



**BOEM** Bureau of  
Ocean Energy Management

# BOEM's Renewable Energy Leasing Process

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Area Identification Phase  
December 8, 2022

Tershara Matthews, SMWG

# Gulf of Mexico Outer Continental Shelf Renewable Energy

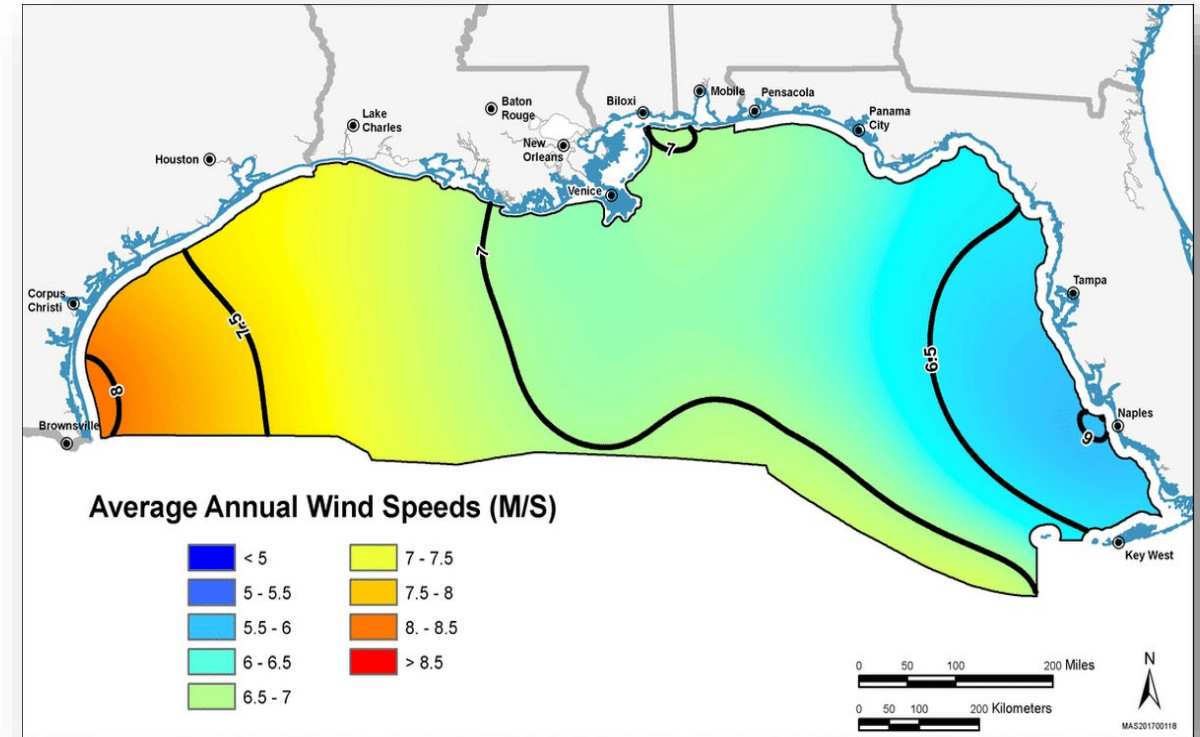
## Agenda

- Background
- Renewable Leasing Process
- Next Steps



# Gulf of Mexico Renewable Energy

- Louisiana Governor Edwards requested a Task Force on October 26, 2020.
- December 2020, Gulf of Mexico Region responded to the LA Task Force Request Letter with a region-based Task Force approach. The inaugural GOM Regional Task Force Meeting was held on June 15, 2021.
- Conducting outreach and engagement to collect data and information.
- Advantages: Proximity to oil and gas supply chain – leverage existing capabilities
- Challenges: Hurricanes – major hurricanes could increase turbine and substructure costs





# BOEM's Renewable Energy Process: Overview



## Planning & Analysis

~ 2 YEARS

- Intergovernmental Task Force
- Request for Information or Call for Information and Nominations
- Area Identification
- Environmental Reviews

## Leasing

~ 1-2 YEARS

- Publish Leasing Notices
- Conduct Auction or Negotiate Lease Terms
- Issue Lease(s)

## Site Assessment

UP TO 5 YEARS

- Site Characterization
- Site Assessment Plan

## Construction & Operations

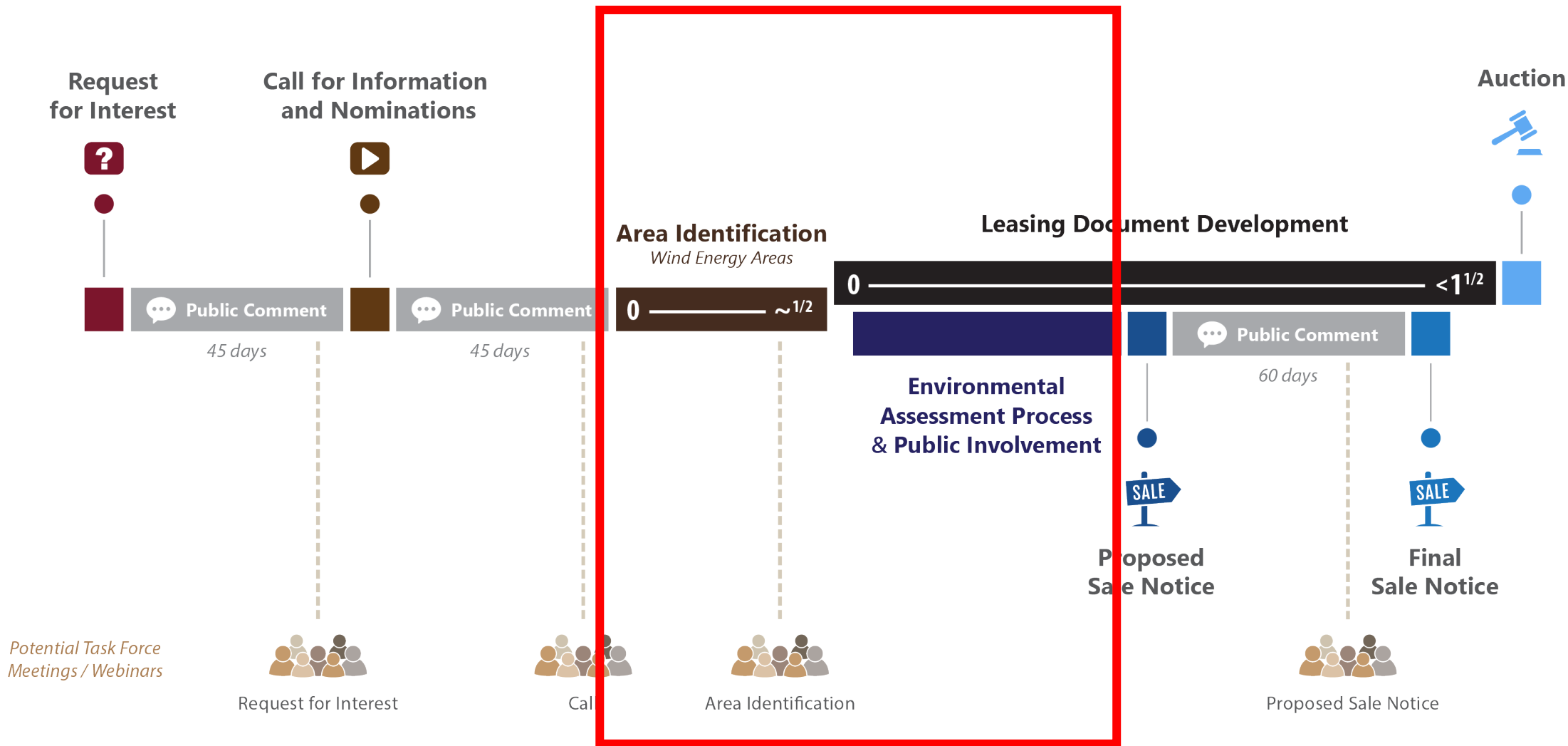
~ 2 YEARS (+25)

- Construction & Operations Plan
- Facility Design Report and Fabrication & Installation Report
- Decommissioning
- Environmental and Technical Reviews



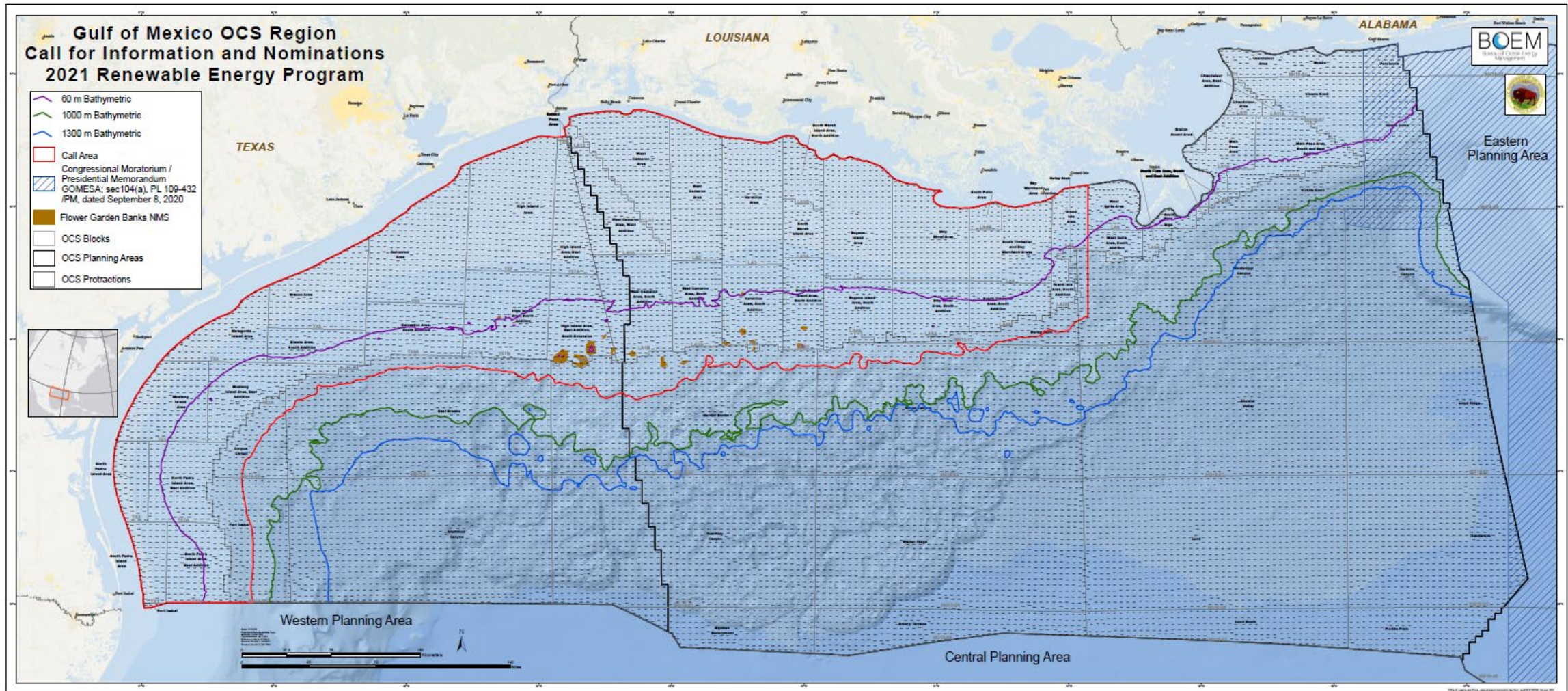


# Renewable Energy Process: Focus on Pre-Lease Activities





# Call for Information Area





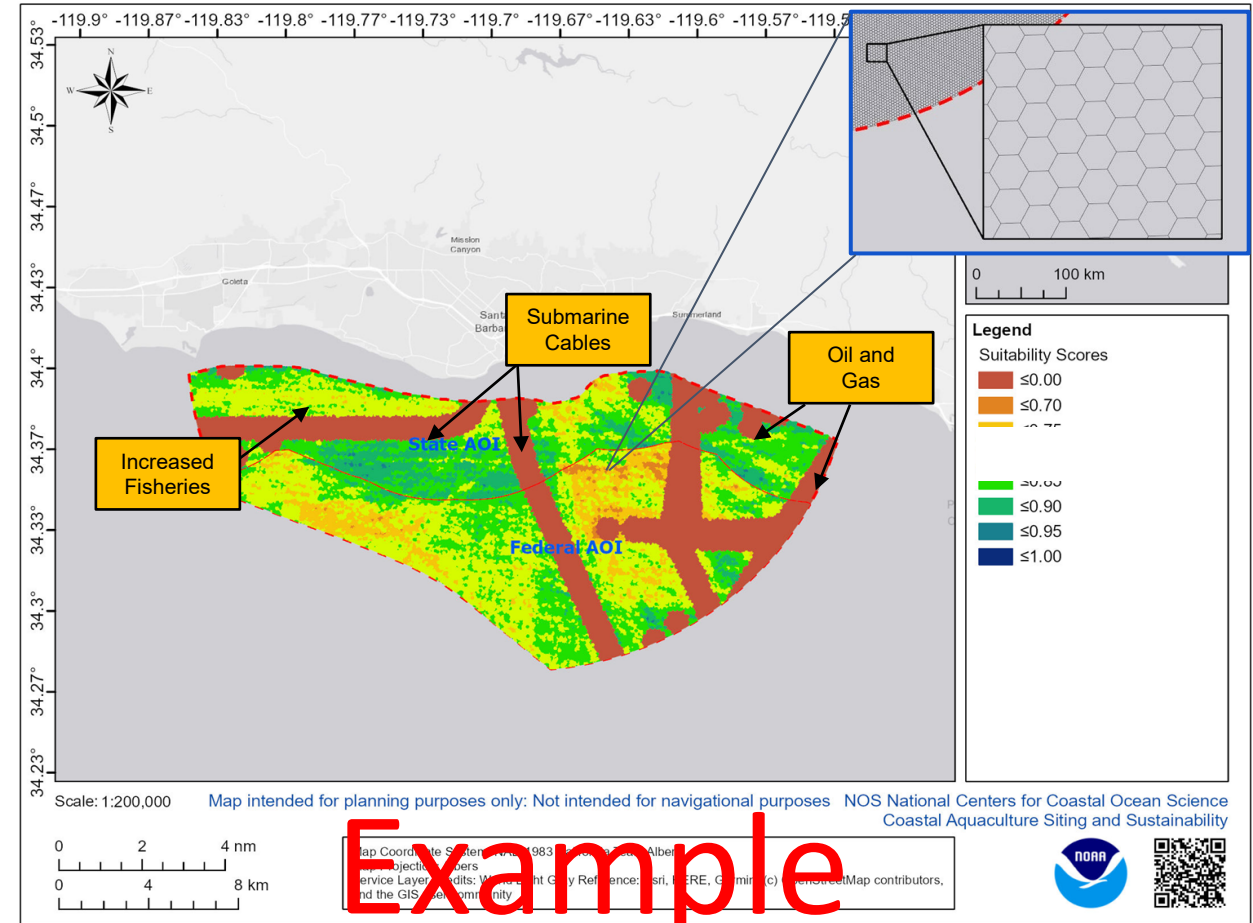
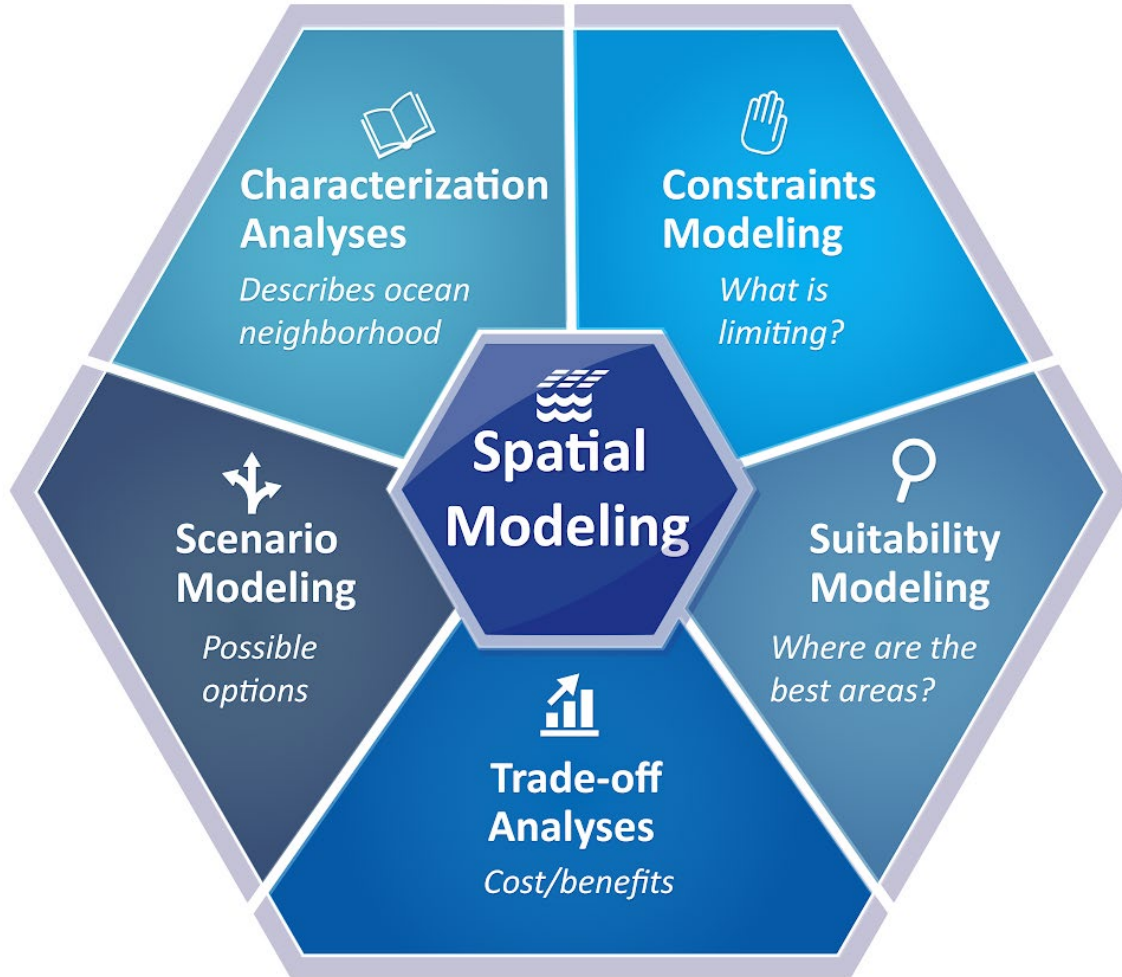
## Some Major Comments Received on the Call for Information

- Request for 20 nm Coastline Buffer for Migratory Birds
- Request for 20 nm Coastline Buffer for Menhaden Fisheries for flyovers
- Protection for the Significant Sediment Resource Areas (SSRAs)
- Request for 100-400 m Buffer for Rice's Whale
- Request for exclusion of high-moderate high shrimping areas
- Request for 2 nm buffer for navigation fairways
- Removal of areas located near low-altitude training areas for DoD



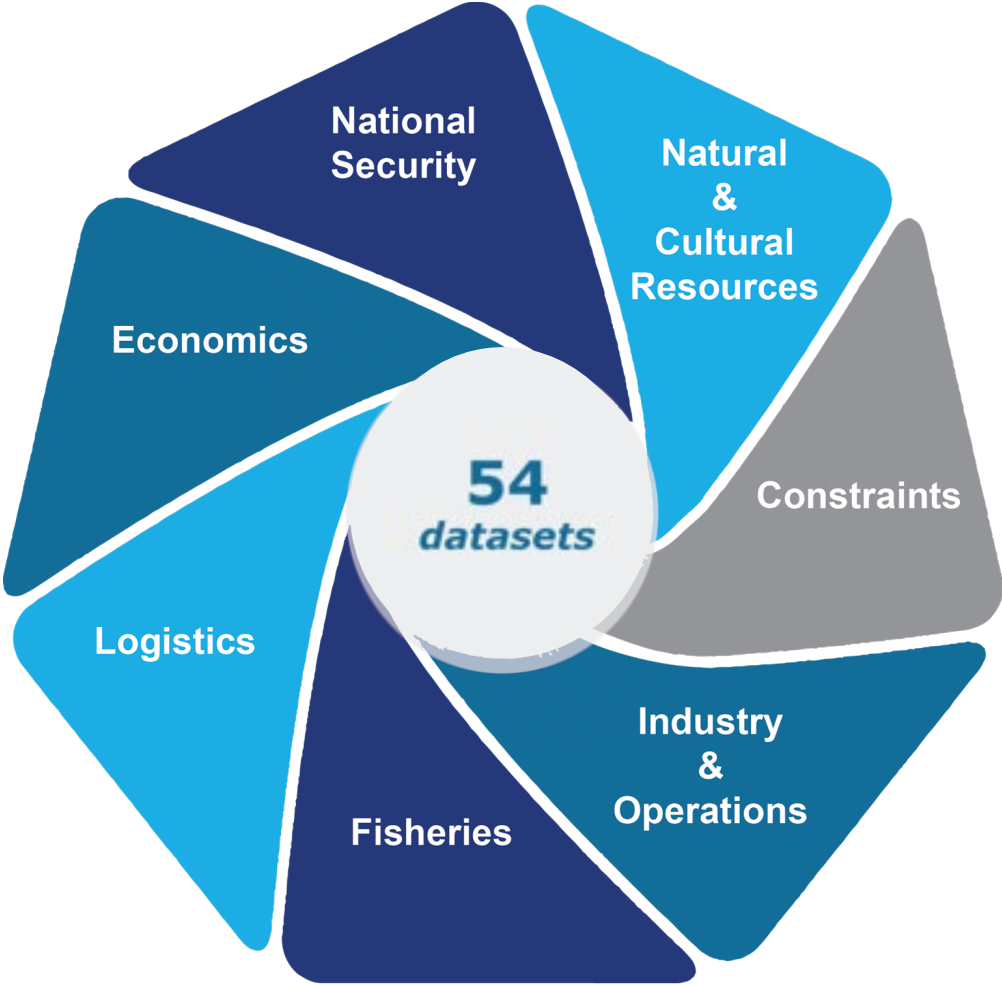
# Ocean Planning Model

An ocean planning model weights locations relative to each other based on a given criteria.





# Ocean Planning - Deconflicting Model structure



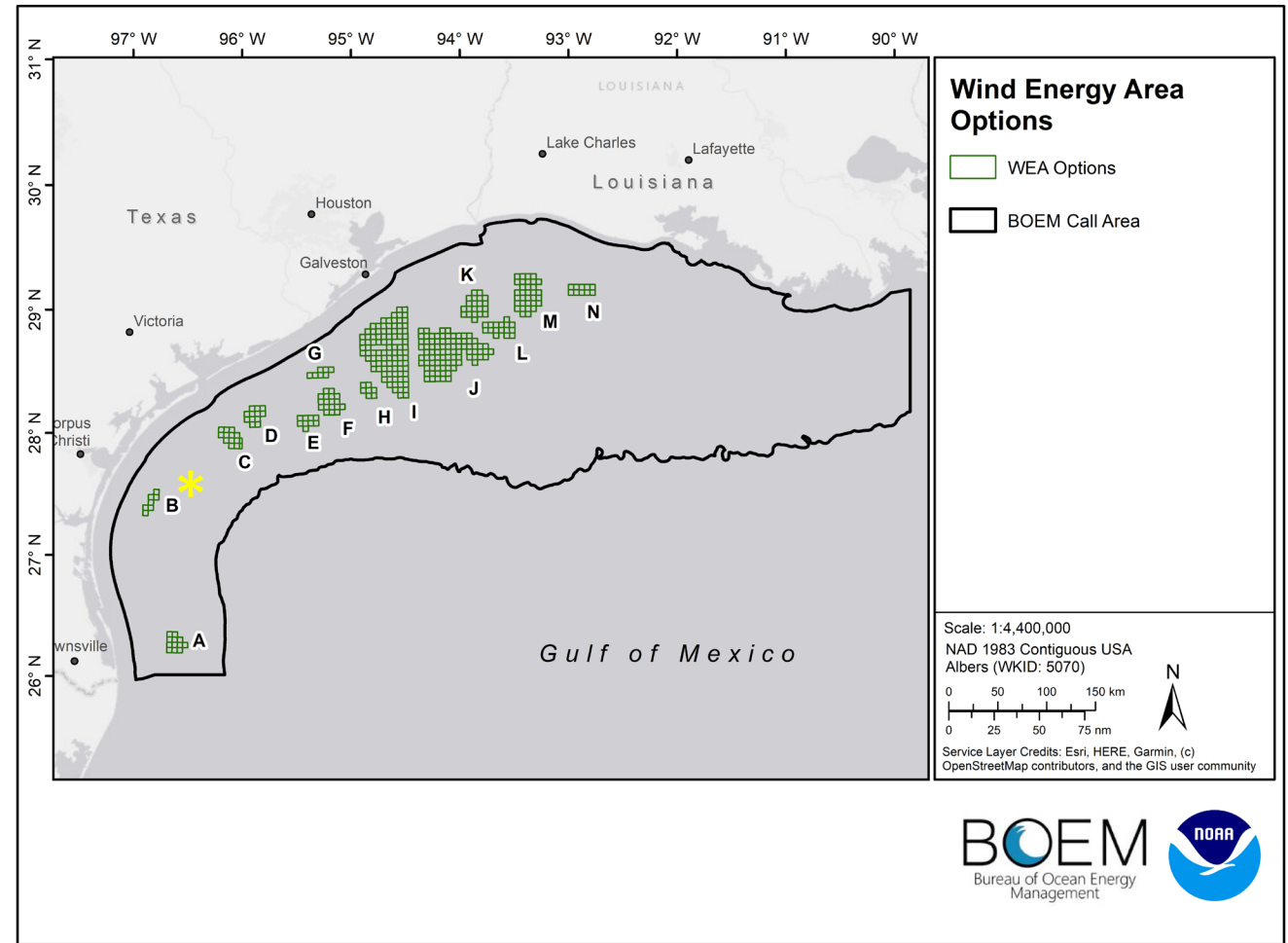
**Equally weighted submodels**



# Deconflicting Process

- 13 deconflicted areas ranging from: 39,840 to 546,645 acres
- 2 million acres total
- Top scoring clusters at the  $p=.05$  significance level (approx. top 5%)

\*Area B is no longer an option due a later DoD assessment requesting removal.

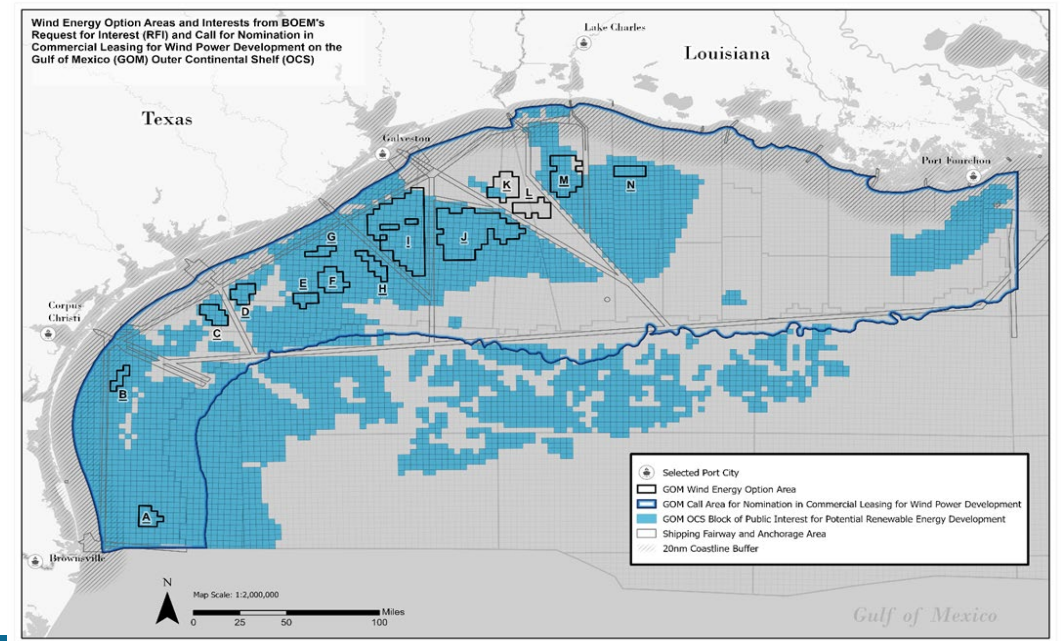
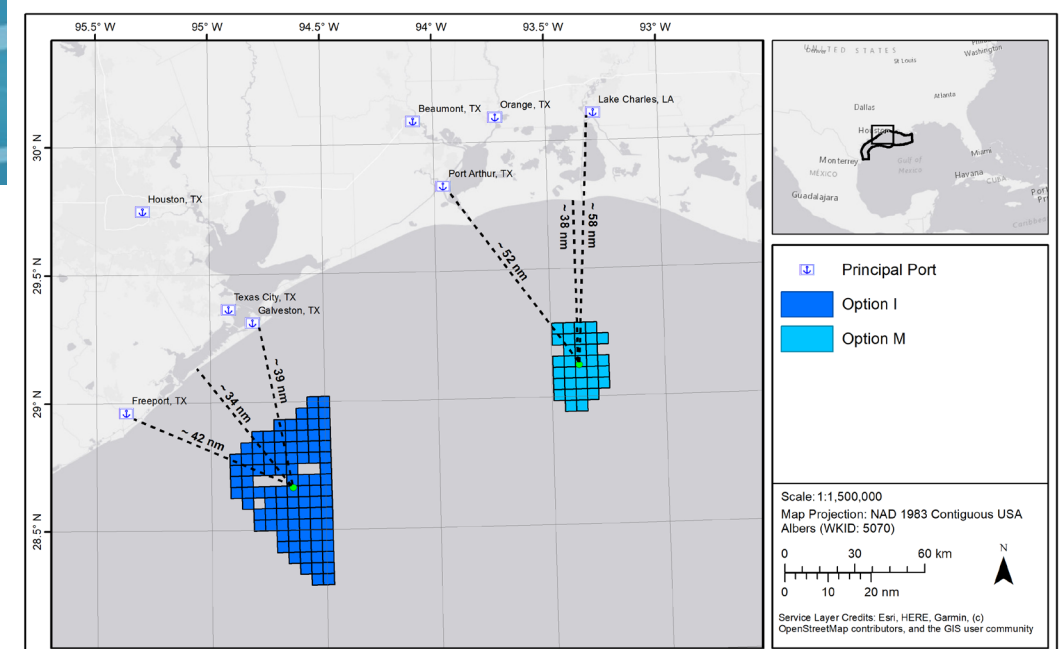


# GOM Recommended WEAs

1. Galveston (Option I) 546,645 acres
2. Lake Charles (Option M) 188,023 acres

## Rationale for WEA Recommendations:

- Competitive Interest
- Less National Security Concerns
- Proximity to Points of Interconnection
- Proximity to Shore
- Less than 10% Moderate-High Shrimping
- Enough acreage



# Some Major Comments Received on the Preliminary WEAs

- **Impacts to potential size of the WEAs**
- USCG has concerns with lightering zones in the southern portion of Option I
- Department of the Navy recommended only utilizing the northern portion of Option I
  
- **Environmental Concerns (Birds, Bats)**
- USFWS and NGOs commended BOEM on the 20 nm but there are still concerns for Trans-migratory birds and bats
- Texas Parks Wildlife Department would like to have 1 nm buffer artificial reefs instead of 1000 ft buffer
- NOAA plans to publish a proposed rule for the green sea turtle critical habitat in 2023. Option I and Option M may overlap with this designation
  
- **General Comments**
- Recommend Lease Area Size 100,000 acres
- Additional WEAs near Port Fourchon, LA
- Concern about the cable routes from the WEAs
- Positive Comments on the CBA used for California PSN

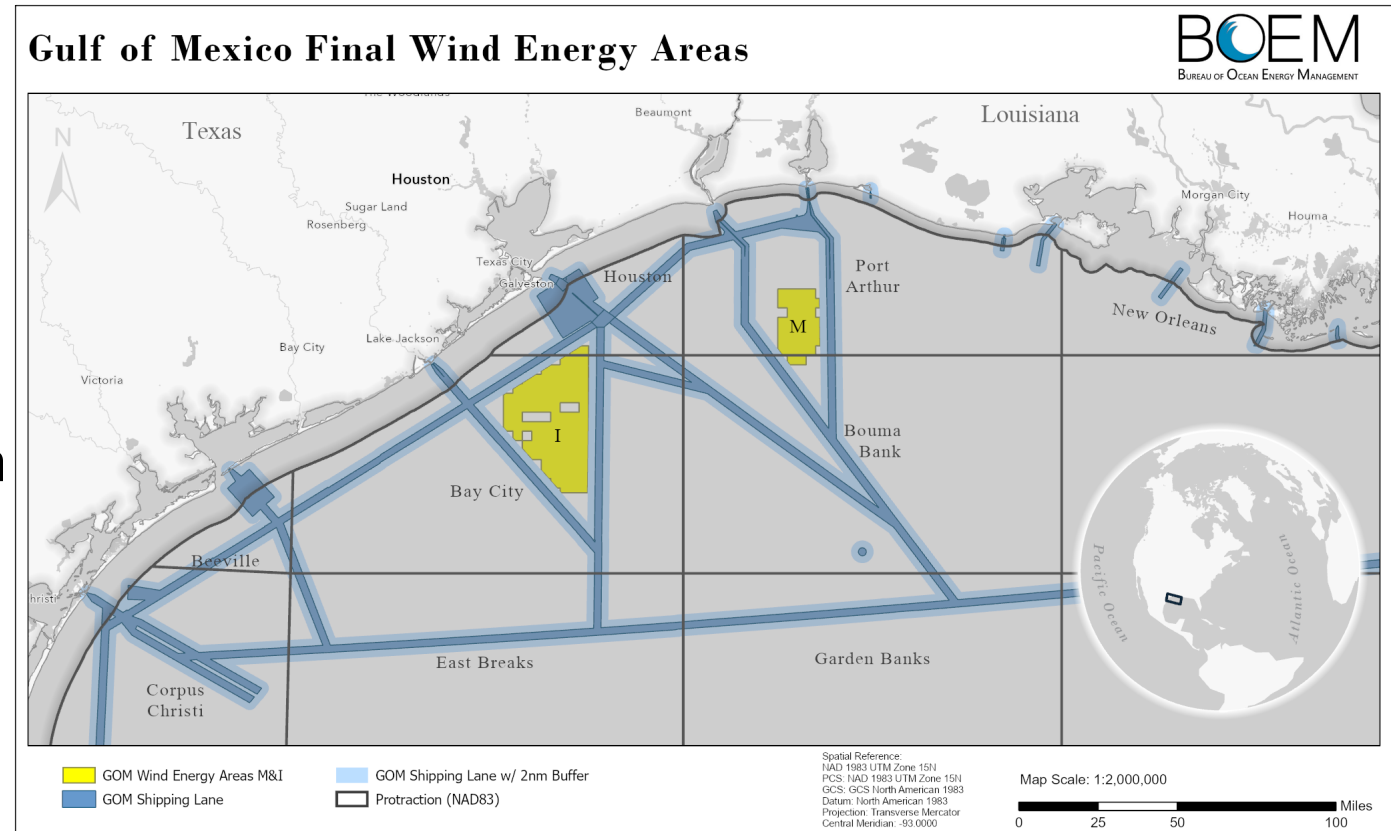


# GOM Final WEAs

1. Galveston (Option I) 508,265 acres
2. Lake Charles (Option M) 174,275 acres

## Rationale for Final WEAs:

- Removal of 6 blocks in the southern portion of Option I
- Proximity to Points of Interconnection
- Proximity to Shore
- Less than 10% Moderate-High Shrimping
- Enough acreage to further divide into smaller lease sale areas



# GOM Offshore Wind Energy Leasing Milestones

- **June 11, 2021:** Request for Interest (RFI) published in the Federal Register.
- **June 15, 2021:** BOEM GOM Inaugural Intergovernmental Renewable Task Force Meeting to present and gather information.
- **July 26, 2021:** Comment Period for the RFI Closed.
  - BOEM received 39 RFI comments.
- **November 1, 2021:** BOEM published the Call for Information and Nominations (Call) in the Federal Register. Docket Number BOEM-2021-0077
- **December 16, 2021:** Comment Period for the Call Closed.
  - BOEM received 40 Call comments.
- **January 19 and 20, 2022:** Fisheries Summit
- **February 2, 2022:** Held 2<sup>nd</sup> GOM Intergovernmental Renewable Task Force Meeting
- **July 20, 2022:** Draft Wind Energy Areas Published. Comment period closed September 2, 2022
  - BOEM received 107 Draft WEA comments.
- **July 20, 2022:** Draft Environmental Assessment Published. Comment period closed September 2, 2022
- **October 31, 2022:** Final Wind Energy Areas Published.





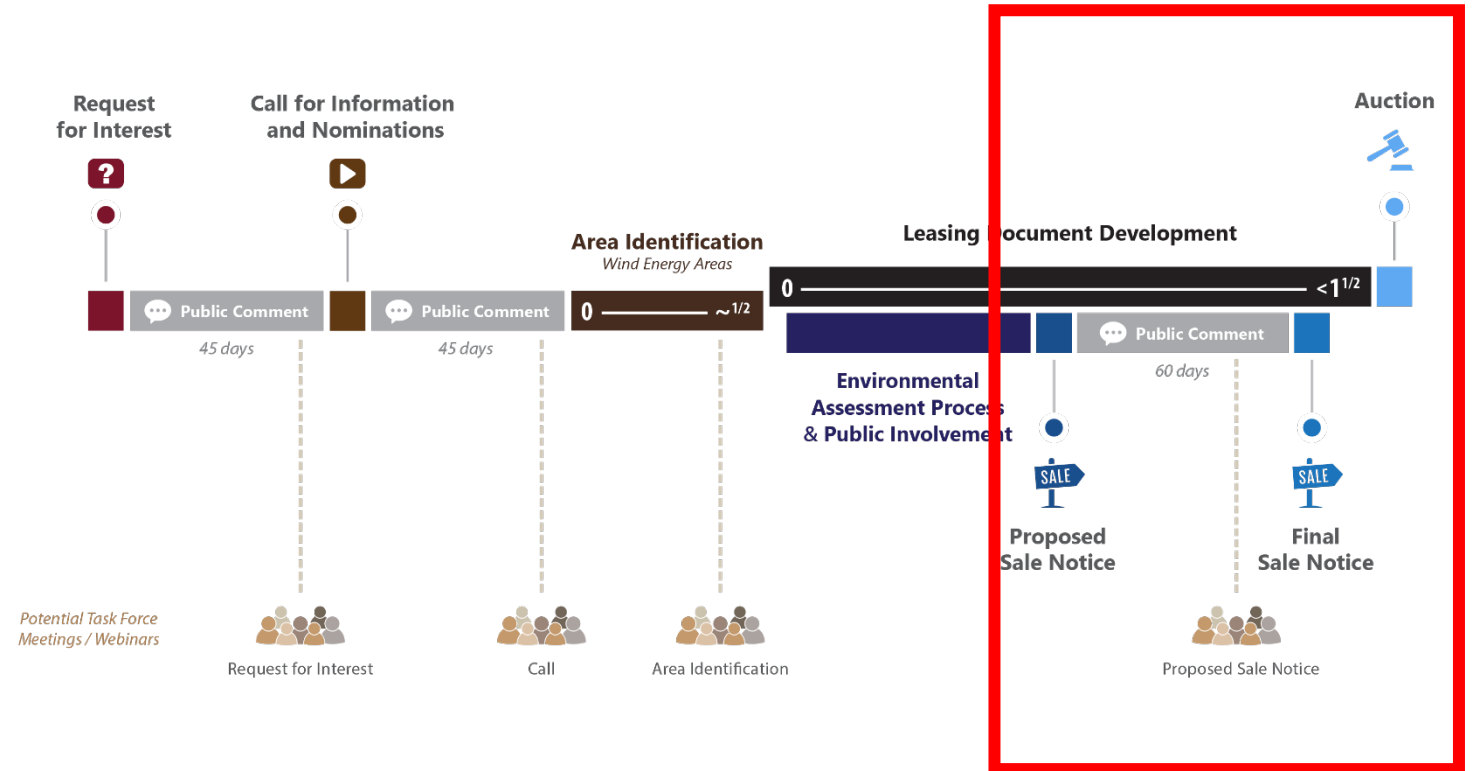
# Future Action: Next Few Months

## Next Steps

- Identify lease areas, auction format, and publish Proposed Sale Notice (PSN)

### Final EA

- Final Sale Notice (FSN)
- Proposed Lease Auction



# BOEM

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