenauer, Chief, Marine Minerals Branch

[Jeffrey.reidenauer@boem.gov](mailto:Jeffrey.reidenauer@boem.gov)

703-787-1851

Jennifer Culbertson, Division of Environmental Assessment

[Jennifer.culbertson@boem.gov](mailto:Jennifer.culbertson@boem.gov)

703-787-1742

Doug Piatkowski, Division of Environmental Assessment

[Douglas.piatkowski@boem.gov](mailto:Douglas.piatkowski@boem.gov)

703-787-1833

Jennifer Rose, Leasing Division

[Jennifer.rose@boem.gov](mailto:Jennifer.rose@boem.gov)

703-787-1223

## Appendix A: Participant List

### In-Person Meeting Participants:

Chelsea Adams, UNC Wilmington  
Layton Bedsole, New Hanover County  
Chip Collier, NC DENR  
Kristen Donofrio, USACE Norfolk  
Chris Freeman, Geodynamics  
Mitchell Hall, USACE Wilmington  
Jenna Hill, Coastal Carolina University  
Scott Howard, SC DNR Geological Survey  
Chris Marello, GBA  
Johnny Martin, Moffatt & Nichol  
Robert Neal, GBA

Katie O'Reilly, WHQR  
Phil Payonk, USACE  
Fritz Rohde, NOAA Fisheries  
Brad Rosov, CB&I  
Dan Ryan, TNC  
Mickey Sugg, USACE  
Christine Voss, UNC IMS  
Debbie Wilson, NC DCM  
Philip Wolf, USACE  
Dawn York, Dial Cordy & Associates

### BOEM Presenters:

Jennifer Culbertson  
Jennifer Rose  
Doug Piatkowski

### Facilitators:

Jason Gershowitz, Kearns & West (by webinar)  
Elana Kimbrell, Kearns & West  
Eric Poncelet, Kearns & West

### Webinar Participants:

Clark Alexander, Skidaway Institute of Oceanography  
Jessi Baker, NC DCM  
Rick Berquist, VA DMME  
Bill Biddlecome, USACE  
Bob Conkwright, MD Geological Survey  
Mary Conley, TNC  
Julie Crocker, NMFS  
Rick DeVoe, SC Sea Grant  
Maria Dunn, NC Wildlife Resources Commission  
Jason Frye, Travel Writer  
Karen Greene, NOAA  
Kevin Hart, NC DCM  
Ryan Hendren, NMFS  
Jonathan Howell, NC DCM  
Steven Kuehl, VA Institute of Marine Sciences  
William Lassetter, VA DMME  
Keith Lockwood, USACE Norfolk  
Alfonso Lombana, TNC  
Jordan Loran, MD DNR

David Mallinson, ECU  
Terence Martin, MD DNR  
Kimberly McKenna, DE DNREC  
*Todd Mitchell, Univ. of Washington (?)*  
David O'Brien, NOAA Fisheries  
Kris Ohleth, MARCO  
Deniz Ozkan, Atlantic Wind Connection  
Helen Rancan, NJ Geological/Water Survey  
Denise Sanger, SC DNR  
Lisa Schiavinato, NC Sea Grant  
Matt Slagel, NC DCM  
Ronnie Smith, USACE  
Eric Strom, USGS  
Catherine Trott, USACE  
Lora Turner, BOEM  
J.P. Walsh, ECU  
Michael Walther, Coastal Tech Corp  
Will Waske, BOEM  
Darlene Wells, MD Geological Survey  
Pace Wilbur, NOAA Fisheries

Appendix B: Meeting Agenda

**Bureau of Ocean Energy Management  
Marine Minerals Program**

**Central Atlantic Sand Management Working Group**

**Monday, March 31, 2014  
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm**

**Location:** New Hanover County HR Training Rooms A & B  
230 Government Center Drive, Suite 135  
Wilmington, NC 28403

**AGENDA**

*Information for Remote Participants:*

**Call-in Number:** 1-866-244-8528

**Participant Passcode:** 676104#

**Webinar Link:** [kearnswest.adobeconnect.com/enter?m=boemsm](https://kearnswest.adobeconnect.com/enter?m=boemsm)

**Meeting Purpose/Objectives:**

- *Exchange information and viewpoints on the changes and progress made both in the Central Atlantic and by BOEM since the last meeting of the Central Atlantic Sand Management Working Group*
- *Provide updates on funding opportunities, research efforts, coastal projects, and challenges faced*

1:00 p.m.	<b>Welcome &amp; Introductions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Review agenda and meeting objectives</li></ul>
1:15 p.m.	<b>BOEM Marine Minerals Program - Where We've Been and Where We're Going</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Brief Overview of Program</li><li>➤ Summary of Past Sand Management Working Group Meetings and Accomplishments</li><li>➤ Hurricane Sandy Response</li><li>➤ Vision Moving Forward</li></ul> <b>Q&amp;A / Discussion</b>

<p>1:45 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Decision-Making Science</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Update from January 24 “Understanding and Maintaining Habitat Values Of Offshore Shoals While Utilizing Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Sand Resources” Working Group in Charleston, SC</li> <li>➤ Environmental Research</li> <li>➤ Ongoing Programmatic Studies</li> </ul> <p><b>Q&amp;A / Discussion</b></p>
<p>2:15</p>	<p><b>OCS Opportunities &amp; Investments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ BOEM’s current solicitation and project funding</li> <li>➤ Cooperative Agreements</li> </ul> <p><b>Q&amp;A / Discussion</b></p>
<p>2:45 p.m.</p>	<p><i>Break</i></p>
<p>3:00 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Central Atlantic Ongoing &amp; Upcoming Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Projects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Current Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ BOEM Status Update</li> <li>○ Local Project Update</li> <li>○ Regional Lease</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ Upcoming Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Stakeholder Input</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ Future needs and opportunities</li> </ul> <p><b>Q&amp;A / Discussion</b></p>
<p>3:50 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Wrap Up &amp; Next Steps</b></p>
<p>4:00 p.m.</p>	<p><i>Adjourn</i></p>