

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

**Northeast Sand Management Working Group Webinar
July 15, 2014, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

Summary

I. Introduction and Overview of Marine Minerals Program

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM)'s Marine Minerals Program held a webinar for the Northeast Sand Management Working Group on July 15, 2014 from 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. The list of participants in the webinar is included as **Appendix A**, the agenda is found in **Appendix B**, and the presentations are available on the BOEM website: <http://www.boem.gov/Marine-Minerals-Program/>.

Jason Gershowitz and Elana Kimbrell, facilitators with Kearns & West, opened the webinar. They noted it was being recorded (the recording is found [HERE](#)). Jeff Reidenauer, PhD, Chief of the Marine Minerals Branch, reviewed the agenda and the goals of the webinar, which were to:

- Describe purpose, projects, and process for obtaining offshore federal sand resources
- Discuss Marine Minerals Program coordination activities
- Present Hurricane Sandy initiatives
- Discuss environmental review process and studies

Dr. Reidenauer summarized the role of the Marine Minerals Program (MMP) at BOEM, which is primarily to manage the use of non-energy minerals (primarily sand and gravel) on the ocean floor of the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) for coastal restoration. Resources are provided free of charge to other federal, state, or local government entities on a non-competitive basis, using either Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) or leases. Typically, agreements last for a period of two years.

II. Summary of Coastal Restoration Projects

Jennifer Rose, BOEM Leasing Division, gave an overview of current MMP projects, which within the states attending the webinar, include: Great Egg Harbor (NJ); Manasquan (NJ); Long Beach Island (NJ); Dam Neck (VA); and Wallops Island (VA).

- A correction to the table of current projects was made: the agreement for the Wallops Island project is a Three-Party MOU. An update was also provided that dredges were being transported to the site the week of July 14.

III. Overview of Environmental Review Process

Jennifer Culbertson, PhD, BOEM Division of Environmental Assessment, provided an overview of the review and agency coordination BOEM conducts to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA), among other laws and regulations.

Questions from participants are summarized below (*responses are in italics*):

- Does BOEM have an example or guidance regarding use/management of cutterhead dredges?
Dr. Culbertson explained that cutterhead dredges are not commonly used in the Atlantic. She could provide information from the Gulf of Mexico on their use, if helpful.

- Is there a recommended percentage of the total shoal habitat system that should be protected from disturbance by dredging? *Dr. Culbertson responded that this is a question BOEM is currently considering as part of its Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultations with other agencies. Another participant noted that USACE Baltimore District imposed a maximum percent removal guideline, in coordination with NOAA and US Fish and Wildlife Service, based on rough relationship between dredging volume and seafloor. However, projects haven't yet been conducted using this guideline.*
- Is NOAA including noise from dredging as an issue of concern in its Biological Opinions for projects? *NOAA is including sound impacts from geological and geophysical surveys associated with OCS dredging activities. BOEM is currently conducting a study in coordination with USGS and other Federal partners, examining sound from various OCS activities.*

IV. Update on Hurricane Sandy Funding

Ms. Rose reviewed the general purposes of the \$13.6 million in funding provided to MMP:

- Geological & Geophysical (G&G) Data Acquisition
- Cooperative Agreements with States
- Environmental Monitoring
- Environmental Assessment
- Outreach

Data acquisition efforts are intended to create a comprehensive data set for the Atlantic Coast's sand resources, which will be shared with states to help all parties better manage these resources. The goals of the cooperative agreements with the states are to review state needs and analyze existing geological and geophysical data.

V. Update on Cooperative Agreements

Jeff Waldner, BOEM Leasing Division, provided an update on BOEM's Hurricane Sandy Cooperative Agreements, which are planned with 13 Atlantic coastal states. He explained the history of cooperative agreements with the states, reviewed the objectives for these agreements and the desired outcomes, which include increased availability of data, a needs assessment and data gaps identification, development of collaborative web tools, and increased communication between federal and state stakeholders.

VI. Marine Minerals Program Coordination

Mr. Waldner also briefly reviewed the various regional and interagency efforts that MMP is currently a part of, such as the Regional Ocean Councils and the Sandy Regional Infrastructure Team.

VII. Update on Broad Agency Announcement

Ms. Rose summarized BOEM's Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) opportunity, the vehicle through which BOEM requested proposals to conduct geophysical and geological data acquisition along the Atlantic Coast to obtain information regarding previously undiscovered OCS sand resources. A contractor for this work will be selected soon, and data collection must be completed within two years. The data will be provided to BOEM, the states, and interested stakeholders.

Questions and comments included the following (*responses are in italics*):

- What is the extent of the surveys and the number of core samples required in the BAA? *Ms. Rose shared that up to 8,000 line miles of data could be provided, with approximately 500*

vibracore/grab samples. The exact number of samples has not been specified so that the selected contractor can recommend the best number of samples in the best locations.

VIII. Discussion of Studies Program and Ongoing Studies

Dr. Culbertson provided an overview of MMP's ongoing and proposed studies. She first explained the intent of BOEM's environmental studies program, which is to provide the information needed to better predict, assess, and manage impacts from offshore energy and marine mineral-related activities on human, marine, and coastal environments. An important element of their current research is to evaluate the biological differences between dredged and non-dredged areas. BOEM's proposed FY2015 studies related to MMP are:

- Managing Dredge Impacts by Optimizing the Use of Sand Resources
- Sediment Sorting During Coastal Restoration Projects: Implications for Resource Management, Environmental Impacts, and Multiple Use Conflicts
- Development of a Decision Support Tool to Reduce Sea Turtle Dredging Entrainment Risk

Funding decisions related to these studies will be made soon.

Questions from participants are summarized below (*responses are in italics*):

- Is BOEM addressing timing and cumulative impacts of multiple large-scale dredging of borrow sites? *Dr. Culbertson responded that as more beach nourishment occurs, dredging operations will need to be further coordinated. BOEM is considering cumulative impacts and ways to improve environmental outcomes from multiple simultaneous leases or actions.*
- Is BOEM considering more comprehensive dredging protocols? *Dr. Culbertson shared that because sand resources can be very unique to an area, different protocols may be needed based on the type of feature and the organisms living in that region.*
- It was noted that the environmental community is concerned that appropriate follow-up activities be conducted after dredging. *Dr. Culbertson agreed that continued environmental monitoring of sand resources is important. Since monitoring is expensive, it is not always required; however BOEM recognizes that it is important for determining the effectiveness of mitigation measures.*
- How will decisions about the BAA's priority survey areas be made? *Ms. Rose clarified that, because the geophysical and geological data acquisition will be conducted using Hurricane Sandy funding, 40% of the funding and work must be directed off the coast of New York and New Jersey. She added that survey areas are generally confined to 3-8 nautical miles offshore. Dr. Reidenauer added that the funding allocated to the BAA is not sufficient for comprehensive data acquisition across all Atlantic states.*

IX. Wrap Up and Next Steps

Dr. Reidenauer thanked the webinar participants for joining, and reviewed the topics discussed. He also noted that MMP is hoping to hold an Information Transfer Meeting to promote additional coordination related to sand management activities. Ms. Kimbrell asked for suggestions of topics for the next sand management working group meeting, to be held before the end of 2014; suggestions can also be submitted via the online evaluation form (see link below). She also encouraged participants to contact BOEM with any additional questions or comments.

Webinar participants were asked to fill out a short evaluation form for the webinar to help improve future sand management working group interactions: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1aJqFuKF-yQenlo0ip7FvLXeBPqEUK_OSV1ulOrslyik/viewform

BOEM Contact Information

Jennifer Culbertson, Division of Environmental Assessment

Jennifer.culbertson@boem.gov

703-787-1742

Jeffrey Reidenauer, Chief, Marine Minerals Branch

Jeffrey.reidenauer@boem.gov

703-787-1851

Jennifer Rose, Leasing Division

Jennifer.rose@boem.gov

703-787-1223

Jeffrey Waldner, Leasing Division

jeffrey.waldner@boem.gov

703-787-1779

Doug Piatkowski, Division of Environmental Assessment

Douglas.piatkowski@boem.gov

703-787-1833

Appendix A: List of Webinar Participants

Tricia Arndt, DE DNREC
Lynn Bocamazo, USACE
Bob Boeri, MA CZM
Josh Bundick, NASA Wallops Flight Facility
Brian Cameron
Dani Carter, NROC
Bob Conkwright, MD Geological Survey
Chris Constantino, NJ DEC
Sarah Deonarine, NYDEC
Bob Hamilton, Woods Hole Group
Wilhelmina Innes, NY DOS
Dan Kelly, Environmental Monitor
Lingard Knutson, US EPA
Steven Kuehl, VIMS
Ralph LaMoglia, USACE
William Lassetter, VA DMME

Alfonso Lombana, TNC
Marissa Maring, NY DEC
Kim McKenna, DE DNREC
Megan McVeigh, NJ DEC
Nick Napoli, NROC
Deniz Ozkan, Atlantic Wind Connection
Chris Rasmussen, USACE
Simone Rodriguez, NYDEC
Kristen Scheler, USACE Norfolk
Jennifer Schmeltzle, USACE
Mark Sickles, Weeks Marine
Patrick Siebenlist, SeaPlan
Chris Spaur, USACE
Katherine Trott, USACE
Jane Uptegrove, NJ Geological & Water Survey
Darlene Wells, MD Geological Survey

BOEM

Jennifer Culbertson
Bob LaBelle
Jennifer Miller
Jennifer Rose
Jeff Waldner
Jeffrey Reidenauer

Facilitators

Jason Gershowitz, Kearns & West
Elana Kimbrell, Kearns & West

Appendix B: Webinar Agenda

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

**Northeast Sand Management Working Group
WEBINAR**

**Tuesday, July 15, 2014
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm**

AGENDA

Meeting Purpose/Objectives:

- *Provide updates on BOEM Marine Minerals Program activities*
- *Obtain feedback on projects and process*
- *Obtain feedback on topics for next meeting*

1:00 p.m.	Welcome & Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Review agenda and meeting objectives
1:10 p.m.	Overview of BOEM Marine Minerals Program <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Roles and responsibilities➤ Q&A / Discussion
1:15 pm	Summary of Coastal Restoration Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Overview of all projects, including Northeast projects➤ Q&A / Discussion
1:30 p.m.	Overview of Environmental Review Process <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Focusing on topics pertinent to working group states➤ Q&A / Discussion
1:45 p.m.	Update on Hurricane Sandy Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Summary of funding/tasks➤ Q&A / Discussion

2:00 p.m.	Update on Cooperative Agreements <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Overview of Coops with State Agencies➤ Current Status with Northeastern States➤ Common Elements➤ Q&A / Discussion
2:15	Update on Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Overview of Work➤ Status➤ Q&A / Discussion
2:30	Discussion of Studies Program and Ongoing Studies <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ How the Studies Program Works➤ Current studies➤ Proposed Studies➤ Q&A / Discussion
2:50 p.m.	Wrap Up & Next Steps
3:00 p.m.	Adjourn