

OFFICE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY PROGRAMS: Ongoing Studies

Region: Atlantic OCS Region

Planning Area(s): North Atlantic

Title: Risk of an Offshore Wind Project to a Migrant Shorebird

BOEM Cost: \$95,800

Period of Performance: FY 2014-2016

Conducting Organization(s): Western Ecosystems Technology, Inc.

BOEM Contact: Dr. David Bigger

Description:

Background: The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is responsible for managing energy and mineral resources on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) of the United States. BOEM has a responsibility under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) to assess the risks of offshore wind energy development to listed species. To inform these assessments, BOEM has several completed and ongoing studies investigating the potential risks of offshore energy development to birds on the Atlantic OCS (<http://www.boem.gov/Renewable-Energy-Environmental-Studies/>). The red knot (*Calidris canutus rufa*) was recently listed as threatened under the ESA. Although BOEM has assessed the potential risk and vulnerability for many avian species, including the red knot, to offshore renewable energy development (e.g., “[New Insights and New Tools Regarding Risk to Roseate Terns, Piping Plovers, and Red Knots from Wind Facility Operations on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf](#)” and “[The Relative Vulnerability of Migratory Bird Species to Offshore Wind Energy Projects on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf](#)”, there is interest in producing a quantitative estimate of collision risk at the project scale, particularly when birds are approaching a staging area when visibility conditions are very poor, less than ¼ mile.

Objectives: This study will quantitatively estimate the mortality of red knots due to collision with operating wind turbines at a yet-to-be constructed offshore wind energy facility in federal waters of Nantucket Sound, Massachusetts

Importance to BOEM: Information from this study will be used to inform ESA consultations with the USFWS and NEPA analyses on the risk of offshore wind development projects on the OCS to the red knot.

Current Status: Awarded on September 25, 2014. Interim report delivered August 21, 2015. Interim report is in independent peer-review.

Final Report Due: December 31, 2015

Publications: None

Affiliated Web Sites: None

Revised Date: December 4, 2015