

New York Bight Draft PEIS Virtual Public Meeting I

January 31, 2024

Transcript

Please note: a portion of these comments have been redacted due to a violation of bureau policy and guidelines for public meetings.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Hello, everyone.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you for joining today's virtual public meeting for the New York Bight Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement or the Draft PEIS.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: This meeting is being convened by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management or BOEM.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: We'll get started here in a couple of minutes.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: If you have any technical difficulties. Please reach out to Sam Levy, using the email on your screen.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: That's slevy@kearnswest.com.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: So sit tight for just a moment. When we will get started here in just a few minutes at the top of the hour, just after 5 Eastern time.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you for joining.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, I see more folks joining, welcome

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: to the New York Bight Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement virtual public meeting. We'll start shortly, sit tight and we'll begin in just a couple

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: minutes. Again, welcome to folks who are just joining us.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: We have people continuing to join the meeting, so we're going to wait a few more moments and get started shortly in just a couple of moments.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: But so, you all know, you're at the virtual public meeting on the New York Bight Programmatic, Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement or Draft PEIS.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: This meeting is being convened by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management or BOEM, and we will begin shortly.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: We're a couple of minutes past the hour. I think we'll go ahead and get started.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Good afternoon, everybody. Thank you for joining us today. You are at the virtual public meeting on the New York Bight Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Statement of the draft PEIS. This meeting is being convened by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management or BOEM. My name is Briana Moseley, and I am your lead

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: facilitator for today's meeting. I'm also joined by a team of folks from Kearns and West, including Hanna Khalil, Leigh Osterhus, Jack Hughes, Tom Fisher, and Sam Levy.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Sam, in particular, is here to manage all the backend technology and address any issues you might have along the way today.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Her email is posted on the screen and is provided in the chat box should you need to reach out to her.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: So we'll get started with a little bit of housekeeping here. First. I'd like to note that this meeting is being recorded to ensure the completion of our notes.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: All public comments shared during this meeting will be included in the public record and available on regulations.gov.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Your participation today assumes you consent to have your comments included in the public record.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: For those whose primary language is Spanish or American Sign Language. We have interpreters available today.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: ASL interpreters will be pinned at the top of the screen for the duration of the meeting, as you see here.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: To access the Spanish interpretation channel, you could simply select the Globe icon at the bottom of your screen and select the Spanish audio channel.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: This will allow you to hear the Spanish interpretation for the duration of the meeting.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: We also have closed captioning available today. If you click the CC icon at the bottom of the screen,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: you have the ability to turn closed captioning on or off at any time throughout the meeting.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And if you are a member of the media who has inquiries. You can contact Brian Walch. He's here with us today, and his contact information is on the screen.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: For the media. Please consider that the information provided by members of the public today is not for attribution unless the person speaking gives permission to be

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: quoted. Okay, so just a quick note here. We have a lot of participants today. We have a lot of interest in this meeting, which is wonderful.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: We've had about 215 registrants, last we checked, just prior to the meeting's start.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: We have over 100, 108 or so public attendees in the room today, and several folks indicated that they would like to give public comment.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: We anticipate that we will have over 40 plus people providing comment today. And with that we, we plan to give folks approximately 2 minutes to speak.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And we will be available and planning to go up until 10 pm tonight.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: While written comments are preferred. BOEM values all forms of feedback and is certainly listening tonight and very happy that you're here.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: If we do not get to everyone this evening, this is not your only opportunity to provide public comment.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: In just a moment. I'll go over the other ways you can provide your comment, and I just want to thank you in advance in, in advance for your patience with us this evening.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, so that's most of our housekeeping, for now. And I will go ahead, and before we dive into our formal agenda for the day, I'd like to turn the floor over to

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: David Diamond for some opening remarks. David is BOEM's Deputy Chief of Operations for the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf region in the Office of Renewable

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Energy Programs. So, David, over to you.

David Diamond (BOEM): Thank you, Briana.

David Diamond (BOEM): Hello! My name is David Diamond, and I'm the Deputy Chief of Atlantic Operations in the Office of Renewable Energy Programs at the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management or

David Diamond (BOEM): BOEM. Thank you for joining us today to discuss the New York Bight Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement offshore New York and New Jersey.

David Diamond (BOEM): We are hosting virtual meetings on January 31st and February 13th, and in-person public meetings on February 5th, in North Dartmouth, Massachusetts.

David Diamond (BOEM): February 7th in Stony Brook, New York, in February 8th in Toms River, New Jersey.

David Diamond (BOEM): For those of you who aren't familiar with BOEM. We are a federal bureau within the Department of the Interior that oversees the development of our energy and mineral resources in

David Diamond (BOEM): the nation's outer continental shelf or OCS. The OCS extends in most areas from about 3 miles offshore to the full extent of the exclusive economic zone, approximately 200 miles

David Diamond (BOEM): offshore. BOEM is responsible for the expeditious and orderly development of the energy resources of the OCS, including renewables like offshore wind.

David Diamond (BOEM): It's our job to ensure this development is done in an environmentally and economically responsible way.

David Diamond (BOEM): This process starts with public input, data gathering, analysis and leasing.

David Diamond (BOEM): After many years, we now have 28 active commercial leases for offshore wind in the Atlantic.

David Diamond (BOEM): As we've mentioned, we are here today to discuss the New York Bight Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement.

David Diamond (BOEM): Your participation and feedback today are essential to BOEM's renewable energy program,

David Diamond (BOEM): and play a vital role in our environmental analysis in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act or NEPA.

David Diamond (BOEM): Thank you all for joining.

David Diamond (BOEM): There are about a dozen or so subject matter experts from the BOEM staff who are also participating today in the meeting, to help provide information as needed.

David Diamond (BOEM): So, we all look forward to hearing your comments and answering any questions you may have.

David Diamond (BOEM): Now, I will turn it back over to Briana.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, great. Thank you, David.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Alright. So, we will dive in a bit to our agenda for today. We have welcoming, and the webinar guidance which we've already reviewed.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: We've had opening remarks from David. Thank you so much, David. Now we're reviewing the agenda and our ground rules for the day.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Then we'll go into some presentations, and we have about 25 or so minutes for presentations.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And the BOEM lead drafters of the Programmatic EIS will provide an environmental, an overview of the

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: excuse me, an overview of the environmental review process and an overview of the New York Bight Draft Programmatic EIS.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Then we'll take some time to go into public comment.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And we'll also take some time to receive and answer any questions you all have during this meeting.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And lastly, we'll wrap up with some closing remarks.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Next slide.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: So just to review our, our main objectives for the meeting today, are to provide information on the New York Bight programmatic environmental review process.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: To provide an opportunity for the public to provide comment and ask questions on the analysis in the New York Bight Draft

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Programmatic EIS.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And to provide information on how the public can comment during the public comment period.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: So, following the presentations by BOEM, participants will have the opportunity to provide oral comments.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: You can use the "raise hand" feature or dial Star 9 to indicate that you would like to provide a comment today.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: As you can see at the bottom of your screen, you can use the "raise hand," icon.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: If you already know you'd like to provide a comment. I encourage you at this time to raise your hand and get into the queue,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: so we can get a sense for how many folks would like to provide comment tonight.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And in, in the event that we do have a lot of folks who want to speak, we want to accommodate that as much as possible, and we're prepared to go until 10 PM

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: tonight, as we had mentioned before. We typically like to give folks 3 min to speak, but I believe we'll have several,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: folks giving their comments tonight, and will likely need to go to 2 minutes.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: If you require more than the allotted amount of time for comments today, there's several more ways to submit your additional comments beyond this meeting.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Here's a few ways on your screen. So, the next big way where you could provide your comments is to write oral comments at the next virtual meeting on February 13th.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: That's a meeting that's identical to this one. You can also submit your comments in writing via mail to the address on the screen here.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: You may also provide comments directly online at regulations.gov, and you can search for the docket number listed on your screen here to find the right

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: location to submit your comment. In addition, there are 3 in-person, open house meetings that are scheduled for next week across the New York Bight region,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: and there is also an opportunity to speak to subject matter experts during those meetings and provide your written comments at those meetings as well.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: I think we'll put some information in the chat, so you all can see where to get additional information on those opportunities.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, so here's the Q&A process, after the public comment process, we'll move into the question and answer session. BOEM is receiving and responding to your

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: questions today. Starting now, and throughout the presentation portion of the meeting, you can submit any question you might have about the draft PEIS

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: analysis via the, the Q&A pod at the bottom of your screen, as indicated here. BOEM subject matter experts will provide responses at the end of the meeting and

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: following the public comment session. So BOEM has time to prepare, to prepare thoughtful responses to your questions,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: we ask that you please submit your questions before the start of the public comment session.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Once the public comment session begins, we'll, we'll stop accepting additional questions.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, so with that, we'll now move to the presentation portion of our meeting. I'd like to introduce 2 members of BOEM's Project Management Team

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: who are leading the development of the draft PEIS, and that is Megan Davidson and Courtney Strain.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: They will be providing information about the New York Bight Environmental Review Process and an overview of the draft PEIS document.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: So, Megan and Courtney over to you.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): Good evening everyone,

Megan Davidson (BOEM): I am Megan Davidson, and I

Megan Davidson (BOEM): environmental programs, BOEM

Megan Davidson (BOEM): New York Bight Programmatic Environment...

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: It looks like we might be having some audio issues with Megan, so hold tight as we sort this out.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thanks everybody for your patience. Please hold tight,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: and we'll see if we can get Megan back.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: While we're waiting to sort out Megan's audio issues. I'm wondering, Courtney, if you'd like to go ahead with your presentation.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): Sorry, Brianna. Could you hear me now? There she is.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): Okay. Sorry. I think I got kicked out of the meeting there for a second. Sorry, everybody. I think I'm back.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): Great! Good evening everybody. Sorry about that delay.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): Great! My name is Megan Davidson, and I'm a Marine Biologist within the Environment Office of Environmental Programs at BOEM.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): I am the Deputy Project Manager for the New York Bight Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): And hello, everyone. My name is Courtney Strain, and I am an Oceanographer within BOEM's Office of Environmental Programs. I am serving as the Project Manager for the New York

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Bight Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. Megan and I are leading this effort on behalf of the Office of Renewable Energy Programs at BOEM.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): Thank you for joining us today, for today's meeting. I will now pass it back over to Megan to kick off the presentation. Great next slide, please.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): Great. I'm going to start the presentation by going over the environmental review process. Next slide, please.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): So, for the National Environmental Policy Act, NEPA stands for the National Environmental Policy Act. NEPA requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their

Megan Davidson (BOEM): proposed actions and any reasonable alternatives prior to making any decisions. This process is often referred to as an environmental review.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): For actions that may significantly affect the quality of the human environment, an Environmental Impact Statement or an EIS must be prepared.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): It will include the proposed action, a no action, and reasonable alternatives that could reduce impacts. The analysis addresses both beneficial and adverse effects, describes the

Megan Davidson (BOEM): effect in environment for each resource, and includes reasonably foreseeable environmental trends and planned actions other than the proposed action. Next slide, please.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): You're going to hear us talk about programmatic and project specific NEPA documents today.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): Programmatic NEPA documents include an analysis of impacts across a broad geographic region, mitigation measures that could be applied across multiple projects, and a robust

Megan Davidson (BOEM): cumulative analysis. Where project specific NEPA documents can tear to programmatic NEPA documents. This means that they incorporate the programmatic analysis by

Megan Davidson (BOEM): reference, and then further analyze additional impacts and mitigation measures that are unique to that specific project.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): Next slide, please.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): Today, we're here to discuss the New York Bight Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, which was prepared in accordance with the requirements of NEPA.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): This slide shows the overall timeline for offshore wind leasing and development, starting from the planning stages all the way through decommissioning.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): Typically, after leases are executed and site assessment and surveys are completed, construction and operation plans or COPs, would be submitted before any additional NEPA

Megan Davidson (BOEM): analysis is complete, which is noted by the orange box towards the center or the right. However, for the New York Bight, we're inserting an additional level of NEPA analysis into the

Megan Davidson (BOEM): typical process, in the form of a Programmatic EIS. This is identified by the blue box on the left, and occurs before any COPs are submitted. Courtney will elaborate on BOEM's

Megan Davidson (BOEM): decision to develop a Programmatic EIS later in the presentation. Next slide, please. A federal agency must publish its Notice of Intent or NOI to prepare an Environmental Impact

Megan Davidson (BOEM): Statement. The NOI for this Programmatic EIS was published in the Federal Register on July 15th, 2022, which initiated a 45-day public comment period.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): The 3 virtual public scoping meetings were held. We received 43 comment submissions during that scoping period, and the scoping report is included as Appendix O in the draft

Megan Davidson (BOEM): Programmatic EIS. if you're interested in looking. Next slide, please.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): The 43 unique submissions were received by a variety of commenters outlined here, such as federal, state, and local agencies, public interest groups, industry, and individuals. All

Megan Davidson (BOEM): comments were received through regulations.gov. Next slide, please. Within those 43 submissions, 362 distinct comments were received. The graph here shows the number of

Megan Davidson (BOEM): individual comments by topic. Most comments received were regarding socioeconomic and cultural resources with 77, biological resources of 49, and scope proposed action and

Megan Davidson (BOEM): alternatives of 48. Many proposed alternatives were submitted,

Megan Davidson (BOEM): however, they were determined to be more appropriate for either the project specific stage or were incorporated as avoidance, minimization, mitigation, and monitoring measures or

Megan Davidson (BOEM): AMMMs, in this draft Programmatic EIS. Next slide, please. In addition to public scoping prior to developing the Programmatic EIS, BOEM must also seek public comment on the

Megan Davidson (BOEM): draft Programmatic EIS. The notice of availability was published in the Federal Register on January 12th, which opened a 45 day public comment period.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): You can provide comment until February 26th through regulations.gov by searching for docket number BOEM-2024-0001. Next slide, please.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): Public comments are a very important part of the need for process. Providing your local expertise and perspective helps guide our environmental analysis and helps BOEM make more

Megan Davidson (BOEM): informed decisions. The types of comments we're looking for include significant issues to analyze in the Programmatic EIS, additional sources of information, identification of

Megan Davidson (BOEM): data gaps and information needs, and feedback on the proposed mitigation measures. Next slide, please.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): In addition to collecting comments on regulations.gov, we're holding 5 public meetings, 2 virtual and 3 in-person as an opportunity for you to provide verbal comments. In addition to

Megan Davidson (BOEM): today's virtual meetings, we will have meetings on February 5th at 4 PM, at The University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth, in Dartmouth, Massachusetts, February 7th at 4 PM, at Stony

Megan Davidson (BOEM): Brook University, in Stony Brook, New York. February 8th at 4 PM Eastern, at The Clarion Hotel in Toms River, New Jersey, and again on February 13th at 1 PM Eastern, will have

Megan Davidson (BOEM): another virtual meeting. You can find additional meeting information, fact sheets and instructions on how to comment on the virtual meeting room website. Next slide, please.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): On that virtual meeting room website, you can click on the resources tab. You can see a lot of information available for you to browse, and a recording of this presentation will be

Megan Davidson (BOEM): added. There are fact sheets that discuss BOEM and renewable energy on the Outer Continental Shelf, include a map of the wind energy leases in the Atlantic, provide an overview of

Megan Davidson (BOEM): the New York Bight leasing and Programmatic EIS processes, provide more information about the public meetings and how to comment,

Megan Davidson (BOEM): and present resources, resource specific topics, like the National Historic Preservation Act, electromagnetic fields, underwater sound and environmental justice. Next slide, please.

Megan Davidson (BOEM): I will now hand it over to Courtney for the next portion of our presentation.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Thanks Megan, and I will now provide an overview of the New York Bight Draft Programmatic EIS.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Next slide, please.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): The New York Bight lease area history began back in December 2016, with an unsolicited lease request from PNE Wind for over 40,000 acres offshore New York.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): In addition to other milestones, BOEM completed an environmental assessment in 2021,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): and in 2022 held the offshore wind auction for the 6 lease areas shown on the screen.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): The slide identifies which Lessees had the winning bids for each area.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): If you are interested in learning more about the full leasing history of the New York Bight lease areas. It is available on the New York Bight Programmatic EIS website.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Next slide, please.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): The overall goal of this Programmatic EIS is to analyze the New York Bight region, such that project specific environmental analyses at the construction and operations plan or COP phase, will be able to tier to or incorporate the analysis done in this Programmatic EIS by reference.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Doing this for the New York Bight demonstrates the connection between programmatic and project specific NEPA that Megan described previously.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): BOEM decided to take this approach for the New York Bight due to the number in proximity of the lease areas, as well as the anticipated timing of COP submissions for these lease areas.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Additionally,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): there are similar habitats and species across this region which will allow for streamlining at the project specific NEPA stage.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Next slide, please.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Through this Programmatic EIS, BOEM analyzes the regional affected environment and environmental consequences to allow site specific reviews to focus on what is truly unique for each lease area,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): conducts a focused regional cumulative analysis,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): establishes a framework for tearing of project specific environmental analyses,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): which helps support streamlining of that process by incorporating by reference this programmatic analysis.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): It identifies, analyze and adopts if appropriate, programmatic avoidance, minimization, mitigation and monitoring measures or AMMMs,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): that can be applied across the 6 New York Bight lease areas.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): And it also provides predictability and consistency to cooperating agencies, partners and developers.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Next slide, please.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): So to expand on the tearing approach a little bit more. The Programmatic EIS includes analysis upon which the COP specific NEPA can build in details for each resource, whether the programmatic analysis may need to be refined in the COPs specific NEPA analysis.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): The intention is that BOEM and agencies with associated decision points, can use the Programmatic EIS to support subsequent analyses.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): So generally, if a COP proposes activities that are captured by the Programmatic EIS design envelope,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): the COP specific NEPA will focus on what is different or site-specific analysis that could not be conducted in the Programmatic EIS.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Appendix C of the draft Programmatic EIS provides guidance for each resource on how the programmatic analysis may need to be refined in the COPs specific NEPA analysis.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): And the application of these AMMM measures identified in the record of decision or ROD will be reviewed for applicability at the COP specific NEPA stage.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Next slide, please.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): To highlight some notable sections of the programmatic draft EIS chapters 1, 2, and 3 contain the purpose and need,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): alternatives, and an assessment of the environmental consequences for each alternative.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Appendix C provides clarification on how BOEM anticipates using this Programmatic EIS for incorporation by reference at the COP/NEPA stage.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): The cumulative impact scenario also referred to as the Planned Activity Scenario in the Programmatic EIS is provided in Appendix D.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Appendix G contains the complete description of the AMMM measures analyzed under Alternative C.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): We also developed a Seascape Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment or SLVIA for the New York Bight, which is Appendix H in the document.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): And we also have visual simulations that are available on the website.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): And finally, Appendix J includes a risk assessment analysis that is typically not in COP EIS's, which can be used to assess the relative risk to marine mammals from acoustic disturbances.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Next slide, please. So now let's dive into alternatives. BOEM has developed a 3-alternative approach for analyzing potential impacts on the affected environment,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): and we will discuss each draft alternative over the next 3 slides.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): So first alternative A is the No action alternative. For the No action alternative, no development would occur on any of the 6 New York Bight lease areas.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Any potential impacts, including benefits associated with offshore wind development in the New York Bight would not occur under this alternative.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Although the impacts of development in the New York Bight lease areas would not occur, the impacts of all ongoing and planned offshore wind and non-offshore wind activities would still occur and are analyzed under Alternative A.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): So, in short, the analysis identifies the overall impacts of ongoing and planned activities without the New York Bight lease areas.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): And this handling of the No action alternative is consistent with the COP EISs.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Next slide, please.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Alternative B discusses the potential impacts of future offshore wind development in the New York Bight, without the application of any AMMM measures that could avoid, reduce or mitigate those impacts.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Instead, mitigation measures would be applied at the project specific NEPA stage.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): The development of one representative project and 6 representative projects was analyzed in this draft Programmatic EIS. Analysis of one representative project will be utilized for future tearing at the COP specific NEPA stage.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): The one project is not associated with any particular lease area but is representative of development that could occur in any of the 6 New York Bight lease areas.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): And the analysis of 6 projects allows BOEM to evaluate the overall impacts of a full offshore wind buildout in the New York Bight.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): BOEM also analyzed the cumulative impacts under Alternative B, which includes impacts from ongoing and planned activities, in addition to the impacts of 6 New York Bight projects with deferral of AMMM measures until the project stage.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Next slide, please.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Finally, Alternative C, analyzes the development of the New York Bight lease areas with the application of AMMM measures. This represents BOEM's proposed action.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): As part of the Programmatic EIS process, BOEM will evaluate and ultimately select programmatic mitigation measures that may be applied to the 6 New York Bight projects.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Analysis of BOEM's proposed action describes how the adoption of AMMM measures may avoid or reduce the potential impacts of Alternative B. I will expand more on the AMMM measures that BOEM is proposing under this alternative in a later slide.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Now other than the adoption of the AMMM measures. All other design parameters for this alternative would be the same as described under Alternative B. BOEM also analyzed

Courtney Strain (BOEM): the cumulative impacts under Alternative C, which includes impacts from ongoing and planned activities, as well as the impacts of 6 New York Bight projects with the application of those AMMM measures.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Next slide, please.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Because the analysis in this draft PEIS occurred before any New York Bight COPs were submitted, BOEM built what we call a Representative project design envelope or RPDE,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): and we use this for environmental analysis of one project.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): The RPDE contains a range of technical parameters that describe a hypothetical wind energy project that could occur within the 6 New York Bight lease areas. And to develop an RPDE

Courtney Strain (BOEM): that reflects realistic project technical details that are specific to the New York Bight, BOEM mined existing COPs,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): and solicited input from the 6 New York Bight Lessees: American Clean Power, the States of New York and New Jersey, and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): It is an informed range of parameters intended to describe a hypothetical project for purposes of analysis in the Programmatic EIS.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): I will also note that this range of parameters represents the maximum case scenario to capture what the greatest potential for impacts could be.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): The RPDE contains basic parameters for wind turbine generators, offshore substations, array cables and export cables.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): I won't go over all of the parameters but wanted to provide you with a few examples of the parameters, to give you a sense of what is included.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): So, as you can see in the table on the screen, the RPDE includes parameters such as number and height of the turbines,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): the number of offshore substations and length of cables.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Notably, because locations for cable landfalls, points of interconnection and ports, are not known at this time, these are not defined in our RPDE.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Detailed site-specific analysis of these components will be deferred and evaluated at the COP specific NEPA stage for all New York Bight areas.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Next slide, please.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Similar to the COP EISs, the draft Programmatic EIS presents analysis by the following resources for each alternative.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): There are 19 total resources that are analyzed in this document, and they are broken down into 8 biological resources, 2 physical resources and 9 socioeconomic conditions and cultural resources listed on the screen.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Due to the lack of project detail available at the stage, some of the onshore resources are analyzed at a higher level. Next slide, please.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): BOEM analyzes potential impacts to resources that could result from the proposed action and alternatives to the proposed action. The Programmatic EIS uses a 4 level classification scheme to characterize potential beneficial and adverse of impacts of all alternatives, including the proposed action and the no action alternative.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): These categories include negligible, minor, moderate, and major, and they take into account the duration and type of impact.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Under the proposed action, most of the expected impacts from 6 projects on the resources were up to moderate.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): However, there were a few resources where the analysis acknowledged the potential for up to major impacts which include those resources in bold.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): That's marine mammals, finfish invertebrates in essential fish habitat, scenic and visual resources; however, I will note that the major impact rating is for a small portion of the coastline,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): cultural resources

Courtney Strain (BOEM): in the scientific research and surveys component of the other uses resource.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Additionally, you may notice some plus signs next to resources where potential beneficial impacts are expected. This is mostly due to the artificial reef effect or additional jobs.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Next slide, please.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): BOEM has developed a working list of AMMM measures that were analyzed under Alternative C and the Programmatic EIS.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): The development of AMMM measures has been a multi-level approach with input gathered through several resources, including existing wind energy development COPs and COP EISs,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): cooperating agencies,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): external and internal input, as well as a focused working group convened by BOEM.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): The current AMMM measures may be modified or added to as the PEIS progresses. The AMMMs in this Programmatic EIS will only be applicable to the 6 New York Bight lease areas.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): The site specific NEPA analyses and consultations for each proposed wind energy project in the New York Bight lease areas

Courtney Strain (BOEM): will confirm if the programmatic AMMMs or AMMM measures, excuse me, are applicable and should be included as conditions of approval.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Next slide, please.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): In the interest of time. I won't go through each AMMM measure on this call, on the screen is a summary of some of the proposed AMMM measures. You can see AMMM measures including, monitoring standards and requirements,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): mitigation of radar system interference, gear handling procedures and monitoring, pile driving, vessel and cable requirements and restrictions,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): as well as monitoring and mitigation for listed species.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Many of the AMMM measures have been included in previous COP EIS's, in more recently COP terms and conditions, and are included here in an effort to streamline their analysis and application for the 6 New York Bight lease areas.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Next slide, please.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): And here's an example of how you will see an AMMM presented in the document. The AMMM measures are analyzed under Alternative C and have been presented as a summary for the reader.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): However, the full AMMM measure language appears in Appendix G.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): You may note that each AMMM measure includes, includes a measure ID, which is a series of letters and numbers that are used to identify which resource or resources it applies to.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): So here's the language for MMST-6, which is aimed to reduce impacts to marine mammals and sea turtles. As you can see, the language in Alternative C briefly describe the measure, while Appendix G includes all of the detail.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): As a reminder, the proposed action analyzes how the AMMM measures may reduce potential impacts to resources and BOEM encourages the public to review and provide comments on the AMMM measures.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Next slide, please.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): So what's next? Once the comment period closes, BOEM will assess all comments received, and make any necessary changes in response to comments or new information in preparation of the final Programmatic EIS.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): The response to comments will also be available as an appendix to the final Programmatic EIS.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Tentatively, BOEM expects to publish a final Programmatic EIS in October of 2024, and issue a record of decision in December of 2024.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Next slide, please.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): And just as a reminder, the public comment period is open until February 26th and you can provide a comment by going to [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) and searching for docket number BOEM-

Courtney Strain (BOEM): 2024-0001.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Next slide. Please

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Thank you again for attending this public meeting for the New York Bight Draft Programmatic EIS. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to reach out to Megan and I using the contact information provided on the screen.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): And I will now pass it back over to Briana. Thanks.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Wonderful! Thank you, Courtney. Thank you, Megan, as well. Okay. So now we'll move on to the public comment portion of our agenda.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: But before we do, I just like to take this moment to remind everybody, if you would like to submit a question today for the BOEM subject matter experts to review and answer later in the meeting,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: please go ahead and submit your questions now through the Q&A pod at the bottom of your screen.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: We'll accept comments or any questions for just a couple of more moments, as I review the instructions for the public comment

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: portion of the meeting, and then we'll cut off and won't be receiving any further questions when we hear from members of the public who are sharing their comments.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, so let's see, we'll now move to the public comment portion of the agenda, at this time BOEM would like to hear your comments on the draft Programmatic EIS for the New York Bight lease areas.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: We have many BOEM staff on the call today who are listening in here to hear your thoughts.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: As a kind reminder, please be mindful of our guides for an effective meeting today, and they're here on your screen. We ask that you honor the agenda, participate actively and respectfully.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And we, we just want to share here that we really appreciate your participation during this meeting. I know BOEM staff really do. And at the same time we also reserve the right to mute individuals who do not participate respectfully, or use colorful, threatening, or other inappropriate language during the meeting today.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: When you speak, when it's your turn to speak, please provide your name and affiliation. Speak clearly into your microphone.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Please try to focus your comments and speak concisely as much as possible and speak within the allotted time. I see right now that we have 22 folks raising their hand, and so I believe we will be able to get through everybody. I'm seeing the number go up.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: well, if folks can continue to raise your hand if you'd like to be added to the queue, please do so now, so we can get a final count and see how much time we can provide for each of you to provide your comments.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: In the chance, and it doesn't seem likely at the moment that we're not able to get to everybody's comments tonight. Please, please know that there, this is not your only chance. There's lots of other ways to provide comments.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And those include the ones we've reviewed already. But just to reiterate, there's another virtual meeting on February 13th, where you can speak your comment just like you can at this one. You can send in your written comments by mail. You can go to [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) and submit a written comment there,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: or submit written comments of whatever in-person open house meetings next week.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: We'll put another link to the chat, in the chat, about how to get more information about that.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: So again, please raise your hand using the raise hand icon at the bottom of your screen. If you'd like to be added to the cue today.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: For those of us joining by phone, you can press Star 9 to raise your hand, and that will add you to the queue.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: I will be minding the queue, and indicating whose turn it is to speak.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And who's up next.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And when it is your turn to speak, you'll be given permission to unmute yourselves with a pop-up screen, you go ahead and click, unmute. You'll be able to unmute yourself. At that time, please share your name and affiliation, and then share your comment.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: A clock will be provided on the screen, so you know how much time you have remaining to speak. To ensure as many participants as possible have the opportunity to speak we are going to allow today, and I'm looking at the attendee list, we have 30 folks raising their hand. We're going to go ahead and allow 3 minutes per person to speak today.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: As time elapses, I will, during your comment, I will generally remind you to wrap up your comment.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: If you go over a few seconds of the allotted time, I will at that moment thank you for your comment and mute your microphone and move on to the next speaker.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: This is essential just to ensure that as many people as possible can have an opportunity to comment tonight.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: If you have not yet finished in the 3 minute mark, you may still submit additional comments in the Federal Register, just so you're aware the written comment opportunity still available to you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: In addition, if you'd like to submit your comment in Spanish today, you may do so. For comment spoken in Spanish, we have a Spanish interpreter with us

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: today, and simultaneous interpretation into English can be heard by participants in the English channel. If you click on the interpretation icon at the bottom of your screen.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, I would like to now invite interested participants, members of the public to provide oral public comment.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: BOEM will now collect the comments on the New York Bight Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. And first up,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: we have, and I apologize if I mispronounce individuals names.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Betsy Longendorfer. Betsy, you may go ahead and unmute yourself. Share your name and affiliation and share your comment.

Betsy Longendorfer: Okay. all right. There's the unmute. Okay. No.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Yes, we can hear you. Okay.

Betsy Longendorfer: Thank you very much for, for inviting me to speak. My name is Betsy Longendorfer. I live in North Vale, New Jersey. I'm just an individual who's interested.

Betsy Longendorfer: One of the issues here is what the environmental impact of wind energy harvesting in the New York Bight will be. But I think the most important question is, what will be the environmental impact if we don't build this?

Betsy Longendorfer: We're already seeing flooding, abnormal rain, intense heat. We haven't even seen the more disastrous effects that could come, like sea level rise, migration of fish to other habitats, crop failures, or

Betsy Longendorfer: almost unimaginable things. But unless we stop dumping waste into our atmosphere at historic levels, they are coming.

Betsy Longendorfer: Here in our area, we don't have hydropower or geothermal power.

Betsy Longendorfer: We pretty much only have wind and solar as renewable energy sources. We must contribute our share

Betsy Longendorfer: in this area to solving our nation's part of the climate crisis.

Betsy Longendorfer: We can even, we could even stop paying other states for fossil fuels and start to become energy independent ourselves.

Betsy Longendorfer: The good news is that we can build a decent future. The changes that need to be made will result in better health for us all, and new businesses and jobs to build the infrastructure we need. It's a shame that we have to move so quickly. But the time is now, don't let our children and grandchildren down. Let's leave them a functioning world. Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Betsy.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, next up we have Brian Russo. And then after that we have Donna Criscuolo. I'm sorry if I mispronounce that. Okay, Brian, please go ahead and unmute yourself and provide your name and affiliation and share your comment.

Brian Russo: Hi! My name is Brian Russo, I'm a member of Climate Reality Project, Sierra Club, Food and Water Watch New Jersey. I've worked in insurance and in the transportation field which calls me to become a climate activist. When I realized that I was most likely just like all of you, going to die from climate change or climate change related events.

Brian Russo: It's very rare that I get to speak out,

Brian Russo: to support a project. There's a lot of misinformation and greenwashing out there, and a lot of things that

Brian Russo: makes it look as if our government,

Brian Russo: and industries are looking to take advantage and exploit the crisis we face.

Brian Russo: So I'm in support of this project. There's a lot of opposition.

Brian Russo: And so I'm not only in support of this project, I'm asking you guys to make sure that you move forward as powerfully,

Brian Russo: as transparently and as quickly as you possibly can. There's going to be a lot of opposition and misinformation, there's going to be a lot of people spreading a lot of lies. We need to call out

Brian Russo: those lies. We need to spread the truth. We need to be transparent. We need to move as quickly as possible, so we could harness the free power of renewable energy, to stop spending money on false solutions, to stop listening to the politicians in the news that is giving us misinformation so that they could continue to exploit us and risking, you know.

Brian Russo: Killing billions of people and risking the future of our civilization as we know it.

Brian Russo: So I thank you for this opportunity to speak. I thank you for investing in renewable energy. And again, I'm asking that you do it swiftly and make sure that you know, we're really putting the,

Brian Russo: you know, putting the, the future of our children in the priority, making sure that we're not doing things like giving the power back to a couple of people that are going to continue to exploit us. We need to do this justly and do it right. Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you very much, Brian.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay. Up next we have, Donna Criscuolo. And then, Sharonda. Donna, please go ahead.

Donna Criscuolo: Hello! Thank you for giving me this opportunity. My name is Donna Criscuolo. I am a New Bedford, Massachusetts resident. We are a coastal community, and are proud to be one of the largest fishing ports in the country. So we understand the impacts of climate change and the increasing temperatures of our oceans, and the effect that it will have on our economy. As well as the health and wellbeing of our community.

Donna Criscuolo: I work for, I'm the executive director of Leadership South Coast. We empower leaders to strengthen and improve the region, and I'm proud to say that we are a strategic partner with Vineyard Wind.

Donna Criscuolo: And one of the ways in which we partner is that we run a community leader development program, and they send employees through that every year with the intention of meeting people in a cross-sector environment that they wouldn't normally come across, to help to educate and inform people about their work and to integrate into the community and understand the needs of our community.

Donna Criscuolo: They've also embraced another program that we run, which is a college pipeline, from college to career. They're very interested in ensuring that our emerging professionals understand a career pathing with them. And to ensure that those really well-paying jobs that have potential, are given to people of community and within the community.

Donna Criscuolo: Other ways in which I feel Vineyard Wind has been a great community partner, is that they have a very strong education and training and workforce commitments. They are a great community partner. They want to integrate into the community and support the community. They're not just here to put up some windmills and go away. They're actually wanting to make sure that our community rises with this

Donna Criscuolo: economy, with renewables. They want to ensure that our youth are informed, they demystify what's going on. They are really good at handling the misinformation that is out there. They are a strong community partner. They not only work with us, but other community organizations. It's not a transactional relationship. It is a commitment to improving the region, and to ensuring that residents of the region

Donna Criscuolo: are employed with them, and ensuring or and in their supply chain, to ensure that those jobs go to the residence, and not from people that they have to import in. So thank you for the opportunity to speak on their behalf. As I said it, it would be a great opportunity for any community to welcome them in.

Donna Criscuolo: And we're really proud to have been one of the first places for offshore wind.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you so much, Donna.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Alright, up next we have Sharonda, and then we have Peter Furcht. So, Sharonda, you can go ahead and provide your comment.

Sharonda Y: Good evening, everyone. My name is Sheranda Allen.

Sharonda Y: I am a standing committee member for NJ PEEC, which is New Jersey Progressive, Equitable Energy Coalition. I'm also the chapter co-chair for the greater New Jersey Gateway Climate Reality Project, the EJ

Sharonda Y: Co-Chair for Tri-County Sustainability, and the founder and executive Director of Operation Growth, and I want to offer my support of offshore wind and its development. But I also want to emphasize the efficacy of accountability for the ensuring of equity for

Sharonda Y: front line, overburdened communities who normally bear more of a brunt of pollution than other communities here in New Jersey and other places.

Sharonda Y: And I would like for offshore wind to ensure that these green jobs

Sharonda Y: will

Sharonda Y: help to support these urban front line communities, and that

Sharonda Y: some of the subsidies could be definitely set aside and allotted to reduce the energy cost for low

Sharonda Y: and moderate-income individuals in New Jersey, and also New York, since this seems like a pretty much joint geographic project. And I would like for the clean energy folks to ensure that things are clean

Sharonda Y: and not just in in, in word, but in full action, and also to consider the ecological impact to all the marine life, and also the avian life, to ensure that their food sources will not be disrupted with the building of the pylons, you know, on our continental shelf of our East Coast.

Sharonda Y: and I'm hoping that we would

Sharonda Y: have some sort of campaign where we would get other young people who are still in elementary and high school to participate in these offshore wind jobs.

Sharonda Y: And to ensure that if they are going to be, quote unquote, unionized, that the unions will not be historically,

Sharonda Y: racially inequitable, but to include

Sharonda Y: especially more members of these front-line communities to combat the systemic racism that has been put in place.

Sharonda Y: So I thank you all for listening. And I hope that this project will be super successful. Thank you so much.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you so much, Sharonda. Okay, up next we have Peter Furcht and then we'll have Kathleen Harper.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: So, Peter, go ahead and unmute yourself and provide your comment.

Peter Furcht: Thank you. I am Peter Furcht. I am a resident of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and the owner of a vacation home in the beach town of Ocean Grove, New Jersey.

Peter Furcht: I represent myself, I am testifying today as a citizen deeply concerned with the health of the global environment.

Peter Furcht: With the extent to which human activities are disrupting the climate and with the way the fossil fuel, industrial complex continues to exploit the environment.

Peter Furcht: In 1896 the first significant scientific paper

Peter Furcht: and the potential for man-made climate disruption was published, 1896.

Peter Furcht: Since the 1970s the majority of the scientific community has agreed that unchecked burning of fossil fuels will lead to

Peter Furcht: major climate disruption. Today climate science is well understood, yet today we have a major political party denying climate disruption.

Peter Furcht: And we have major billion-dollar corporations fighting the science with fake studies, misleading publications, and outright lies on the effort to protect the profits.

Peter Furcht: There is no perfect answer for generating power.

Peter Furcht: Every source has some disadvantages. It's all ugly. There isn't a wind farm, solar farm, gas plant, coal mine, coal burning power plant, oil rig or oil refinery that anybody wants in their backyard.

Peter Furcht: But we need power. Wind turbines, especially far offshore, where either you can't see them at all, or they're just little whirligig, slowly spinning,

Peter Furcht: offer probably the least disadvantages.

Peter Furcht: Yes, they disturb, but they don't kill whales and other marine wildlife during the initial construction stages. And yes, after that they will kill a few birds, but that's the worst of it.

Peter Furcht: They really aren't. There really aren't any other significant risks. The power they produce generates no climate altering gases or pollution ever for their life.

Peter Furcht: So what are we going to do if we don't build these wind farms, put an oil rig out there or a gas rig?

Peter Furcht: We know that the risks that all of that entails.

Peter Furcht: But even if you want to argue that building gas rigs,

Peter Furcht: or oil rigs rather than wind farms off of New York and New Jersey

Peter Furcht: are less damaging. You're still missing the point. We have to move away from burning fossil fuels. My property in Ocean Grove is now an ocean front.

Peter Furcht: If we don't do something soon it will be, and then it will be. Then it will be in the ocean. I want to be able to pass my vacation home down to my children for their children to enjoy.

Peter Furcht: I'll take a few whirligigs spinning on the horizon over the alternative, and strongly support the continued study and eventual build out of the wind farms in the New York Bight.

Peter Furcht: Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you so much, Peter.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, up next we have Kathleen Harper, and then we have Zack Boyer. So, Kathleen, you can go ahead and unmute yourself and provide your comment.

Kathleen Harper: Hello! The first thing I want to say is that I went to Ocean City High School, Ocean City, New Jersey.

Kathleen Harper: 40 years ago. We were told that by now Ocean City would not be there, that we would not have Venice anymore, because it would all be covered up with water. Today, 40 days later, we're still here, and Ocean City still has an island. My other point of view is, why

Kathleen Harper: does BOEM need to give, take charts or provide take charts to these wind companies? New York wind companies, allowing them to kill so many marine life.

Kathleen Harper: In the beginning, NOAA said wind development, sonar testing or the wind turbines would not affect the whales. Now they come out and say, oh, yes, they will affect the whales, they will harm the whales or harass the whales, but they will not kill the whales. But if you talk to any marine biologists, they will tell you a harmed whale,

Kathleen Harper: or harassed whale is a dead whale. These whales that you want to show that are struck by something, are struck by boats and other marine things because they are fleeing for their lives from the noise that the wind farms are creating. Let's start telling the America the truth about what wind turbines will do to our ocean floor and our fishing industry.

Kathleen Harper: Our fishing industry is about to lose its livelihood, because what you will do to the ocean floor will destroy the ability of our fishermen and women to fish. This not only affects the men out in the water, but affects the dock workers, it affects the packing plants, it affects the transport people, affects the fish markets.

Kathleen Harper: Who wants fish that's made, that comes from a foreign country. We need our fishing industry, and you need to stop this farce and tell the truth. Wind turbines will not have any effect on climate change.

Kathleen Harper: So please start telling America the truth. Stop giving, take charts. You gave take charts out in out, in, out in the inland and said they could kill so many birds, and they're far surpassing the amount of birds that they were supposed to kill. And now these wind farms are being fined for it. Same thing is going to happen to our whales. 68 dead whales, is on your hands.

Kathleen Harper: Thank you for allowing me to speak.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Kathleen. Okay, up next we have Zach Boyer, and then we will have Carolyn Rush.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Zach. Okay.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Go ahead and unmute yourself.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, I believe Zach has dropped his hand. So, Carolyn Rush.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: You can go ahead,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: and unmute yourself.

Carolyn Rush: Okay, thank you very much. I assume you can hear me right.

Carolyn Rush: I am Carolyn Rush, and I live in Sea Isle City, New Jersey. I am a private citizen advocating for offshore wind projects. I live right, very close to the bay, and also very close to the ocean. I'm on a barrier island. I have watched the storms get worse every year. I have watched the beach erosion,

Carolyn Rush: get worse and worse. Our government is spending millions of dollars to replenish our beach, and I think that is fiscally irresponsible. They have to bring, dredge

Carolyn Rush: the ocean floor, which probably is disruptive to sea life, to bring sand back to our beaches and build our dunes higher and higher. This is, I believe, caused by climate change. I have seen my flood insurance and homeowners' insurance go up every year.

Carolyn Rush: I've heard that in other areas of the country like Florida and California. Homeowners are having trouble getting affordable insurance for their homes, because of all the natural disasters that have gotten more frequent and more intense over the past years. It is urgent that we do something to curb the effects of climate change.

Carolyn Rush: As a previous person mentioned, there is no perfect solution, but I believe that ocean wind is the best that we have given our location and our geographic makeup on the East Coast here. I strongly support it. I hope that it's successful up in the Bight area, and that the programs that were scheduled to occur off of the coast of Southern New Jersey, get back on track.

Carolyn Rush: I would love to see that happen. I have no concerns at all about my property value, my concern about property value comes in with

Carolyn Rush: the flooding that is happening now. So I'd like to see us do something to address that, so that my property will not only continue to exist, but continue to be

Carolyn Rush: affordable, and I can insure it.

Carolyn Rush: I, too, hope that

Carolyn Rush: the information coming out of Vineyard Winds and out of this

Carolyn Rush: program will help people put their minds at ease, because I think there is so much misinformation out there that, knowing the truth about what actually happens when these wind farms are erected, would help people to raise less opposition. I am strongly in favor of seeing this move forward, and I'm grateful to you for holding this session tonight and giving us all an opportunity to speak. Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Carolyn.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, up next we have Michael Skelly, and then we'll have Ben Dziobek. Michael, you may go ahead and unmute yourself and share your comment.

Michael Skelly: Hi, I'm Michael Skelly. I live in Bordentown City, New Jersey, and our home

Michael Skelly: also had a home in the shore region in Margate, New Jersey for nearly 30 years.

Michael Skelly: I represent the Unitarian Universalist Faith Action of New Jersey and our Environmental Justice Task Force.

Michael Skelly: UU Faith Action represents all the Unitarian Universalist congregations throughout the State of New Jersey.

Michael Skelly: Thank you for the opportunity to speak out in support of the BOEM Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement pertaining to the 6 commercial wind leases in the offshore area of New York and New Jersey.

Michael Skelly: Our faith calls on us,

Michael Skelly: to respect the inherent worth and dignity of every person, and to have respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. And therefore, these wind energy projects and their environmental impact are of direct interest to us.

Michael Skelly: We support BOEM's tiered study, analysis review and public participation process, starting with the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and then conducting further EIS and COP

Michael Skelly: reviews for each of the projects.

Michael Skelly: We expect that this process will lead to an expeditious and orderly development process

Michael Skelly: that is sensitive to environmental justice communities and the web of life.

Michael Skelly: We are looking forward to these wind energy projects,

Michael Skelly: and more because they can help clean our air pollution that harms our health while creating good jobs and protecting humans and nature from the rapidly increasing dangers from climate change.

Michael Skelly: We believe the science that climate change is real, is here, and it's now. This is an existential problem, and we must face and take immediate action to reduce fossil fuel emissions that cause it.

Michael Skelly: The longer we take to significantly cut our fossil fuels, we will not only slip deeper into the climate crisis,

Michael Skelly: the harder it will be to climb out of the hole for the forces of climate

Michael Skelly: that are up against us today. Thank you for your attention.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Michael. Okay, up next we have Ben Dziobek, and then we have Hannah Katz. Ben, you can go ahead and unmute yourself.

Ben Dziobek: Good evening, any media outlets here. You guys have permission to quote me.

Ben Dziobek: My name is Ben Dziobek, I'm the Executive Director of Climate Revolution Action Network, a movement in New Jersey aimed at uplifting youth voices to fight the climate crisis.

Ben Dziobek: Today, I'm here to express my support and Gen. Z's support of offshore wind in New Jersey.

Ben Dziobek: Without projects like these, my generation will not have the opportunity to live their lives in a stable New Jersey. The climate crisis is already bearing down on our state, causing once in a generation flooding storm surges and an insurmountable amount of damage.

Ben Dziobek: We already have lost 2 wind projects in New Jersey, and I implore BOEM and state agencies to do everything they can to choose the right partners, so we can see this project come to fruition.

Ben Dziobek: I am not just saying this for no reason, I grew up and live at the shore. I understand the devastation we are facing here. The youth of the state, our children and our grandchildren deserve better.

Ben Dziobek: I want to finish here today by speaking directly to opponents of offshore wind.

Ben Dziobek: The ball is in your court now. It's time to decide if you will continue to let fossil fuel companies play you like a puppet or stand up for this state.

Ben Dziobek: Stand up for future generations, that dream of living at the shore, stand up for local fishermen and stand up for workers who want to be employed in the green economy and stand up for this beautiful place we call home. Let's turn our energy challenges into economic development opportunities.

Ben Dziobek: Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Ben.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, up next, we have Hana Katz. And then we have Cindy, Zipf.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Hana, you can go ahead and unmute yourself.

Hana Katz: Hi, everyone! Thank you so much for allowing me to speak.

Hana Katz: My name's Hanna Katz, and I am the Policy Associate at the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions. We are a nonprofit organization that oversees over 300 environmental commissions across the state and provides support, training and resources to environmental commissioners, green teams and other municipal officials, and our goal is to protect and restore natural resources and create healthy communities.

Hana Katz: Of course, we know the climate crisis is a growing threat for New Jersey residents, businesses, and the environment.

Hana Katz: And as we work hard to become more resilient to more frequent and intense flooding and more extreme heat. ANJEC works to support the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions as much and as fast as possible, and ending reliance on fossil fuels and transitioning to clean renewable energy is critical, as been said, for our future generations and for ourselves, and also for the future of our country and planet.

Hana Katz: Therefore, ANJEC is in support of the development of responsible offshore wind energy to meet the Garden State's energy needs.

Hana Katz: And as a resident I'd like to add that I think they would look really cool on the shore.

Hana Katz: And so do a lot of other people. And so we urge BOEM to identify responsible areas for offshore wind and open those lease areas to facilitate the transition to clean energy.

Hana Katz: Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you so much, Hana.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, and then we have Cindy Zipf, and then we have Steven Yafet. Cindy, go ahead and unmute yourself and share your comment.

Cindy Zipf: Thank you. Good evening. My name is Cindy Zipf. I'm Executive Director of Clean Ocean Action. Climate change is real and accelerating due to the wasteful, wantful, wanton human actions, releasing greenhouse gas emissions. Immediate actions are needed, and chief among them is reducing energy use and waste.

Cindy Zipf: Instead, the government has set its sights primarily on fast tracking, massive ocean industrialization, transforming the ocean into a giant offshore power plant. Despite the fact that the industry is in economic and technological turmoil.

Cindy Zipf: Clean Ocean Action is not opposed to the idea of offshore wind. COA does oppose this reckless scope, scale, speed and magnitude currently underway due to the lack of robust, independent science, transparency, good governance, and due diligence.

Cindy Zipf: Clean Ocean Action's professional staff will be speaking tonight in more detail on those issues. But while the focus of this meeting is on the large region off of Southern Jersey. It is just a part of a much larger industrialization. The plan includes nearly 8 million acres. That's more than 6 times the size of the Grand Canyon National Park, just in the northeast.

Cindy Zipf: 25 wind projects that will change the ecosystem from a wide-open ocean to a concrete jungle. Thousands of turbines as tall as a Chrysler Building, which will require the mining and manufacturing of millions of tons of industrial waste,

Cindy Zipf: of industrial materials, excuse me. At the same time there are, are at least 50 power transfer stations that will discharge billions of gallons of contaminated, superheated wastewater. And of course there's the thousands, tens of thousands of miles of cables emitting electromagnetic fields, including high voltage cables known to affect marine life.

Cindy Zipf: It is a never before seen scale of industrialization of an ecosystem which would never be allowed on land. To say the least, it is ironic, a plan, ironic plan to reduce climate change, since a healthy ocean is the planet's most efficient and free buffer against climate change.

Cindy Zipf: Some say that climate change is greatest threat to marine life. That may be true, but this massive industrialization of offshore wind will not help and will only increase grave risk and harm. So we'll be doing all this. And yet BOEM has stated that these projects in the northeast will not reduce climate change

Cindy Zipf: by themselves.

Cindy Zipf: The fact is, the most important call to action is to reduce climate change, is to protect the number one buffer of the ocean and reduce energy demand.

Cindy Zipf: In closing, just like to emphasize. When has industrialization ever resulted in environmental improvement.

Cindy Zipf: Thank you. And I will just add, since I have a few seconds, that it's very difficult. I know you want public and public comment, but it's very difficult when the amount of time is fluctuates so much, and we don't really have and pro, we don't have prior notice, so it's really difficult to frame our comments.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you for that feedback, Cindy.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, up next we'll have Steven Yafet, and then I believe we have Zack Boyer back, so we'll go to Zack Boyer next after, after Steven. So, Steven, go ahead and unmute yourself and share your comment.

Steven Yafet: Thank you so much.

Steven Yafet: I have any.

Steven Yafet: I would say that. Yes, I also favor the, the more aggressive plan that you outline. Especially it does answer the complaint of destruction of marine habitat, because it will.

Steven Yafet: as you, as you identify it, should provide reef and

Steven Yafet: and structure for new habitats, as it were. So. Yes, it'll be different, but

Steven Yafet: it's not. It's not necessarily bad. So I also wish to draw your attention. Everybody's attention to the article, on the Tar Sands

Steven Yafet: emissions issue. That was last week in

Steven Yafet: in science. This was carried out in all major media, except perhaps not Fox.

Steven Yafet: And it it's a bombshell that,

Steven Yafet: the report is says that.

Steven Yafet: Yeah, we know this is dirty oil that's coming out of the Tar Sands and coming through the Keystone Pipeline. But it's, in fact, 20 to 64 times dirtier,

Steven Yafet: than dirty, in terms of PM-25 production,

Steven Yafet: in terms of greenhouse gas,

Steven Yafet: across the board. The, the Natives have been complaining for years about their health condition. It is indeed,

Steven Yafet: a cancer alley.

Steven Yafet: Just like the

Steven Yafet: New Orleans is. It's the equivalent for Canada.

Steven Yafet: The problem is

Steven Yafet: that

Steven Yafet: the amount of money that's in that

Steven Yafet: reserve, apparently 2 trillion dollars.

Steven Yafet: And I don't know what Justin Trudeau has announced. But anyway, it that's, that's the problem.

Steven Yafet: But it just

Steven Yafet: brings our attention to the fact that we're going to have bombshell reports like this. And

Steven Yafet: the resolution on the greenhouse gas front

Steven Yafet: is not, is not all in the right direction. So we have a global responsibility as well as our local responsibility, shoreline responsibility. And we should

Steven Yafet: take that very seriously. This is not just a local or national issue.

Steven Yafet: And other countries, Germany.

Steven Yafet: Scandinavia countries, have taken

Steven Yafet: a huge responsibility to try to help.

Steven Yafet: So everybody who can needs to. And that's

Steven Yafet: that's really what I have to say. So thank you. I'm sorry. Run, run out of time here.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you so much.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, next we'll go to Zach Boyer, and then we'll go to Rose. Zach you can go ahead and unmute yourself and share your comment.

Zach Boyer: Hi, good evening everyone, my name's Zach Boyer, and I live in New Bedford, Massachusetts, where we currently have an offshore wind project well underway.

Zach Boyer: I work at a local elderly services agencies, their Planning Director, and have also ran for a local elected office as a proponent of wind, wind energy. Tonight, though, I'm commenting with my dad hat on as a 30-year-old new parent of my 10 month old son Leon.

Zach Boyer: Thinking of the world that we wanted to bring our son into was a large consideration in family planning. And now is a proud dad, I'm going to support my son's future by supporting renewable energy projects like offshore wind to avoid climate catastrophe,

Zach Boyer: because, without embracing renewable energy, there won't be a fishing industry, there won't be any whales or humans if our ocean continues to undergo acidification, and have continuous oil spills. I think that we should be leading the world as Americans in renewable energy and offshore wind. But,

Zach Boyer: I'm not too sure if it's a, you know, paperwork, bureaucracy, permitting. But we need a faster and more streamlined process to get renewable energy so we can protect our community children, elders, and hopefully, the world.

Zach Boyer: Not only does renewable energy help protect my son's future, but it helps to create well-paying careers and revitalizes postindustrial communities like New Bedford, which is an environmental justice and coastal community as well.

Zach Boyer: We need more offshore wind and renewable energy sources now before it's too late. So thank you for your time.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Zach. Okay, next up we have Rose, and then we have Toni Groet. Rose, you can go ahead and unmute yourself and share your comment.

Rose: I'm Rose Willis. I'm a commercial fisher.

Rose: Okay, BOEM has already admitted in their documents that these turbines will have no effect on climate change. According to Page 76, BOEM's Vineyard Wind 1 FEIS Volume 2. And ultimately, because of the wind wake effect extending for up to 60 miles past the turbine zone, it will decrease the upwelling and downwelling of the ocean, and it'll increase sea surface temperature. It is unclear how many of these sites will use

Rose: once through cooling stations like those mentioned in sunrise wind documents, these cooling stations,

Rose: taking cool ocean water to dissipate heat produced through the AC to DC conversion of electricity. Each offshore cooling station will discharge up to 8,100,000 gallons of sea water with chlorine residuals and the temperature per BOEM's document is between 86 to 90°F. What happens to all the fish, larvae, phytoplankton, zoo plankton, necessary microorganisms that end up in this wash cycle?

Rose: Why would we destroy an entire ecosystem under the guise of saving the environment by green washed oil companies. When BOEM's documents point to dead zones, 10 plus years of mass constructions. Documents say they will kill fish and marine life and potentially kill endangered, protected marine mammals. They're altering the bottom of it, benthic habitat, including an ocean environment with unnatural garbage that can't be recycled.

Rose: 20-year shelf life with no decommissioning plan. 0 pilot project. We have one chance with our ocean. Why would we risk that? We are going to destroy the economy of our coastal communities. People come to the shore for seafood and boating, both will be eliminated. Say goodbye to seafood. You want to talk about job creation. What about the generational jobs you're taking? Thousands of commercial fishermen will lose everything. The jobs that stem from this industry will be lost

Rose: further draining the economies of our coastal communities. We're talking billions in GDP and billions in labor. Party boats will be a thing of the past. No fish for recreational fishermen, restaurants. The list goes on and on. Cumulative impacts equals cumulative assumptions. The negligible effects on the most productive lucrative commercial fishing grounds are extremely concerning not only within these lease sites.

Rose: An area on the map shaded in green, a proposed fairway, the block marked Barnegat to Narragansett Fairway and separation area above and the block east of that fairway marked Hudson Canyon to Ambrose precautionary area. This area is an extremely lucrative fishing area for both the commercial and recreational fishermen. No cable substations and or cooling stations should be

Rose: placed in this area, known as the Mud Hole. No cables, substations, and or cooling stations should be placed near Monster's Ledge. This area has been heavily surveyed by Attentive Energy and Blue Point Wind. The cumulative impacts of these lease sites will decimate a healthy, sustainable resource and industry. Irresponsible cable placement will be catastrophic, and the economy of our coastal communities will feel the brunt of it.

Rose: Food security will be a major concern. According to 3.5.7-33 PES New York Bight, glauconitic sands may be present in New York Bight lease areas depending on the classification of the glauconitic sands present, there could be challenges associated with potential offshore wind development in these areas. Specifically.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: If you could wrap up your comment. Just a couple more moments, please.

Rose: Specifically, some glauconitic sands are difficult or even impossible to drill through and cause high friction and increase noise during pile driving. Developers discovered glauconitic sands during construction installation, noise levels will likely increase as they determine if the glauconitic is possible. We need to know if glauconitic exists before any construction begins. Developers need to be required to disclose this prior to any IHAs being issued, considering sound may be much louder, leading to higher mortality.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you so much, Rose, for your comment. Thank you. Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, next up we have Toni, and then we have Licada.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: So, Tony go ahead and unmute yourself and provide your comment.

Toni Groet: Hello! Can you hear me?

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Yes, go ahead.

Toni Groet: Hello! My name is Tony Groet. I obtained my Master's in Marine Science, and I'm now an Atlantic County resident and the South Jersey Coordinator for Clean Ocean Action. Today I will raise some concerns COA has about the PEIS and the cumulative impacts to our ocean and its inhabitants.

Toni Groet: The scale, scope and speed of these offshore wind projects has always been a concern, but with this PEIS it seems the intent is to move even faster.

Toni Groet: There are tradeoffs between speed and quality. It seems we are leading towards fast science not necessarily good science. Science takes time, and we should be conducting thorough baseline research, taking time to analyze data and planning for adequate mitigation efforts prior to proceeding with projects like those planned in the EIS or PEIS.

Toni Groet: For example, in this document, BOEM lists the potential for negligible to major impacts to whales. That is the full possible range of impact. Confirming the impact to marine mammals is not fully known. Even assuming a moderate cumulative impact will cause more harm than the species can handle. So how do you gauge and plan monitoring mitigation efforts when you don't know what to expect?

Toni Groet: As a former marine mammal stranding technician. I understand the many complexities that go into these studies in conducting the crowsyst. Over the past 13 months, 99 cetaceans, including 38 whales and 61 dolphins and porpoise have died just in the New York New Jersey Bight that we know of.

Toni Groet: That does not include the countless others outside the Bight or the ones we could not locate records for, or that never washed ashore.

Toni Groet: Agencies that claim that there is no evidence linking the deaths to offshore wind have not provided any scientific support. The lack of due diligence in investigating the cetacean deaths and transparency is alarming, to say the least.

Toni Groet: COA is concerned that these grim headlines can be more common without proper investigations into how the construction and operation of these concrete and steel jungles in the ocean will affect marine habitats and behavioral responses, such as feeding, mating, and migration patterns.

Toni Groet: We owe it to the many vulnerable and endangered species of marine mammals, sea turtles and fish to understand the inevitable repercussions of building an obstacle course in their home. The ocean is without boundaries,

Toni Groet: and the increased noise, vessel traffic, and potential, chemical and electromagnetic field exposure that come with offshore wind infrastructure need to be investigated cumulatively to understand the total impact to a species.

Toni Groet: Further segmenting and fast tracking these projects, as the PEIS does, will not help to create sustainable and safe approaches to reducing climate change.

Toni Groet: Thank you for allowing me to speak today.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Tony.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, up next we have Annie Licata, and then we'll have Carl Van Warmerdam. Annie, you can go ahead and unmute yourself and provide your comment.

ANNIE LICATA: My name is Annie, and I was born and raised on the Jersey shore. I've spent my whole life on the waters off New Jersey and the south shore of Long Island, this is my home. I'm a writer. I'm an artist, and my creative, spiritual, personal and professional life is deeply connected to the beauty and the vitality of the natural world and asking a writer to do this in 3 min is its own special cruelty. On a little screen where I can't see anybody's faces in a vacuum where I can't honor anybody's sadness or passion. This is not due diligence. I am here today to help protect what nourishes me. I am also here to represent a body of silent stakeholders, entities,

ANNIE LICATA: entities who have never and will never read a draft programmatic environmental impact statement. They have no computers, and they have no mailboxes. I am here representing the ocean in her entirety. The whales, the sharks, the dolphins, seals, fish, turtles, birds, crabs, phytoplankton, millions of other underrepresented stakeholders who live in the 488,000 acres of land

ANNIE LICATA: being discussed by our species here tonight. I am concerned with the future of all beings, not just the future of humans. The only thing we can agree on with 100% certainty is that we do not know. We have no idea how animals in the ocean really live and communicate. We do not understand

their intelligence or the intelligence of the ocean as a living body. It is the mystery and the magic of our world.

ANNIE LICATA: We simply do not know the short-term or long-term effects that offshore wind will have on these animal and plant communities. If someone or some agency says they know for certain, they're selling something certainly. Our justified panic to address global warming has made us susceptible to seductive technological promises. The question is not, how can we continue to harvest industrial quantities of energy

ANNIE LICATA: without causing harm? The question is, what can we do to help the earth repair from the damage we've caused? Have we considered the idea that industrial technology is not a part of that repair.

ANNIE LICATA: I personally added up the IHAs. There are over 1 million takes on marine mammals for offshore wind, dating back to 2014. Why is anyone saying that offshore wind doesn't cause harm to whales when we have legal documentation of offshore wind corporations requesting to cause harm to whales? What is this delusion? Is there some sort of miraculous plan to build offshore whale without vessels and pile driving? Are offshore, is offshore wind

ANNIE LICATA: somehow different than the other vessels that are killing

ANNIE LICATA: North Atlantic right whales? We must stop doing the things that kill us and that kill everything that we love. I leave you with no answers, only more questions, as any good writer does, since when have we, as Americans, blindly trusted the government to do the right thing with our environment. When, as the American government ever prioritized the wellbeing of the natural world over money and power? How trusting are we? How can any of us be so sure?

ANNIE LICATA: What if offshore wind is being politicized too much? Why is this a Republican versus Democratic issue? What do we really know, and what are your assumptions? Who are we? What does your gut tell you? I'll end with a quote from Mayor Berliner, a Polish Jew, who died resisting his Nazi captors at Treblinka, "When the oppressors give me 2 choices, I always take the third."

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you for your comment, Annie. Okay, next we'll go to Carl Van Warmerdam, then go to Margaret Ortiz.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Carl, you can go ahead and unmute yourself and share your comment.

Carl Van Warmerdam: Hi, I am Van Warmerdam. I'm with the Deep Sea Defenders. We're trying to ban deep sea mining,

Carl Van Warmerdam: and this correlates directly with

Carl Van Warmerdam: the production of wind turbines.

Carl Van Warmerdam: People who believe that offshore wind turbines can help solve the climate change, are misinformed because the facts are that they will not.

Carl Van Warmerdam: The truth based on facts will always trump belief.

Carl Van Warmerdam: I'm not a climate denier, but I do not do. But you don't have to be a climate denier to know that these things are bad and are doomed to failure. And you also don't have to be linked to the fossil fuel industry. The truth be told, most of these rebuildable extractive energy companies

Carl Van Warmerdam: have ties to the fossil fuel companies. The devil's in the details. In reality,

Carl Van Warmerdam: what is really going on, a boondoggle, that you won't hear in mainstream corporate media because they only give disinformation is this,

Carl Van Warmerdam: that after years of rebuildable energy, solar and wind infrastructure, the world used more fossil fuels in 2023 than it did in 2022 and the year before that, and the year before that.

Carl Van Warmerdam: The fact, in fact, we're using more fossil fuels than ever before.

Carl Van Warmerdam: We, we

Carl Van Warmerdam: are also using more, using twice as much

Carl Van Warmerdam: emissions. And so, in the last 50 years, emissions went from 17 billion metric tons of CO2 to 37, 20 billion metric tons. Why?

Carl Van Warmerdam: Because these energy intense technologies require massive amounts of fossil fuels to produce. And those emissions are added onto whatever is already being used, not subtracting.

Carl Van Warmerdam: Thus spewing more planet heating carbon dioxide into the atmosphere at a time when greenhouse gas emissions worldwide must be, must nose dive to stop the extreme weather

Carl Van Warmerdam: from growing more unpredictable and violent.

Carl Van Warmerdam: The only reason CO2 emissions may drop in countries installing rebuildable extractive energy and electric vehicles is because they outsourced the mining and manufacturing of these machines to other countries,

Carl Van Warmerdam: thus increasing CO2 emissions in those countries.

Carl Van Warmerdam: If this continues, the so-called energy transition will, in fact, be an energy correction, complements of Mother Nature. Bigger and more storms, flooding fire, drought, and biodiversity collapse.

Carl Van Warmerdam: There are no more natural disasters. These more powerful weather events are man-made, rebuildable extractive energy capturing devices are not clean except through green washing, and are only making predict our predicament worse.

Carl Van Warmerdam: In fact, trillions of government subsidies given to this sector only make the rich richer. The Inflation Reduction Act should more appropriately be called the fourth Industrial Revolution Act.

Carl Van Warmerdam: This is government redistribution of wealth from the working class to offshore transnational state sponsored corporations, and the way wealthy finance of class, which are also principally owned by fossil fuel companies.

Carl Van Warmerdam: And ultimately any money that is offered by them as payouts for grants, agreements, promotions, or mitigation will come from the utility rate payer.

Carl Van Warmerdam: This is a scam. This is not financially feasible without trillions in government subsidies. This is what their balance sheet looks like.

Carl Van Warmerdam: But what they do to the environment is even worse.

Carl Van Warmerdam: When wildlife and wind turbines are an uncomfortable mix. Rotating wind turbines can make short work of anything unlucky enough to collide with them. But direct mortality is only a part of the story.

Carl Van Warmerdam: Having so.

Carl Van Warmerdam: I would hope.

Carl Van Warmerdam: That you would select Alternative A, no, no action alternative.

Carl Van Warmerdam: The jobs you, you in your

Carl Van Warmerdam: EIS, you say that jobs will improve. Actually, that's not true. There's,

Carl Van Warmerdam: there's, you will be destroying fishing jobs and no extra jobs will be created. You'll be, you'll be destroying permanent jobs.

Carl Van Warmerdam: Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you for your comment, Carl. Okay, next up we have Margaret Ortiz, and then we have Kari Martin. Margaret, you may go ahead and provide your comment.

Margaret Ortiz: Hi, I'm Margaret Ortiz. I'm Co-Chapter Chair of the New Jersey, Greater New Jersey Gateway Climate Reality Project. I'm a resident of the Jersey shore, and I truly love our beautiful natural world. I want to register my support for the offshore wind.

Margaret Ortiz: Climate change is a real threat to our shorelines through sea level rise, ocean acidification and the threat to our marine life. It's so critical and important for us to invest in renewable energy, so we can mitigate these effects.

Margaret Ortiz: I have seen firsthand,

Margaret Ortiz: the increased storms, the increased floodings, the worsening air and water quality, the animal biodiversity loss, and loss of our shorelines, and so many more effects. So action is truly needed.

Margaret Ortiz: Wind projects also will bring economic benefits to New Jersey, countless new jobs and energy independence. Of course, it's important for us to work safely, ethically and perform cumulative impact assessments and please take the learnings from other Atlantic Shore wind projects to ensure best practices and impacts can be minimized in the process.

Margaret Ortiz: There's no perfect source of energy, but we know what will happen if we continue on this course.

Margaret Ortiz: It is important for us to move responsibly towards renewable future, so we can have a beautiful, wonderful ocean and shoreline for our future generations to enjoy.

Margaret Ortiz: Thank you so much for having this hearing and

Margaret Ortiz: all the work you do. Thanks.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Margaret.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, next up we have Kari Martin, and then we have Erica Bosack. Kari, you can go ahead and unmute yourself and provide your comment.

Kari Martin: Good evening. I'm Kari Martin, I'm a lifelong Jersey shore visit...

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Alright! Why don't we try that again? If you can unmute yourself and we'll restart your comment, apologies.

Kari Martin: Can you hear me now?

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: We can hear you now, please go ahead.

Kari Martin: Kari Martin, I am a lifelong Jersey shore visitor and resident, with a master's and bachelor's degrees in environmental studies and policy. I'm the Advocacy Campaign Manager for Clean Ocean Action or COA, which is a broad based coalition whose mission is to improve and protect the waters off the New York and Jersey coast from pollution and harm. The ocean is our number one priority having led many successful campaigns with bipartisan support over our 40-year history.

Kari Martin: COA works to protect the ocean because it's of its many functions and features that are amazing. We know a healthy ocean is essential to reduce climate change. The ocean absorbs 90% of the heat humans emit and 30% of the carbon dioxide emissions. Adding stress and impacts with industrialization will jeopardize the ocean's essential functions and impact the species within it.

Kari Martin: The ocean off the New York, New Jersey coast is like no other, but that all seems about to change with the addition of large-scale offshore wind. COA is not opposed to the idea of offshore wind, but policies and projects are moving forward at reckless speed

Kari Martin: with state and federal officials on record, publicly describing the current process of offshore wind development as quote, building the plan as we fly it, end quote, and learning, and quote learning as we go, end quote, and quote building the ship while we sail it, end quote. These are unacceptable statements as offshore wind is set to dramatically transform the ocean environment. Policy decisions are outpacing available science.

Kari Martin: This draft PEIS sets the stage for offshore wind development in an unprecedented, enormous area. Nearly half a million acres for 6 massive project areas.

Kari Martin: COA requests an extension of the public comment period of at least 90 days, for the following reasons. One, BOEM provided the public with a mere 45 days to review a 1,400 plus page document with around 100 references, 15 appendices, nearly a hundred 80 tables, nearly 85 figures, and over a hundred 60 acronyms and abbreviations. This is an impossible amount

Kari Martin: of content for any one individual group to thoroughly review in a given time frame. Will take the average person hours and hours to review this document.

Kari Martin: Plus, due to the technical nature of the content, the time to carefully review, understand, evaluate, and verify, requires much longer. Then there's time needed to actually write the comments.

Kari Martin: Two, most individuals will not have the capacity to do the proper review, despite their best efforts, and will rely on interest groups, many of whom are volunteers with full-time jobs to review such a document.

Kari Martin: These groups often have, timeframes for approval and writing, that may exceed those 45 days. Three, COA is aware of public request of BOEM, for the EIS asking for paper copies and additional information about the upcoming public meetings that took longer than necessary. Clean Ocean Action received our paper copy of PEIS in the mail today.

Kari Martin: Four, the public meetings are appreciated, but more time will be needed to verify and incorporate lessons and information from the meetings into testimony and comments. Five, the subject area for the PEIS are areas labelled as the New York Bight, creating significant confusion for New Jerseyans, who are not clear if those, the PEIS applies to them

Kari Martin: and their interest. Six, there are several other obstruct projects and processes in the review process simultaneously, many of which should be considered in the PEIS itself.

Kari Martin: COA will be submitting additional formal comments. I'm just wrapping up. COA will be submitting additional formal comments in writing, but respectfully requests at least a 90-day extension for adequate and fair review. Thank you for your time.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you. Kari.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, up next we have Erica Bosack, and then we have Anthony Taddeo. Erica, please go ahead and unmute yourself and share your comment.

Erika Bosack: Hi! Good evening and thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Erica Bosack, and I'm the Policy Attorney for Clean Ocean Action. I have to disclaim that my comments today are based on Clean Ocean Action's highest priority areas of the PEIS and other issues may arise as we continue to review the document.

Erika Bosack: This perfectly illustrates why Clean Ocean Action submitted our request for a 90-day extension of the comment period on the first day it opened. BOEM has never considered the environmental effects of multiple over offshore wind projects at once in this way, so it's crucial to evaluate every sentence, every appendix, and every reference.

Erika Bosack: The stated purpose and need

Erika Bosack: for this PEIS is to consider the combined impacts of these projects in order to streamline offshore wind development in response to President Biden's executive order calling for a certain amount of offshore wind energy to be to be developed by 2040, it's 11 gigawatts. This presupposes that offshore wind projects must be developed in this area which runs counter to the purpose of the National Environmental, Environmental Policy Act,

Erika Bosack: which is to analyze the effects of projects before deciding to build them. The purpose in this section also incorrectly claims that BOEM can predict the environmental impacts of projects with wide ranges of design elements in a helpful way.

Erika Bosack: Because choosing different foundations, different numbers of turbines or different types of substations, just to name a few examples, will have very different environmental impacts depending on which

Erika Bosack: part of the range a developer chooses. That is likely why the range of impacts for the different factors can be as high as negligible to major.

Erika Bosack: Yet the PEIS would allow BOEM to use, depending on the factor, the same characterization of the affected environment and the same qualitative impacts estimated in the PEIS and the environmental reviews of the individual projects. This is what we mean when we say that speeding up the environmental review process comes at the expense of the quality of the analysis.

Erika Bosack: In the required appendix on incomplete and unavailable information, the PEIS shows there are significant gaps in scientific knowledge of how the offshore wind industry will affect marine wildlife.

Erika Bosack: Example, data on the distribution of multiple species of whales and dolphins is lacking. The effects of electromagnetic magnetic fields affect the communities, sea turtles and marine mammals are not well understood. For Baleen whales, BOEM is extrapolating the effect of pile, the effect of pile driving noise from studies on response to air guns, which is a different technology, and little research has been conducted at all on sea turtle hearing.

Erika Bosack: Scientists don't know how marine mammals will respond to the presence of artificial structures in their environment.

Erika Bosack: And outside of the PEIS, scientific research has also outlined multiple ways in which offshore wind poses risks to marine life. Increased vessel activity, noise, and in this particular geographic area, potentially changing the patterns of the North Atlantic Cold Pool, a unique seasonal temperature cycle that allows cold water creatures to thrive here.

Erika Bosack: All of this shows the Clean Ocean Action's questions and concerns related to offshore wind's effect on the marine environment are legitimate. I want to be very clear,

Erika Bosack: Clean Ocean Action is not claiming, but there is definitive proof that offshore winds is the cause of the spike in whale deaths, but we also cannot rule out, offshore wind is a potential factor either because of the data gaps. This is why Clean Ocean Action has been calling for an independent peer reviewed scientific study. We need to conclusively determine why so many whales have been dying in the New York Bight.

Erika Bosack: BOEM argues that filling these data gaps would have exorbitant costs or research methods are unavailable, but our ocean life deserves better.

Erika Bosack: Our priorities should be on developing scientific methods, not developing industry. Industrializing blindly without regard to the environmental consequences is, is exactly how we got ourselves into the climate crisis.

Erika Bosack: I know we would all love a solution that allows us to keep using as much energy as we want while creating a new industry and all the economics that that would provide, to some corporations.

Erika Bosack: But it would carry much less environmental risk to reduce energy consumption and demand by prioritizing efficiency and waste with even half as much fervor as we're currently prioritizing offshore wind. Thank you very much.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you very much. Thank you for your comment, Erika. Okay, Anthony Taddeo, you are up next, and then we have Heidi Yeh. Anthony, please go ahead and unmute yourself and share your comment.

Anthony Taddeo: Can you hear me? Perfect? My name is Anthony Taddeo, I'm a resident of Monmouth County and a Campaign Organizer at New Jersey Lead Conservation Voters. The renewable energy transition is a workable solution to the current crisis threatening my community and all the coast communities in New Jersey. They have borne the brunt of sea level rise, intensified storms and other environmental challenges.

Anthony Taddeo: Offshore wind beyond its economic potential is a crucial step in building resilience against the impact of climate change. Offshore wind is a driver of opportunity, the creation of thousands of well-paying union jobs has the power to transform our local businesses, strengthen our unions and contribute significantly to the overall economic growth of New Jersey.

Anthony Taddeo: New Jersey is preparing to create highly skilled work force that will be poised and ready to take leading role in

Anthony Taddeo: delivering clean offshore wind to millions of families in our region. The dedication and expertise of our workers, combined with the economic benefits generated by the industry

Anthony Taddeo: make it a win-win scenario for our state.

Anthony Taddeo: I commend BOEM for their ongoing efforts to support the economic development and meaningful engaging community members.

Anthony Taddeo: I urge swift action to ensure the benefits are realized by New Jersey workers and communities as soon as possible.

Anthony Taddeo: The PEIS will ensure that we can move forward and develop quickly, safer and responsible.

Anthony Taddeo: We know that quick and efficient development is vital to ensuring the success of these projects and the offshore and industry in our state.

Anthony Taddeo: I'd like to draw attention to Salem County,

Anthony Taddeo: New Jersey, where there is a proposed built port currently in development. It is vital, component in the offshore wind vision that holds the

Anthony Taddeo: key job creation, providing dedicated spaces for staging and assembly and manufacturing of the wind components.

Anthony Taddeo: The establishment of the port underscores, a commitment to fostering a robust supply chain, creating jobs locally and positioning New Jersey as a leader of

Anthony Taddeo: offshore wind industry.

Anthony Taddeo: One key aspect that really resonates with me is the potential of keeping young people in their communities by creating meaningful employment opportunities locally, we can stem the tide of young talent leaving for job opportunities elsewhere. The industry has the power to not only provide employment, but to foster a sense of community pride and sustainable future for our next generations.

Anthony Taddeo: Offshore wind isn't just about clean energy, it's about making a tangible commitment to job creation. The prospect of thousands of well-paying jobs is not just a promise, it's a transformation

Anthony Taddeo: of our local workforce and cornerstone of New Jersey's economic future. Thank you for your time.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Anthony. Okay, up next we have Heidi Yeh and then James Thompson. Heidi, you can go ahead and unmute yourself and share your comment.

Heidi Yeh: Hello! My name is Heidi Yeh, I'm a Policy Director for Pineland's Preservation Alliance, and I did my PhD in Oceanography.

Heidi Yeh: We support these projects, which will be an important complement to the solar power that is produced in the Pinelands and elsewhere in New Jersey. We support the adoption of these AMMM measures to facilitate efficient development and maximize the net benefits of these projects.

Heidi Yeh: And the U.S is lagging behind the rest of the world in offshore wind development. But we can take this opportunity to learn from the over 30 years of experience that have already been gained from wind farms operating elsewhere.

Heidi Yeh: I did my PhD work on shellfish ecology, including artificial reefs, and one of the major reasons for our support is the environmental co-benefits that are provided by offshore wind through artificial reefs.

Heidi Yeh: The PEIS states that artificial reefs provide

Heidi Yeh: valuable habitats to foster the biodiversity of marine invertebrates and finfish. So, their value is acknowledged in the document, but I am concerned that the PEIS seems to present full decommissioning as the default end of life plan for the wind farms, which would require any developer that wishes to retire any portion of the project in place to jump over additional hurdles.

Heidi Yeh: So given that the artificial reef benefits have already been well documented on other wind farms, we want BOEM to make partial decommissioning the default.

Heidi Yeh: This can be done by following the renewables to reef concepts

Heidi Yeh: that is presented in a 2015 paper by Smith and colleagues.

Heidi Yeh: This leaving the scour protection in place can ensure that the artificial reef communities that become established there over decades of operation, can remain there in perpetuity. A 2017 paper on

Sustainable Decommissioning of Wind Farms by Topham and McMillan acknowledges that there's no one size fits all solution.

Heidi Yeh: So the specific decommissioning plan for each project will be site specific. But as a general rule, scour should be left in situ, because marine life will have flourished around scour, protecting any element of the wind farm.

Heidi Yeh: So preserving these reefs could be especially consequential for recreational and subsistence fishermen, as we anticipate that these reefs will become a destination for fishing activity akin to oil rig fishing in the Gulf of Mexico.

Heidi Yeh: It would be nonsensical to facilitate the growth of this ecological and economic activity only to remove it later. So, we are asking BOEM to take steps as early as possible to ensure the preservation of these reefs.

Heidi Yeh: I would like to thank BOEM for their careful work on this, and we look forward to seeing these projects come to fruition. Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Heidi.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, next we have James Thompson, and then we have David Case. James, you can go ahead and unmute yourself and share your comment.

James Thompson: Good evening, can you hear me? Thanks. My name is James Thompson, and I'm the Campaign Director for the New Jersey League Conservation Voters. I'm a resident of Southern New Jersey.

James Thompson: I'd like to start by acknowledging all the steps that BOEM is taking to make sure that this process is transparent to the public

James Thompson: and to solicit community input at every opportunity in term.

James Thompson: Including diverse stakeholders of all of folks who are affected in the cities and counties and towns, they show that offshore when will be developed responsibly

James Thompson: here in New Jersey, and New Jersey LCV deeply cares about that. New Jersey LCV actively participates in various coalitions that span diverse interests unified by commitment to protecting the natural world. Today, I'm here to emphasize the endorsement of the environmental community for offshore wind

James Thompson: and the PEIS.

James Thompson: Any concerns raised by organizations dedicated to addressing climate change, are aimed at enhancing the overall quality

James Thompson: of this crucial initiative.

James Thompson: Notably offshore wind coalition, the New Jersey Wind Works as they get dedicated to ensuring responsibly, developed offshore wind throughout New Jersey, the coastal area in Jersey. This Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement is an innovative way to increasing the efficiency of the entire process by adding another bottleneck layer of environmental review.

James Thompson: This allows BOEM to assess the environmental impact of projects in a holistic way and focus later environmental impact statements on the specific impacts of each project.

James Thompson: We will be able to see the overall impact of the projects that they work through the process suggests, particularly details of each project plan to mitigate environmental impacts to the New York Bight.

James Thompson: The PEIS allows for more thorough assessment of environmental impacts which will enable us to employ superior mitigation techniques and ultimately ensure that development and progress do not repeat the disastrous takes of the past,

James Thompson: remain true to our ideals and move forward

James Thompson: towards a brighter, greener and healthier future for all.

James Thompson: New Jersey LCV is committed to preserving clean air, water, and expansive green space to every New Jersey resident, recognizing climate change as the paramount challenge of our era. We understand that our future hinges on confronting it directly

James Thompson: by implementing responsibly, developed offshore wind.

James Thompson: The tangible impacts of climate change are already evident along the coast of New Jersey and other coastal communities and states, including rising sea levels and intensified storms, disruptions, marine life, coastal erosion and deepening crisis that demands

James Thompson: urgent attention.

James Thompson: To develop offshore wind in Jersey is vital to protect our vulnerable coast, to coastal communities, to safeguard our unique way of life, hereby attracting new investment in creating new jobs for current and future residents and addressing climate change. Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you. Thank you, James.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, next we have David Case, and then we will have Cindy Moore. David, you can go ahead and unmute yourself and share your comment.

David Case: Found it. Yes, my name's David Case, a member of Mid-Hudson Sierra Club Group. I'm a lifelong environmentalist. I'm also an avid fisherman.

David Case: I lived in Jersey City most of my adult life. When superstorm Sandy, hit I got to see and feel what climate change looks like firsthand. I had several friends who were flooded out of their homes. I took them in,

David Case: in the first few days, and I know it took them many months for them to get their lives back together. In some ways it really took years. And I started to think of our kids

David Case: growing up to live in a dystopian future where

David Case: events like catastrophe are the norm and I'm surprised we have such short memories, we don't remember that in New York and in New Jersey.

David Case: Personally, I can't wait to see wind turbines go off our coast. Far from being ugly,

David Case: to me, they are what hope for the future will look like. I salute the steps that BOEM,

David Case: might have not pronounced that right, it's taking to site the wind turbines responsibly and build them safely.

David Case: I'll add my voice to the course of others, confirming that what is destroying the health of our oceans

David Case: and harming marine wildlife

David Case: is climate change and warming ocean temperatures, first and foremost.

David Case: European countries, with strong science-based ecological values have been safely and sustainably operating offshore wind for decades. Fisheries have not suffered.

David Case: People go to the seashore to vacation, swim and enjoy themselves just as they always have, all within sight of offshore wind turbines. I know I've played the little towns

David Case: in Denmark. I got a chance, and

David Case: those places are wild, they're booming. Trust me.

David Case: No development is without a cost,

David Case: but we need offshore wind to stave off a horrendous future. At the same time, offshore wind will be a long-term economic benefit, sustainable benefit not subject to the boom-and-bust roller coaster

David Case: that we get from the fossil fuel economy. Adjust the 2 projects approved from New Jersey alone,

David Case: are supposed to add 6.8 billion dollars and 27,000 high paying jobs to the State's economy.

David Case: We need those jobs in the Northeast and not down in Oklahoma or

David Case: Wyoming somewhere out there on the oil patch.

David Case: When I picture industrialization, I'll just finish, when I picture industrialization of the oceans, I picture the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill or the Exxon Valdez leaking oil into the

David Case: the pure waters of Alaska. To me that's industrialization of the ocean and the fisheries in those places have still not recovered

David Case: decades later. And let's not let that happen here in the northeast. Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, David.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, next we have Cindy Moore, and then we have Tanya Lobo. Cindy, go ahead and unmute yourself and share your comment.

Cindy Moore: Okay, can you hear me all right? Okay, thank you. Well, first, I'd like to grant media permission to use my comments if they choose to do so. My name is Cindy Moore, and I appreciate the

opportunity to speak before the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management in support of offshore wind off the New York, New Jersey coast.

Cindy Moore: I'm a volunteer in clinicians for Climate New Jersey and co-founded the Environmental Physical Therapy Catalyst Group which is housed within my national professional association.

Cindy Moore: I am a physical therapist with decades of New Jersey home healthcare experience, and I work in an agency that serves 11 New Jersey counties.

Cindy Moore: Additionally, I am a mother, a grandmother, and also caregiver for my 98-year-old mom. So, in both my professional and personal life, I'm concerned about health and wellbeing across the lifespan.

Cindy Moore: We know that using fossil fuels for energy production damages air quality and worsens climate change. These in turn, are associated with a multitude of maternal and neonatal through geriatric health problems. And I'd like to just give 3 examples of those.

Cindy Moore: One, increased morbidity and mortality from respiratory, cardiovascular, renal, and other conditions. The American Lung Association reported poor air quality in multiple New Jersey counties, and I've personally worked with many New Jersey residents, experiencing life altering and life-threatening health problems exacerbated by poor air quality and extreme heat.

Cindy Moore: Two, decreased ability and safety to access and engage in outdoor and indoor physical activities. And outdoor workers, pregnant women, athletes, and older adults are among those at increased risk for heat, stress, heat stroke and death.

Cindy Moore: Also extreme weather associated with flooding, that hampers the ability of clinicians to deliver care and patients to receive that care delivery. As well as the disruptions of relocations and damage and increase risk of mold and other disease transmissions.

Cindy Moore: Having seen the environmental justice and health equity concerns in my work, I appreciate that this group is considering environmental justice issues

Cindy Moore: and I just like to end with saying that the World Health Organization and many other healthcare organizations are clear that climate change is the number one greatest threat to human health, and that quickly and rapidly and strongly decreasing fossil fuel use is urgently needed. So as healthcare providers, we have ethical responsibilities to advocate for

Cindy Moore: urgently reducing fossil fuel use through less harmful methods of energy generation such as offshore wind. Thank you very much.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Cindy.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay ,next we have Tanya Lobo, and then we have Michelle Quinn, Tania go ahead and unmute yourself and share your comment.

Tanya Lobo: Good evening, everyone. My name is Tanya Lobo, and I'm the founder and CEO of TRUE Diversity. We are a civic and social nonprofit in Taunton. This nonprofit is dedicated to serving underserved children, youth, and families within our communities.

Tanya Lobo: I am also a proud member of Clean Air Taunton, and a staunch advocate for sustainable development.

Tanya Lobo: I would like to share today the incredible journey and impact of Vineyard Wind and TRUE Diversity, particularly through our LEEAD Workforce Development Program. Our community, perched on the front lines of climate change, understands the urgency of embracing sustainable solutions.

Tanya Lobo: TRUE Diversity is not just an organization, but as a, we are a beacon of hope

Tanya Lobo: and progress within our community. The LEEAD Program, which is our workforce development program that specifically works within clean energy,

Tanya Lobo: in particular, has been a game changer. We begin to offer our youth and community members a window into the emerging offshore wind industry and Vineyard Wind has been such a great community partner.

Tanya Lobo: In collaboration with us, they have opened doors to numerous opportunities. They've introduced students, families, and community members to the diverse career pathways within the offshore wind sector, illuminating the potential of this industry to energize our workforce and supply chains.

Tanya Lobo: Their commitment to educating us,

Tanya Lobo: training our youth and the workforce development has been nothing short of inspirational. We've seen firsthand how their dedication, it not only nurtures talent, but also fuels passion for a greener future.

Tanya Lobo: The promise of more projects on the horizon brings with it the anticipation of expanded opportunities.

Tanya Lobo: Not only for job development within our community,

Tanya Lobo: but especially for our students. This isn't just about economic growth. It's a commitment to sustainable community development.

Tanya Lobo: The impacts of climate change are not a distant threat, but an immediate reality. As a mom of 3 boys, and to many others who rely on my advocacy to make the future brighter and cleaner,

Tanya Lobo: I believe adopting offshore wind energy is no longer a choice but a necessity. Vineyard Wind is at the forefront of this transition, championing a cause that resonates with every one of us

Tanya Lobo: who calls this beautiful coastline home.

Tanya Lobo: In the face of escalating climate changes, it's imperative to expedite the approval and construction of offshore wind projects.

Tanya Lobo: This isn't just

Tanya Lobo: for meeting our climate goals. Honestly, it's about ensuring a sustainable and resilient future for our community for generations to come. We must also recognize the need to streamline processes and work to keep grants and bids equitable, so communities like mine are able to access funding without

undue burden, by simplifying the application requirements and ensuring transparency in the allocation process,

Tanya Lobo: in order for communities like mine to thrive. Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Tanya.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, next we have Michelle Quinn, and then we have Ben Gilbarg. Michelle, you may go ahead and unmute yourself and provide your comment.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Give us a moment, folks.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Michelle, are you able to unmute yourself.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, we'll come back to Michelle. Ben Gilbarg.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Can you unmute yourself and provide your comment?

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Hi, how's everyone? Can you hear me? Yes, we can hear you.

Ben Gilbarg: Okay.

Ben Gilbarg: Hi, I'm Ben Gilbarg. I am a New Bedford native, and currently a resident of Hercules, California. I am,

Ben Gilbarg: but in my current residential situation, and in my former both residents of lands right by the water, both affected by environmental justice and climate change,

Ben Gilbarg: and both areas that are underserved and need economic

Ben Gilbarg: restoration and development. What I do is I'm the Director of STEAM the Streets.

Ben Gilbarg: STEAM the Streets is an organization with a mission to inform, inspire, and activate underrepresented youth to pursue career paths in STEM and the arts or STEAM.

Ben Gilbarg: What's significant is we're a current grantee of the Mass Clean Energy Center to develop a

Ben Gilbarg: career module and educational content, to help build a more diverse and new workforce pipeline around offshore wind. So in these efforts we have done a lot of in interfacing with Vineyard Wind.

Ben Gilbarg: They have been great in providing

Ben Gilbarg: advice for us. As we develop these materials. We have seen them be very active in the community. My team has attended job fairs that they put on, their outreach has been extensive.

Ben Gilbarg: And that's really different to what a lot of companies have done in the New Bedford area. Oftentimes these opportunities go unseen,

Ben Gilbarg: and people don't know about the opportunities. But the Vineyard Wind team has been very, very keen on making sure the word is out, and then everyone is reached by this. And that's, that's really encouraging.

Ben Gilbarg: We're also currently working on a partnership to, to help,

Ben Gilbarg: you know, bridge the gap

Ben Gilbarg: between the knowledge that young people and people in the community in general have about offshore wind,

Ben Gilbarg: and we hopefully will have that soon. So, we show that there's a model that Vineyard Winds developed to work with small and local companies, you know, so I feel like in the face of

Ben Gilbarg: what we see is escalating,

Ben Gilbarg: just and horrific climate change impacts. It's important to really expedite the approval, the construction of these great offshore wind energy projects. It's an urgent and essential measure to meet our climate goals,

Ben Gilbarg: and have a sustainable future. We support renewable energy.

Ben Gilbarg: We support offshore wind and support Vineyard Wind in this effort. Thank you very much.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Ben. Okay, next we have Leslie Mangold, and then we have Bonnie Brady.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Leslie, you can go ahead and unmute yourself and share your comment.

Leslie Mangold: Hi there! Can you hear me?

Leslie Mangold: Hi! Leslie Mangold, I'm a private citizen and consider myself an ocean advocate. In your mission statement of core values, BOEM, you state responsible stewardship, and that BOEM is committed to environmental protection.

Leslie Mangold: And your mission is to manage, develop for the US. Continental Shelf for energy, mineral and geological resources in an environmentally responsible way.

Leslie Mangold: I ask, how is approving lease sites for

Leslie Mangold: offshore wind

Leslie Mangold: considered environmentally responsible?

Leslie Mangold: How is destroying an environment, to save the environment, good stewardship?

Leslie Mangold: I don't understand how it can be justified,

Leslie Mangold: supported or approved by not only BOEM,

Leslie Mangold: but by anyone else, federally

Leslie Mangold: or statewide, locally, or individually.

Leslie Mangold: Especially in terms of, for protecting our environment.

Leslie Mangold: There are so many other land-based green energy options. Industrializing our ocean is not the answer.

Leslie Mangold: From damaging our marine environment, harming marine mammals, and all the creatures that live in the ocean, the dangerous EMFs from high-voltage cables,

Leslie Mangold: the substations, the threat to navigation and national security, our commercial fisheries, our view, our way of life, and so on.

Leslie Mangold: I am opposed to not only the 6 lease sites in the New York Bight that this meeting is for tonight,

Leslie Mangold: but I'm against all offshore wind.

Leslie Mangold: The ocean is our last great open space, and it should not be sold, leased, developed, industrialized,

Leslie Mangold: or used for profit. It must be protected and preserved.

Leslie Mangold: There is a connectedness and balance to all of our natural environments and ecosystems.

Leslie Mangold: Harming one will have a ripple effect on others and on us.

Leslie Mangold: We cannot stand idly by and let the ocean be used as collateral damage in the fight against climate change.

Leslie Mangold: If we do,

Leslie Mangold: we are complicit in helping to destroy it. I emphatically ask you to not approve

Leslie Mangold: these 6 lease sites or any other offshore wind. Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Leslie.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And next up we have Bonnie Brady, and then we have Kathleen Sullivan. Bonnie, you can go ahead and unmute yourself and share your comment.

Bonnie Brady: Oh, Hi! Can you hear me?

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Yes, go ahead.

Bonnie Brady: Great. Thank you very much. I'm Bonnie Brady, I represent the Long Island Commercial Fishing Association.

Bonnie Brady: I want to say I have appreciated listening to all of the comments that are been had to date. I

Bonnie Brady: have a fair amount of respect for those that are working in community development to help people's lives become better and offer them hope for the future. However, the issue of offshore wind is unfortunately, many of the people that are

Bonnie Brady: doing things, thinking it's best for the environment have been lied to.

Bonnie Brady: I would highly suggest all of you as opposed to taking your talking points from whomever, to take the time to read one of the construction operation plans.

Bonnie Brady: Offshore wind will increase climate change by increasing sea surface temperature and will decrease the upwelling and downwelling of the ocean, which decreases the productivity of all marine food webs. The loss of current, and will increase the loss of productivity, and will extend according to ArcVera's studies, up to 60 miles leeward of where the lease area is.

Bonnie Brady: Basically, the wind acts as a block, and as such the sea surface, where current comes from will have less wind, and will actually warm the ocean, mimicking climate change and increasing the issues of climate change. The ocean is our carbon sink.

Bonnie Brady: Especially in the mid-Atlantic, we have something called the Mid Atlantic Cold Pool, which Rutgers did study on in 2021, and they are extremely concerned because it has been considered basically our safety mechanism, a large pool of cold water toward the bottom. By pile driving and jet plowing the ocean floor, and then creating this lack of upwelling and downwelling, we risk losing the protective nature of the cold pool itself,

Bonnie Brady: which would literally put climate change on steroids.

Bonnie Brady: If Vineyard Wind cared about the community, it's great. You guys have been trying to do stuff I don't blame. I think that's great. However, if they truly cared about the community, including the fishing industry that they spoke about wanting to be neighbors, they wouldn't have bailed on the 15 years to start and put the decommissioning bond financial insurance in full for that area. I did hear someone on there about the pine,

Bonnie Brady: the pine barrens, which seems ironic, putting solar farms in the pine barrens, cutting down trees which helps to lose topsoil over. However, the reef effect is not

Bonnie Brady: what you've been told. The reef effect is actually called biofouling. You've got essential environment in the mid-Atlantic Bight, and by literally putting

Bonnie Brady: turbines, you are creating an environment that is ripe for invasives, such as sea-squirts as

Bonnie Brady: the muscles which are going to...Actually, there's a study, and let me see if I can find it, and if I can't, I can't in time. The Tethys has a fouling community on turbine foundations and scour protections. They basically become magnets for anything that happens to float by, and they completely change an essential environment into a hard substrate, and the ecosystems within it.

Bonnie Brady: If people have been told a story and haven't taken the time to read the actual documents. I implore you to do so. The people that have spoken right now have been in the trenches fighting this. It is not what you think it is.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Bonnie, please wrap up.

Bonnie Brady: Sure.

Bonnie Brady: There is no perfect quick fix to this issue.

Bonnie Brady: But by destroying the ocean,

Bonnie Brady: under the guise of saving it, will actually be hastening our demise. Thank you very much.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you. Thank you, Bonnie.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Next, we have Kathleen Sullivan, and then we have Ellen Petersen. Kathleen, go ahead and unmute yourself and provide your comment.

Kathleen Sullivan: Hello, hi!

Kathleen Sullivan: Thank you very much for letting me speak tonight. I will start off by saying that I did not know this, so I was on the Long Island Railroad, I had 5:39. So, you're

Kathleen Sullivan: letting people know about this event happening and

Kathleen Sullivan: marketing it, was not very well done.

Kathleen Sullivan: I work in Wall Street as a Project Manager, and you let everybody know. I don't know how this was communicated out, but I found out,

Kathleen Sullivan: on a train. I've been working on Wall Street for 32 years, and I've been living on the Barry Island

Kathleen Sullivan: of Long Island for 53 years. My grandfather, longer than that, and built out the Barry Island from Point Lookout, New York, to the Atlantic Beach, New York.

Kathleen Sullivan: He was an engineer, and I will say in those 53 years, until recently I never saw a whale die. I am now going to, cause I could not prepare for this tonight, I am going to read

Kathleen Sullivan: from one of Protect Our Coasts, Long Island, New York

Kathleen Sullivan: constituents that didn't know how to unmute. I'm going to get her,

Kathleen Sullivan: word for word. This is Michelle Quinn Leo. I am opposed to offshore wind projects for a myriad of reasons. I do not work for the fossil fuel industry.

Kathleen Sullivan: However, it would make sense these days since oil companies are now under the guise of renewable.

Kathleen Sullivan: Think about it!

Kathleen Sullivan: If oil companies don't jump on the offshore wind bandwagon, they would be obsolete.

Kathleen Sullivan: I'm educated and informed on the misinformation that is written on the BOEM and the offshore wind developer documents. Docs are filled with direct, contradicted

Kathleen Sullivan: information, page after page. It is part of the agenda to make these documents hundreds of pages, hoping no one reads them.

Kathleen Sullivan: I've read most of them, and absorbed as much as I can while having a life,

Kathleen Sullivan: working. She's a paralegal. I work

Kathleen Sullivan: 48 hours

Kathleen Sullivan: a day as a Project Planner, but that's I'm talking from Michelle. What I find most disturbing,

Kathleen Sullivan: is residence

Kathleen Sullivan: being monitored after the fact. Remember that, after the fact. Projects of these magnitudes have never been done before in residential communities. Tables at 345

Kathleen Sullivan: megawatts of power just 3 feet below street, less than 50 feet from home, resident homes,

Kathleen Sullivan: being that

Kathleen Sullivan: close to cancer residents will be detrimental impacts

Kathleen Sullivan: to residents of health.

Kathleen Sullivan: Consultants write the EMF data for offshore wind developers. Paid consultants. Engineers, scientists, and other studies directly contradict all of these offshore wind studies. What makes one opinion any better than the other.

Kathleen Sullivan: If a study does not coincide with the offshore wind studies, they are labelled misinformation or fake facts. Why?

Kathleen Sullivan: Each offshore wind developer is looking for waivers to local ordinances. They will destroy our communities.

Kathleen Sullivan: I have lived on Long Island for 53 years. Michelle,

Kathleen Sullivan: as witness for, and less than me. As

Kathleen Sullivan: witness firsthand, the zero accountability by Equinor and every other offshore wind company that's coming into all of Long Island.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Kathleen, please wrap up your comment.

Kathleen Sullivan: Why?

Kathleen Sullivan: You're, you're out of time, if you can please.

Kathleen Sullivan: May I finish? I only have 2 paragraphs left on Michelle that didn't understand how to unmute.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Sure, go ahead.

Kathleen Sullivan: There are many inequalities in the FEIS redacted documents,

Kathleen Sullivan: not transparent in answering any questions of residence, and do not attend local community meetings when invited and redacted, OSRP.

Kathleen Sullivan: What does a renewable need, OSRP?

Kathleen Sullivan: Did BOEM do any due diligence on Equinor, aka Statoil, who have destroyed

Kathleen Sullivan: rivers and bribed Iranian officials. Well, you know about it because they sanctioned them. These are oil companies.

Kathleen Sullivan: Don't fool yourself. BOEM has started to sell off our oceans. Each OSW Project

Kathleen Sullivan: use thousands of gallons of fossil fuels to have true renewable. It should be built, transported, and work without the use of fossil fuels.

Kathleen Sullivan: Are these electric boats delivering these projects?

Kathleen Sullivan: Are they recycled? Are the fossil fuels, fossil recycled? These are BOEM document called summary

Kathleen Sullivan: report, best management practice workshop for the Atlantic offshore wind facilities, marine protected species.

Kathleen Sullivan: I can go on, on what Michelle Quinn wrote, but I'm going to say to you right now.

Kathleen Sullivan: I might not be as well versed in reading all these documents, because I'm not part of the settlement, but I'm going to tell you right now.

Kathleen Sullivan: We have 10,000 and going farther,

Kathleen Sullivan: and I only found out about this recently, and I am, we do not want this here.

Kathleen Sullivan: We will continually

Kathleen Sullivan: go after you. Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Kathleen. Thank you for your comment.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, next we have Ellen Peterson, and then we have Kathleen Miklosey.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Ellen, you can unmute yourself and please provide your comment.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: I think we lost Ellen, or she lowered her hand. Kathleen, you can go.

Ellen Pedersen: Hello.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Ellen. Yes.

Ellen Pedersen: Oh, okay, go ahead.

Ellen Pedersen: Hi, my name is Ellen Peterson, I'm a resident of New Jersey. I'm a mother and a grandmother,

Ellen Pedersen: and support of offshore wind.

Ellen Pedersen: I don't believe we have the luxury of time. We need to act now.

Ellen Pedersen: We're seeing increasing and more violent storms and flooding.

Ellen Pedersen: We're seeing the water warming and species moving north. We're seeing

Ellen Pedersen: extinctions across the globe. And we all don't live in an island, we're all interconnected in this world. And I think this is something

Ellen Pedersen: we can do to help mitigate climate change, and in in the process

Ellen Pedersen: we can help New Jersey become

Ellen Pedersen: self-sufficient hopefully, and welcome green jobs.

Ellen Pedersen: Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Helen.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, we have Kathleen Miklosey and you can go ahead and share your comment now.

Kathleen Miklosey: Okay. Can you hear me?

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Yes.

Kathleen Miklosey: Okay, my name is Kathleen Miklosey.

Kathleen Miklosey: I've been a lifelong resident of New Jersey, South Jersey my whole life.

Kathleen Miklosey: Strongly against

Kathleen Miklosey: all offshore wind projects in New Jersey, New York,

Kathleen Miklosey: anywhere.

Kathleen Miklosey: Never have we've seen the amount of

Kathleen Miklosey: whale deaths, dolphin deaths,

Kathleen Miklosey: ever.

Kathleen Miklosey: That's how I became aware of this, I was not even aware that the ocean was sold,

Kathleen Miklosey: to have these lease sites and the offshore wind project.

Kathleen Miklosey: Myself and thousands and thousands of other people who are educated

Kathleen Miklosey: and do look up the actual correct information about this are against it.

Kathleen Miklosey: It continuously says things or people continuously say things that sound scripted as far as the jobs that it will create, and no one that's saying that is really looking into the scallop oyster,

Kathleen Miklosey: clamming, lobstering,

Kathleen Miklosey: fishermen. They will be so severely impacted by this, and for me it's extremely common sense, when you mess with the seabed,

Kathleen Miklosey: you are messing with the whole ecological system of the ocean. When you ruin that, that doesn't come back.

Kathleen Miklosey: That's what is called dead zones. So these people who have done this for all these years. It's their livelihoods, and we rely on that seafood to eat.

Kathleen Miklosey: We know that it's fresh, that it's wild caught, that it's not

Kathleen Miklosey: coming from another country unregulated. I could go on and on about so many things.

Kathleen Miklosey: The ocean

Kathleen Miklosey: is a natural resource. You are putting something in the ocean and blasting the sea floor,

Kathleen Miklosey: that ruins it right there. That's the end of the ocean. Anything that's living there is gone. The horseshoe crabs we need, we need everything that's in the ocean. But we do not need the turbines.

Kathleen Miklosey: There has got to be another way if they continue on this route.

Kathleen Miklosey: You cannot destroy God's

Kathleen Miklosey: gift to us as the natural ocean and all the resources that we need from it. And no one has brought up the fact, with the cables and all the interference,

Kathleen Miklosey: and then also, what about the money for the rate and taxpayers that this is going to cost?

Kathleen Miklosey: Nobody is saying anything about that. They're saying that this is, you know, going

Kathleen Miklosey: help everyone in New Jersey, but they're not saying, everyone has to look these facts up. They're not saying anything about the money

Kathleen Miklosey: that it's going cost, the rate in taxpayers on their electric bills, and they will go up. It's a fact, but nobody's really looking into it. So, I'm firmly,

Kathleen Miklosey: strongly pushing for everyone who's on here to look that up. Who is for the offshore wind projects. Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Kathleen.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, we have 3 more folks who'd like to provide comments tonight. We have Adrienne Esposito up next, Mike Dean.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And Adrian, you can go ahead and unmute yourself and provide your comment.

Adrienne Esposito: Thank you so much for the opportunity to comment. My name is Adrienne Esposito. I'm the Executive Director of Citizens Campaign for the Environment, will be submitting extensive comments in writing, but just a few brief details tonight. One is in response to some of the folks who testified who are concerned about the open loop cooling systems. For instance, the one being utilized by Sunrise Wind. I think it would be important for the PEIS

Adrienne Esposito: to juxtapose, the open loop cooling system from an offshore wind farm against power plants, fossil fuel-based power plants. So, for instance, in Northport on Long Island, where I live. They kill billions, with a "b", of finfish and fish larvae, juvenile fish, horseshoe crabs, crustaceans,

Adrienne Esposito: and other marine species. So, all offshore, all energy infrastructure has an impact on our environment. We need to do a comparative analysis, so we choose the one with the least impact. And frankly, that's offshore wind.

Adrienne Esposito: Also, some people complaining about the viewership. Well, I think we should again just suppose, in the PEIS, the view of the power plants we can see.

Adrienne Esposito: We can see our fossil fuel power plants, they're not invisible. And yes, we may be able to see one or two of the turbines offshore, but that's nothing compared to the power plants that not only we can see but are spewing out nitroxide, sulfur dioxide, into the air around our communities.

Adrienne Esposito: Also, some are saying, we have never seen whales die, and I think it's very important that the PEIS, identify when the unusual whale mortality event started, which was in 2017, way prior to any offshore wind exploration ever occurred.

Adrienne Esposito: In addition, I think it's important to look at the reduction of fossil fuels. We've heard several comments from people who say, we shouldn't do wind, we should just reduce

Adrienne Esposito: our fossil fuel consumption and stop wasting energy. Well, we agree. We should reduce fossil fuels and stop wasting energy, and energy conservation as one component to fighting climate change. However, to say that reducing energy is the only solution is delusional and dangerous. We can't just reduce fossil fuels, we need to replace fossil fuels, and that is the way that we fight climate change.

Adrienne Esposito: I mean frankly, here on Long Island we're hanging on by a thread.

Adrienne Esposito: We are literally hanging on by a thread. It's costing us millions and millions of dollars every year to shore up coastlines, raise roads. The Governor just appropriated 250 million dollars to buy our homes, and it's just a drop in the bucket for those homes who can no longer get insurance and can't stand getting flooding anymore.

Adrienne Esposito: So the need is more than critical. It's about saving lives. Thank you for the ability to comment, and we appreciate this process.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you Adrian, for your comment.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay up next, we have Mike Dean, and then we have Vera Soloway, and then we have Mike Jacobs. I just want to let folks know we're coming to the end of our comments. If you would like to provide a comment, please raise your hand now to get into the queue and we will hear from you, in order. And let's go ahead and go to Mike Dean. Mike, you can go ahead and unmute yourself and provide your comment.

Mike Dean: Okay, thank you. Mike Dean, I'm a New Jersey resident, Monmouth County. Thanks for the opportunity to comment today.

Mike Dean: I speak on behalf of all those that oppose

Mike Dean: industrialization of our oceans and our and our coastal communities. With the, this reckless offshore wind undertaking.

Mike Dean: To be clear, the harms and costs of these projects are limitless, and claims that

Mike Dean: the projects will benefit in the fight against climate change, they're false.

Mike Dean: How do I know that? As Bonnie suggested, I read the documents.

Mike Dean: And I do commend BOEM staff

Mike Dean: for having compiled these documents, starting you know, at least on the East Coast here, with Vineyard Wind and,

Mike Dean: and on down through this, this larger undertaking with the programmatic. But I do commend them for the for the work they've done, and for the thoroughness they've gone through, and

Mike Dean: listing of all the harms and stating the facts that are in there, and, and I echo Bonnie's

Mike Dean: urging to people that oppose this, or people that are supporting the turbines, should dig into these documents and see exactly what we're talking about, and I will, I'll try and highlight some of them. I do, I do want to say it, mention what Kari said as well. I don't think it's fair, particularly the BOEM staff, that did all this work, that more time is not given to the public to be able to review the documents, both before comments are due, and before hearings like this are held.

Mike Dean: I got through portions of it, but you know, I have a, I have a base to build on from Vineyard and the other projects, and that's what I'm going to pull from, from my comments here, but I do think that is a little bit fair, but. So just first and for my most,

Mike Dean: in terms of the turbines themselves, they're not green and they're not clean.

Mike Dean: And I think you know anybody that picks up the documents and reads and will find right away that fossil fuels are used in all phases of turbine manufacturing,

Mike Dean: construction, the operation of the wind for our projects, the maintenance, and will be so, well also in the decommissioning, and that's through net increases and carbon emissions from increase shipping, trucking, helicopter traffic, all used to construct and maintain these, not to mention all the steel and other fossil fuels or other

Mike Dean: products that need, rely on fossil fuels to be constructed, so. The documents also reveal the amounts of,

Mike Dean: significant amounts of petrochemicals and lubricants necessary for operation of the turbines ongoing, I suggest people look into that. The leading-edge erosion issues related to the fiberglass blades that will pollute the ocean with micro plastics and toxic compounds increasing ocean acidification, and Bonnie mentioned a lot of the cold pool disruptions, so.

Mike Dean: I mean to sum up, BOEM itself states,

Mike Dean: there will be no collective impact on global warming as a result of offshore wind projects. These projects are not the answer. And, paving our ocean

Mike Dean: to say, is not a way to save the planet.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you Mike, for your comment today.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, up next we have Vera Soloway. And then we have Mike Jacobs and looks like we have 2 more after that. So, Vera, you can go ahead and unmute yourself and provide your comment.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Vera, if you're able to go ahead and unmute yourself

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: and provide your comments.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, Vera might be having some technical difficulties, and we'll follow up with her offline.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: We'll go ahead and go to Mike Jacobs.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Mike, you can go ahead and share your comment now.

Mike Jacobs: Thank you so much, thank you. I came here late, I had, I was in the city, but I want you to know,

Mike Jacobs: to listen to these heroes like Bonnie and Mike Dean does my heart incredibly good. Brianna, this is not about the good guys and the bad guys.

Mike Jacobs: This is about the misinformed, and those people whose soul lie in the ocean, lives in the ocean, better word. And there is something going on here

Mike Jacobs: with this project.

Mike Jacobs: And to me it's people with spreadsheets and excel programs locked in offices that don't really know what's going on in our oceans.

Mike Jacobs: From the standpoint of basic logic. Building 5,000 wind turbines from Maryland to Maine,

Mike Jacobs: blasting 10,000 miles of copper cable into our oceans.

Mike Jacobs: Destroying the oceans.

Mike Jacobs: The aesthetic value of what we're going to lose in our oceans for a false science that any third rate, electrical engineer can tell you, wind turbines, salt water, electricity, electrolysis, thousands of tons of concrete going into each base.

Mike Jacobs: This is mass lunacy.

Mike Jacobs: One day this will be looked at in generations to come. Who will curse the people who did this to our oceans. And we're going to recognize this is a scam.

Mike Jacobs: This is a situation where the Federal Government made a mandate to have 60% of our electrical needs by 2030 met through renewables and mostly wind turbines. We are following a lead of a lie. We are chasing pink unicorns.

Mike Jacobs: Now, okay, problems. What about solutions? Look at France. See what's going on with reliable nuclear?

Mike Jacobs: No, the wind doesn't have to blow with nuclear and the sun doesn't shine. We can't live in the yesterday tragedies of shorn and say, that's for us. We have to open our eyes and we have to recognize that we have to go into this century and this problem with open eyes? The answer is not

Mike Jacobs: building wind turbines and destroying our oceans. That is a form of insanity that people just won't wake up to, the fact that this is wrong.

Mike Jacobs: It's wrong aesthetically, it's wrong, because there are sea creatures without voices who don't have a chance to talk, and wonderful people like Barney Brady stand up and they speak for them.

Mike Jacobs: Again, I'm not condemning any bad guys. But I'm saying that if this is truly looked at from the standpoint of two words,

Mike Jacobs: common sense.

Mike Jacobs: We are following a lie. This is a tragedy. Future generations, and our children will not forgive us for what we are doing here. It is a horrible situation, and I hope we wake up the public to this disaster. Thank you very much.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Mike for your comment.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: We'll go back to Vera again and see if Vera is able to unmute herself. Vera, you'll likely have a pop-up window on your screen. If you click, unmute,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: on that window,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: you should be able to speak out loud for the group.

Kathleen Sullivan: Tell them to double click.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Perhaps try double click.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: We'll come back to Vera. We have one more person with their hand up, that's Christina Kramer.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Christina, go ahead and unmute yourself and share your comment.

Christina Kramer: Hi! Can you hear me? Yes.

Christina Kramer: Hi, so I just wanted to take a moment. I didn't have anything prepared. I am one of the admins is from Protect Our Coast, Long Island, New York, and I just want let the people on this call know that we have over 10,000 signatures on a petition against this scam. It's not green, it's not clean from creation of strip mining the minerals,

Christina Kramer: to creating turbine bleeds with epoxies containing Bisphenol As, which will contaminate our ocean, our food, and our water.

Christina Kramer: Right down to the fact that when you decommission these blades, will never be useful, and they will end up in groundwater in the Midwest, in cemeteries of turbine blades.

Christina Kramer: All while killing ocean life during the construction, and while these blades are spinning with noise for eternity, just really destroying the ocean. And you know as stewards of this planet. It is our job to protect the rights of nature. We cannot, they cannot protect themselves. We have to do this. Our beautiful ocean is one of our, our last

Christina Kramer: valuable resources on this earth, and it needs to be left alone. And, as others have stated, if you just leave the ocean alone to renew itself, it will do its job in carbon, and it will take care of the carbon issues.

Christina Kramer: I do want to, I want to also let the people on this call know that these companies are willing to put 690,000 volts of electricity, 20 feet from residential homes,

Christina Kramer: on the land of Long Beach, Long Island. What kind of conscience do these people have, knowing full well that these EMFs that are emitted will exacerbate and cause cancers among children, among the people in these communities.

Christina Kramer: 3 to 6 years of construction, ongoing noise in these residential areas for eternity. These people are happy to destroy the lives of humans. What makes you think they care about the marine life in the ocean?

Christina Kramer: *[redacted]*. Since 2017, NOAA Fisheries has permitted, or is considered, or is considering permitting 108 vessels to conduct geophysical survey activities over more than 10,000 survey days, resulting in more than

Christina Kramer: 113,000 instances of harassment, level B takes of marine mammals. And we all know that these, this type that was from NRDC themselves, and in a letter to BOEM. And we all know that takes our harassment. You can, everybody knows that a deaf whale is a dead whale, and if a whale loses its calf, they search for each other for eternity. What you're doing is an atrocity, and it needs to stop. Thank you for your time. Have good night.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, we have 2 more folks with their hands up. We have Stephen Leftly and Shoshana Osofsky. Stephen, go ahead and unmute yourself and provide your comment.

Stephen Leftly: Good evening. Okay, I just want to respond to some of the information that's been promulgated by some of the other speakers.

Stephen Leftly: First of all, about energy payback funds.

Stephen Leftly: There has been enormous number of studies on energy payback for offshore wind and normal wind farms. The numbers actually come back that offshore wind

Stephen Leftly: payback times are usually less than 5 years. In other words, within 5 years the energy that was used to construct the wind farm has been paid back. Secondly, I'd like to talk about

Stephen Leftly: the moral issue.

Stephen Leftly: There's lot of people sitting there on the shore, right, who are very, very happy to use frat gas

Stephen Leftly: and oil from other parts of the world where there's immense ecological and economic damage done by those products. If you're against wind farms, please turn off your gas fired

Stephen Leftly: heating systems, your electricity systems, and also stop driving your car, because those are doing a lot more damage to the environment than the wind farm is. And finally,

Stephen Leftly: we have somebody who is talking about nuclear energy in France.

Stephen Leftly: If you actually look at the numbers of how many reactors we'd need, we'd need at least 20 reactors in New Jersey, 20. Now, I don't know anywhere, where you can stick 20 new reactors in the State of New Jersey.

Stephen Leftly: That is just not going to happen. And there's also lots of really serious long-term issues with storing heavy duty long term nuclear waste from the reactors. Each nuclear reactor, each nuclear reactor of one gigawatt in size, produces 20 tons, that's tons, of heavy highly irradiated material every year.

Stephen Leftly: Currently, after spending billions of dollars,

Stephen Leftly: we in the United States do not have anywhere to store that nuclear waste. So that is just from what we have today, we have something like 80,000, 80,000 tons of nuclear, high level nuclear waste which has nowhere to go.

Stephen Leftly: If we went with a full nuclear program, that number would rapidly increase. So, anybody who thinks

Stephen Leftly: nuclear is a solution to this problem

Stephen Leftly: really hasn't looked at the issue.

Stephen Leftly: And, by the way, my undergraduate degree was atomic and nuclear physics. So, I'm very, very comfortable knowing how nuclear reactors actually work.

Stephen Leftly: So those are the points wish to make. So thank you very much for your time.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you very much, Stephen. And I'll just share at this time, if folks are raising their hand who have already provided their 3 min comment. Please lower your hand. You've already provided your comment for the evening. We appreciate it. Thank you very much.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: I'll go on to our next

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: and final comment, or, as far as I can tell, Shoshana Osofsky, you can now unmute yourself and provide your comment.

Shoshana Osofsky: Okay, Shoshana Osofsky, Cumberland County.

Shoshana Osofsky: I, there were certainly better educated

Shoshana Osofsky: speakers that spoke tonight, specific to this issue. I do have a background in science, so I'm not a complete wingnut. I can tell you that for decades, I have followed the Center for Coastal Studies out of

Shoshana Osofsky: Cape Cod and they do whale research.

Shoshana Osofsky: And they,

Shoshana Osofsky: major killers of whales are ship strikes and entanglement in fishing gear. And that is not new. That is decades and

Shoshana Osofsky: if we don't address

Shoshana Osofsky: climate change, we don't have to worry about the whales, we have to worry about anything because we're unleashing chaos. It's already happening, and you need to address it. So, I'm going to stop right there and just say.

Shoshana Osofsky: I hope that we will see wind turbines off the coast

Shoshana Osofsky: in the near future. Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you very much, Shoshana. Okay.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: That wraps up the end of our comments tonight. I see 2 more hands up. However, those are individuals who have already provided their comment this evening, and I

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: highly encourage everybody. If you'd like to say more or share more of your thoughts, I encourage you to share them via [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) in writing, and perhaps we can provide that information in the chat again.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Great! And it's here on the screen as well. You can go to [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov), and search for BOEM's docket number for this project, which is BOEM-2024-0001, in the

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: search field, and then you can click on the comment button and write your comment there. You can also prepare written comments and send them in by mail to the address on your screen.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And you can also attend another virtual meeting. We have 3 in person meetings as well next week,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: across the region, and you can provide written comments at those meetings as well as, talk to subject matter experts and get any of your questions answered live?

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: So with that, that's the end of our public comment for tonight. Thank you, everyone, for sharing your thoughts again with us today.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: At this time, we're going to take a short break, and then we're going to come back and move on to our question-and-answer portion of the agenda.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: At that time, we'll hear from subject matter experts who will share answers to the questions that you all have submitted this evening. I believe we have 40 questions

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: or so that will be responded to, and we will take all the time we need to make sure we get through all the questions and provide answers for everybody. So, this

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: includes questions that were submitted this evening, as well as questions that were submitted during the registration process in advance of the meeting.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, we're going to take a 10-minute break. We'll put a timer up on the screen, and we will reconvene at approximately 7:58PM.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you so much.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, welcome back, everybody. We're at the end of our break. We will go ahead and move into the question-and-answer portion of our meeting tonight.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: This is our last agenda item before we have closing remarks and adjourn the meeting. We will go ahead and hear from BOEM subject matter experts,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: some responses to the questions that were submitted.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Well, we've batched the questions into kind of topic areas that are similar. So hopefully, that's helpful for everybody.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: First, we'll hear from Luke Feinberg, who will answer a few of the questions for us. So, Luke, if you wouldn't mind

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: showing your camera and showing your video here.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And I'll go ahead and say the first question.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: The first question we have that we received is, let's see, it says, "requesting an extension to the comment period PEIS, and demand further independent investigations on the impacts of marine life."

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Luke, can you provide some response to this?

Luke Feinberg: Absolutely, thank you so much for your question, I appreciate that.

Luke Feinberg: And for participating in today's meeting.

Luke Feinberg: BOEM was required to provide a minimum of 45 days for public review of and comment for a Draft Environment Impact Statement.

Luke Feinberg: And the comment period for this document will close on February 26.

Luke Feinberg: Currently, BOEM does not anticipate a comment period extension. However, we review and consider all requests when extensions are received. So, thank you for that.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, thank you. And next question is, "how are you addressing the growing concerns over the environmental impact?"

Luke Feinberg: So BOEM is conducting this programmatic environment review in order to evaluate and disclose the, the potential impacts of expected offshore wind development in the New York Bight lease areas. And this programmatic approach is ideal for considering impacts that are regional level.

Luke Feinberg: And then, they can then be

Luke Feinberg: refined as the project specific stage, as we get more information about those projects themselves will be able to provide

Luke Feinberg: more analysis on that.

Luke Feinberg: Sorry, my screen is changing here. Also, BOEM also invites

Luke Feinberg: comments during the public review period to ensure that we've considered relevant topics and impacts.

Luke Feinberg: So I appreciate that question.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you. Okay, let's go to our next question. "Are you aware that the public did not know about the development of the offshore wind projects and had no opportunity to voice their opposition?"

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Can you share some thoughts there?

Luke Feinberg: Yeah, I'm sorry to hear that folks were not aware what's going on here. I, personally have been involved in the New York Bight process for some time, and particularly, we've engaged on the topic of New York Bight offshore winds about 2018.

Luke Feinberg: In this case, the, for more information, the Environmental Review tab on the project page of our website, and we'll put that in the chat,

Luke Feinberg: links to various meetings and stakeholder engagement opportunities that have taken place.

Luke Feinberg: You're welcome to go there, but, in short, we have done a lot of outreach. There's always an opportunity to do more, so I appreciate your concern and glad you're able to find information about this. But we will continue to engage with the public on the New York Bight

Luke Feinberg: PEIS, throughout the NEPA process for this programmatic aspect. During the scoping and draft EIS stages,

Luke Feinberg: BOEM provided and is providing right now, information and outreach to, on the project and certainly solicits feedback from stakeholders in the public.

Luke Feinberg: And there's also a diagram that we're going to include in the chat here,

Luke Feinberg: that displays the process for the PEIS and that highlights specific stages for public engagement.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, great. I see those things coming through in the chat.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, next question is, "what is the regulatory difference between public meetings and public hearings?"

Luke Feinberg: Yeah, it's a great question. Thank you, Sydney. I think,

Luke Feinberg: public hearings and public meetings are terms that that can be used interchangeably. The BOEM public engagement process seeks to provide information, as well as receive feedback from stakeholders and the public at key stages in the development of our analysis.

Luke Feinberg: And we do this through in-person and virtual public meetings such as this, or comments can be provided by the public.

Luke Feinberg: And comments can also be provided through [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) or submitted by mail. And we have some additional information regarding how to comment on the Draft PEIS and there's a link we'll put in the chat there.

Luke Feinberg: But there's a lot of hard work tonight, with folks submitting comments and providing that orally, and we do consider all the oral, written comments provided during the public comment period as part of our document.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you for that. Next question, "are there any learnings you will take from the offshore wind projects occurring in the Atlantic?"

Luke Feinberg: Yes, absolutely. That's, that's a great question. We are always striving to improve our process and incorporate

Luke Feinberg: the best available science into our analysis and project planning.

Luke Feinberg: And really, the foundation of our, our process is trying to build upon what we've learned, Luke Feinberg: given the nascency of this industry.

Luke Feinberg: For example, BOEM has a project with a real complicated acronym called the Realtime Opportunity for Development of Environmental Observations or RODEO.

Luke Feinberg: And this is a study that we funded and our, our learning and gathering information during the construction and operations of existing offshore wind facilities.

Luke Feinberg: So, we've invested time and resources in, in making observations prior to work being done out at sea during installation of foundations, towers,

Luke Feinberg: and during early operations, and this is both happened at the Block Island Wind Farm,

Luke Feinberg: offshore Rhode Island, as well as the Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind Pilot Project.

Luke Feinberg: And we have a lot of information from this study, and it's being used by BOEM to inform our environmental analysis and the development of mitigation measures.

Luke Feinberg: And we have several reports and highlights of the RODEO program, that can be found on our website, it's just

Luke Feinberg: [BOEM.gov/rodeo](https://www.boem.gov/rodeo), put that in there.

Luke Feinberg: And so, that's shared in the chat as well, so thank you for that question.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Great, thank you so much, Luke. And I think now we'll turn it over to Courtney Strain, who will answer another batch of questions for us.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: So, Courtney, if you can turn on your video. There she is, okay. Great.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, so the first question we have is, "can sections of the PIES, when final, be integrated into the COPs by reference.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And can images be used. For example, via simulations?"

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Thanks for the question. So project specific NEPA analyses for the New York Bight will be tied to and incorporate by reference this programmatic EIS.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Construction and operations plans or COPs could reference the programmatic EIS as well, but should be much more project specific. You also mentioned visual impact assessments or via simulations in your question.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): COPs may need new visual simulations, particularly if our representative project design envelope or our PED, doesn't capture the project's turbine layout or height.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): We encourage you to look at our tearing appendix in Appendix C, of the Draft PEIS, to get a better sense of what additional information will be needed to do the COPs specific NEPA analyses.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, thank you. Okay, next question is. "I would like more information regarding the scope of impacts to be considered." So, Courtney, can you provide a little more information there?

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Absolutely. Thanks for this request for more information. The draft Programmatic EIS analyzes and compares the potential impacts of the 3 alternatives.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): We have no development of the 6 New York Bight leases. We have, deferring adoption of avoidance, minimization, mitigation and monitoring measures for the 6 New York Bight leases.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): And then we have, adopting avoidance, minimization, mitigation and monitoring measures for the 6 New York Bight leases. Now, because the analysis in this draft Programmatic EIS occurred before any New York Bight COPs were submitted.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): BOEM built a Representative project design envelope or RPDE, to use for environmental analysis of one project. For each alternative, the draft Programmatic EIS analyzes the potential impacts of 1 in 6 representative New York Bight projects as well as the potential cumulative impacts.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): The draft Programmatic EIS,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): uses a 4-level classification scheme to characterize potential beneficial and adverse impacts of all alternatives, including the proposed action and the no action alternative.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): You can also check out the handout that will be posted in the chat in just a moment, that summarizes the alternatives and the impacts analyzed. If the question is asking more about the resources that are potentially impacted.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): The draft Programmatic EIS looks at 19 resources overall,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): including, physical resources, such as air, quality and water, quality, biological resources, such as marine mammals, birds, finfish, invertebrates, and essential fish habitat,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): and socioeconomic conditions and cultural resources, such as fisheries and scenic and visual resources.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): I will also note that because locations for onshore components are not known at this time. These are not defined in the RPDE. Detailed site-specific analysis of these components will be deferred and evaluated at the COP specific stage for all New York Bight lease areas.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): We encourage you to check out Chapter 3 of the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for more information on how impacts were analyzed.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): And I think, do we get the link in the chat?

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: I believe.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Oh perfect, great! Thanks.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, let's see. So, next question we have is, "Alternative B and Alternative C, and the alternative sections appears to be very similar. Can you highlight the main differences between the two?"

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Sure, thanks for the question. The main distinction between them has to do with when we make the decision to commit to certain mitigation measures. So, under Alternative B,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): all potential mitigation measures would be considered during the review of the Construction and Operations Plan. that is, each project would need to individually analyze the impacts of development,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): as well as measures to avoid, minimize or compensate for those impacts. Alternative B provides the analysis of impacts assuming no avoidance, minimization, mitigation or monitoring measures.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Alternative C, on the other hand, provides an assessment of the potential impacts, assuming those AMMM measures would be applied.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): That impact analysis can be incorporated into the site-specific reviews so that the site-specific analysis can focus on what is different to that site, instead of having to fully and individually analyze the and measures at the project level.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, thank you Courtney. Another question.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: "Needed extensive impact studies of the environment and tourism industry.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: More, public input and opinions are needed from the people.”

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Do you have a response to this kind of comment actually?

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Sure, so BOEM is conducting this programmatic environmental review in order to evaluate and disclose the potential impacts of expected offshore wind development in the New York Bight lease areas.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): This programmatic approach is ideal for considering impacts at a regional level,

Courtney Strain (BOEM): that can then be refined at the project specific stage.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): BOEM also invites comments during this public review period to ensure we have considered relevant topics as well as impacts.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Additional studies and analyses, along with more project specific detailed information will be included in the project specific COP EISs.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, thank you Courtney. Another question here is, “what does programmatic mean?” I bet a lot of people have this question.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Sure, thanks for the question. So programmatic means that the environmental review, as well as the analyses are focused more broadly than just one project.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): So, in this case the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement evaluates the potential impacts from expected offshore wind development in all 6 New York Bight lease areas.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): The Programmatic EIS will not result in the approval of project activities and is regional rather than site specific or project specific.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): When we say that we are analyzing programmatic avoidance, minimization, mitigation and monitoring measures, we mean, AMMM measures that could be applied to all 6 leases, not just one.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, thank you. Next question is, “will individual project EISs and COPs...”

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Let's see, “will individual project EIS and COP review include cumulative or combined impacts from more than one project.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Will this be true if projects have different EIS and COP review timelines?”

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Thanks for the question. Yes, each individual project will review cumulative impacts which include past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Regardless of differing timeframes, BOEM and other activities that are known and anticipated, are included in these reasonably foreseeable future actions.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you. “Does maximum case scenario mean; you assume that each project would be at the top of each range of design elements?”

Courtney Strain (BOEM): That's a great question. The maximum case scenario is composed of each design, parameter, or combination of parameters that could result in the highest impact level for each fiscal, biological, socioeconomic, and cultural resource.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Certain resources may have multiple maximum case scenarios and the most impactful design parameters may not be the same for all resources.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Next question, "does the programmatic NEPA consider the nearby offshore wind projects already in review,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: parentheses, Atlantic Shores, and ocean wind?"

Courtney Strain (BOEM): Thanks for the question. The programmatic analysis includes what is called a cumulative analysis. The purpose of that analysis is to look at everything going on in and around the New York Bight lease areas.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): And this includes both ongoing projects as well as planned projects. The cumulative analysis first looks at everything going on, other than the 6 New York Bight leases.

Courtney Strain (BOEM): And then talks about how adding either one or all 6 New York Bight lease areas to those ongoing and planned activities may add to the overall impacts, to people, animals and habitats that they may already be experiencing.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Courtney. We're going to move now to another set of questions. And we'll, we'll go back to Luke Feinberg again. Luke if you can share your video.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: We will bring you up on the screen here with us.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: There he is. Hi, Luke. Okay, so next question we have is.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Let's see, "I would like to know why the windmills off of LBI will not be further offshore in the New York Bight, as residents have requested?"

Luke Feinberg: Yeah, hi, thank you so much for the question. It's, it's a good one. You know overall, it's BOEM's responsibility to site offshore wind in, in areas in the ocean for potential renewal, renewable energy development,

Luke Feinberg: and the process in the New York Bight was a 4-year effort that endeavored to consider a number of competing factors, and namely, a desire to maintain current activities in ocean space,

Luke Feinberg: and allow space to responsibly develop renewable energy.

Luke Feinberg: You know in general terms, the further from shore that one goes, visual impacts do tend to decrease.

Luke Feinberg: However, locating wind farms further from shore may increase your eventual cost of energy or conflict, conflict with existing navigational or, or fisheries uses. So

Luke Feinberg: your question is definitely a good one, because it highlights the fact that there is no acre of space in the New York Bight, or really anywhere on the Atlantic coast, for, for that matter, that

Luke Feinberg: is not conflicted today, or, or will perhaps be tomorrow or perhaps not been used in the past. So, it's our job to consider all of those factors, and

Luke Feinberg: you'll note that there are several lease areas, as part of the New York Bight, the 6 New York Bight leases, that are located considerably far from shore, dramatically decreasing any visual impacts.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, thank you. Next question we have is, "when did the people approve to install windmills?"

Luke Feinberg: Yeah, thanks for the question. And, and just as a reminder,

Luke Feinberg: the scope of this discussion is the 6 New York Bight leases.

Luke Feinberg: And that can be a little confusing because we're using the term New York Bight as discussing, you know, a region. But there are other leases in this area. In fact, leasing has been active in the general area since about 2015,

Luke Feinberg: and these New York Bight leases were executed in 2022. So, there are other leases in the region at various point in the development process, in addition to what we're discussing today.

Luke Feinberg: At this point no wind turbines have been approved for installation within the 6 New York Bight lease areas.

Luke Feinberg: And this Draft Programmatic Environment Impact Statement analyzes a representative project. So, once we get a construction operation plan, which is really the plan that tells us

Luke Feinberg: what a Lessee is proposing to do for particular lease area, we'll do a specific analysis on that

Luke Feinberg: scope of work that they plan to conduct. That's the NEPA analysis.

Luke Feinberg: And this review process allows another opportunity for public input.

Luke Feinberg: So, if we do get to a situation where BOEM approves the construction and operation plan, additional facility, design, and installation reports will be required to be submitted to our sister agency, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement.

Luke Feinberg: And it's only upon approval of those plans that actual installation can begin.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, thank you. Next question we have is, "which projects will be the models?"

Luke Feinberg: Yup, that's another good one. Because the analysis in the draft PEIS was prepared

Luke Feinberg: before any of the, the New York Bight leases have the construction operation plans submitted.

Luke Feinberg: BOEM used a, a representative project design envelope which Courtney discussed earlier.

Luke Feinberg: And that's what we use for the environmental analysis. And that

Luke Feinberg: representative project design envelope is a range of technical parameters that describes a single wind energy project that could occur within the New York Bight lease area. And again, once we get more specific information, we'll use that in further analysis down the road.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Luke. I think we're going to move on to our next kind of set of questions here. That will be answered by Jeri Wisman. Jeri, if you could go ahead and share your video.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: We will bring you up,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: on the webinar screen here.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: There's Jeri, hi Jeri.

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): Hey.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, so our first question for you is, "why are incidental take authorizations. Oh, why are incidental takes authorized on threatened species?"

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): Yeah, thank you for this question. So, "taken" marine mammal is actually a term that's specifically defined under the Marine Mammal Protection Act or the MMPA.

Jeri Wisma (BOEM): And the Endangered Species Act or the ESA.

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): So, while the programmatic DEIS analyzes impacts ESA listed species, the taking of marine mammal is not determined through NEPA but is through the MMPA and/or ESA.

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): And for clarity, BOEM does not authorize any permits or takes, only the National Marine Fisheries Service or NMFS, has the authority through the ESA or MMPA.

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): So, the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act require that in incidental take documents are prepared to estimate the potential for harassment and or harm resulting from offshore wind development prior to any activities being conducted.

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): Types of incidental take include a Level B harassment. So, for example, behavioral disturbance or temporary hearing, threshold shift.

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): Or Level A harassment. So, for example, permanent hearing, threshold shift or other types of non-serious injury and/or serious, or injury or mortality. So, to date offshore wind developers have not applied for, and MNFS has not approved any authorization for mortality of any marine mammals incidental to offshore wind site characterization surveys or construction activities.

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): Given the nature of this programmatic document, Lessees covered will not submit an application under the MMPA for incidental take regulation until they are at the construction operation and decommissioning permitting phase of their individual wind projects. And through future consultations, mitigation measures in addition to the ones analyzed and adopted through this Programmatic EIS, may be identified to further minimize and mitigate impacts to ESA listed species.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, thank you for that.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And next question we have is, “why are you providing take charts, if wind development doesn't harm or harass whales?”

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): Yeah, thank you again for your question. This programmatic EIS, again, it does not authorize take while the DEIS analyzes impacts to ESA list species, the taking of the marine mammal, of marine mammals is determined again through the Marine Mammal Protection Act, or and/or the Endangered Species Act.

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): BOEM does not authorize any permits or takes only MNFS has the authority to do so.

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): The ESA and the MMPA are 2 laws that protect endangered and threatened species, and it does make it illegal to take, export or import those listed species or their parts. However, there are some exceptions that make it legal to take protected species for incidental take such as marine mammals or sea turtles. Permits and authorizations allow Lessees to conduct their activities legally under the ESA and MMPA.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, thank you. Next question is, “did the PEIS considers shifts in marine life,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: key fishing areas and marine habitats due to climate change and/or other causes over the project life?”

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And then there's a question mark about AMMMs.

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): Yeah, so the programmatic DEIS, it describes the affected environment for each biological resource in the document. The section describe and includes a description of existing conditions as well as the discussion of non-routine activities and events which includes climate change and/or environmental trends that affect the various biological resources

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): And specific to your question for fisheries and habitat, regional effects of climate change, including ocean acidification, increasing sea temperatures and changes in ocean circulation patterns are influencing finfish and invertebrates and essential fish habitat. And we recognize that the impacts of climate change are likely to affect habitat suitability for and species distributions of finfish and invertebrates in the geographic analysis area, including EFH.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Let's see, next question is, “Northern diamondback terrapins crossroads near a shoreline near the time that they give birth to young,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: so fencing have proven to be inadequate to prevent these crossings.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: BOEM, recommend temporary signs, and reduce speed regulations for trucks and vehicles, traffic during construction and decommissioning.” I think that's a suggestion for BOEM to recommend that. But your thoughts there.

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): Yeah, thank you for your comment. So, avoidance, minimization, mitigation, and monitoring measures

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): are analyzed in the draft Programmatic EIS, and then described in detail, in the Appendix G in that document, titled Mitigation and Monitoring. And these measures are focused on BOEM's area of jurisdiction, which is the Outer Continental Shelf.

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): BOEM will evaluate impacts to coastal and upland resources during the environmental review of the individual construction and operations plan.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Next question is, "how does BOEM know when Lessee is responsible for a take of a marine animal, for example, a whale?"

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): Yeah, thank you. So again, so take is of a marine mammal. Excuse me.

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): Is a term that is specifically defined under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, as well as the Endangered Species Act, and it does include a range of effects from changes in behavior to injury and mortality and this is authorized by the National Marine Fisheries Sanctuary through the ESA or MMPA.

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): And while it is the responsibility of the Lessee to report any incident with a protected species. BOEM, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, the National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service, we work together to ensure that Lessees are complying with their permits. Including monitoring and reporting of protected species.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, thank you. And the next question we have is, "who monitors the takes allowed,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: who ensures compliance with regulations, and there has been no open discussion with offshore wind on the Empire Wind Project?" So, a 3-part question there.

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): Yeah, so BOEM and the National Marine Fisheries Service, we require reporting of any incident with protected species, including marine mammals and ESA listed species as a part of the permitting requirements. And BOEM and NMFS monitor to ensure impacts to marine mammals and ESA listed species do not exceed those authorized under the MMPA or ESA.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Let's see, next question is, "how can offshore wind benefit marine mammals?"

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): Yeah, thank you. Thank you again for your question. So within, in the programmatic DEIS in Section 3.5.6, there's a discussion of the anticipated impacts of the proposed action on marine mammals.

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): BOEM reviews the best available science to evaluate potential impacts. And, and we determine that minor beneficial impacts are possible due to the reef effect, which is the structures put in place as part of offshore winds may attract, end up attracting fish.

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): And this would

Jeri Wisman (BOEM): be most likely to benefit animals like seals and tooth whales like dolphins in the area.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, thank you Jeri for, for answering all those questions for us. We'll go ahead and move on to another set of questions, and Brandon Jensen is going to come

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: answer them for us. So, Brandon, if you can please put your video on, and we will

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: bring you to the meeting here.

Brandon Jensen (BOEM): Hi, can hear me, okay?

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Yes, great. Hi, Brandon.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, so our first question for you is, "what benefits does offshore wind have for the ocean? I have heard about artificial reefs developing under them. Can you touch on that?"

Brandon Jensen (BOEM): Sure. Hi, everyone! Good evening, and thanks for hanging out with us. This is a long series of questions and answers. This is great, my name is Brandon Jensen, Fisheries Biologist with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management Office for Renewable Energy Programs.

Brandon Jensen (BOEM): So, thanks for the question. Much of the ocean floor in the New York Bight Project area consist of soft bottom habitat, minimal soft bottom habitat, in our analysis would be converted into hard bottom, with placement of offshore wind infrastructure. That would include novel habitat for hard bottom species, as well as creating the brief effect that you mentioned, which was mentioned just a moment ago by Jeri, around those structures, including foundations, cabling, cable protection, scour protection features, etc.

Brandon Jensen (BOEM): So, fish and other marine life that are attracted to or settle on those hard bottom habitats would benefit from those structures. Impacts resulting from habitat disturbances, from those habitat disturbances or conversions is not expected though, to result in a population level effect within the geographic analysis area.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, thank you. Next question we have, "what method specifically, in a lab setting, computer modeling in the field, were or are to be used to determine potential adverse marine impacts on benthic species, such as horseshoe crabs and the long-term effects on the benthic habitat?"

Brandon Jensen (BOEM): Yeah, thanks. It's a, it's a really good question. So BOEM, we have it on our mandate to use the best available science to understand the potential impacts to living marine resources, including benthic habitat from proposed projects.

Brandon Jensen (BOEM): So, the draft Programmatic EIS includes a thorough analysis of benthic resources in Chapter 3.1, I'm sorry. 3.5.2, and the finfish, invertebrate and essential fish habitat, Chapter 5.3.5. So definitely direct you to those for thorough analysis. We complete, I'm sorry, BOEM's approval of construction, operations plans, or COPs

Brandon Jensen (BOEM): has the potential to include specific monitoring measures. So, I would encourage you to take a look at what's provided already, and to submit a comment on measures that you may want to see included for protection or monitoring of horseshoe crabs in this environmental review process. Thanks.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thanks Brandon. Okay, next question is, "how will the current and future commercial fishermen be compensated for the loss of these fishing grounds?"

Brandon Jensen (BOEM): Yeah, great question. So fishing is an important use of the Exclusive Economic Zone, or EEZ that BOEM must consider in its decision-making process.

Brandon Jensen (BOEM): BOEM regularly engages with commercial and recreational fishermen to understand their concerns from both their biological and socioeconomic impact perspective.

Brandon Jensen (BOEM): Project specific environmental assessments include an analysis of impacts to fisheries and, and every project approved to date has included fishery compensation programs. The draft PEIS includes proposed mitigation measures to reduce those impacts to fisheries that may be adopted for the nearby projects. So, I encourage you to take a look at Tab G1, the proposed action avoidance,

Brandon Jensen (BOEM): minimization, mitigation, and monitoring measures, AMMMs. In Appendix G, which includes the commercial fisheries Measure-1 or ComFish-1. Compensation for gear loss and damage, and ComFish-6 which is fisheries compensatory mitigation.

Brandon Jensen (BOEM): These measures reflect BOEM's draft fisheries, mitigation guidance developed over the past year. Which has been reviewed by the agencies, tribes, and other stakeholders. Your comments on these measures are very welcome and solicited through this PEIS process. So, please we encourage you to provide some comment there. Thanks.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Brandon. Thank you so much for providing some answers for us.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: We're going to go ahead and move on to the next budget questions. And Meghan Cornelison is going to help answer them for us.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: So, Meghan, if you can go ahead and turn your video on, that'd be great.

Meghan Cornelison (BOEM): Can you hear me?

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Yes, we can hear. You can't see you quite yet.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: There you are. Okay.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay. So, we have a question for you, it says, well, maybe it's more of a comment. So, it says, "please report specific metrics for

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: diversity, inclusion improvements from 2023 and 2024 goals."

Meghan Cornelison (BOEM): Yes, thank you. So, I'm going to answer that question in the context of diversity and inclusion for offshore wind jobs. So specific employment and hiring decisions, including those related to diversity and inclusion of jobs in offshore wind development, you know, those were

made by project developers, many of whom have expressed commitments to supporting job opportunities for underserved communities.

Meghan Cornelison (BOEM): BOEM, as a federal agency does not direct or track hiring decisions by the developers. But we do have some resources to share with you here. Information on the Lessees

Meghan Cornelison (BOEM): for the New York Bight lease areas, can be found on the Lessee websites and we'll put the link to the New York Bight page in the chat now, and if you scroll down to the bottom of that you'll see links to information pages for each of the 6 New York Bight Lessees.

Meghan Cornelison (BOEM): And you might have to look through some information there, but you'll find some contact information, and some reports and additional information, if you're interested. Additionally, there's contact information for Lessees in the Lessee point of contact table,

Meghan Cornelison (BOEM): developed through the New York Bight Environmental Justice Forums and we're going to put the link to the

Meghan Cornelison (BOEM): New York EJ Forums webpage in the chat as well. And then we'll also provide the link to the specific table that has Lessee point of contacts, so there's information available. They, you know, overtime will be providing more information on, you know, the hiring strategies.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And it looks like, thank you Meghan. It looks like we're going to go back to Luke to answer a few more questions for us. So, Luke, if you could please

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: share your video again.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And I just appreciate everybody for staying on late with us and hearing the answers to all these questions.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Luke, welcome back. The question we have for you is, "please identify what domestic and foreign company entities will profit from this project and the amount of contracts?"

Luke Feinberg: Yeah, yeah, it's a, it's a great question.

Luke Feinberg: So,

Luke Feinberg: under BOEM's regulations, our leaseholders must be a,

Luke Feinberg: we have set requirements, basically, you need to be a private, public, or municipal corporation,

Luke Feinberg: officially organized with the laws of any state in the United States. This is regarding territory for insular possession subject to U.S jurisdiction. So basically, what that means is, you need to be a U.S entity in order for you to even come and be a Lessee.

Luke Feinberg: So that's a,

Luke Feinberg: an important aspect. It doesn't mean that there are companies that come in that set up organizations in the United States that are primarily

Luke Feinberg: supported by other agencies or other organizations that are outside United States, but they do need to have that the U.S company started there. So, further regarding

Luke Feinberg: supply chain, BOEM included a new lease stipulation in the New York Bight leases to submit a

Luke Feinberg: supply chain commitment of goals or statement of goals, that's describing plans by the Lessee

Luke Feinberg: for contributing to the creation of a robust and resilient U.S based offshore and supply chain. And this must include the Lessees' plans for investments and supply chain improvements,

Luke Feinberg: as described within the lease itself. There's a stipulation in the lease itself called, Stipulation

Luke Feinberg: 7.1 of Addendum C, and that's in all of 6 New York Bight leases. And BOEM requires an

Luke Feinberg: annual progress report following the approval of a Construction Operation Plan

Luke Feinberg: and an evaluation of the Lessees' success in meeting those goals,

Luke Feinberg: no later than last required fabrication, installation report submission.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Luke. It looks like we will move on to

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Srinivas, you might need to share your last name with us. I think I will get it wrong. But welcome if you could please provide your video and introduce yourself.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: and help answer some questions for us.

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): Can you see me and hear me? Yes, my name is Srinivas Vishnubhotla.

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): Thank you for your question.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you. Okay, so the question is, "will radar and national security be impacted? If so, is tech being improved to fix the issues?"

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): Great. The potential impacts on military and national security and radar systems are analyzed in Section

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): 3.6.7 of the draft PEIS.

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): Potential impacts under Alternative B were found to be minor for most military and national security use,

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): and moderate for radar systems. Potential impacts under Alternative C

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): were found to be minor for most military and national security uses and radar systems.

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): Radar impacts will be further assessed by Lessees in their construction and operations plans,

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): and reviewed by BOEM and other agencies,

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): in the Tier2 project specific NEPA analysis. Furthermore,

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): potential offshore wind radar impacts and mitigations are being analyzed by affected government agencies.

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): BOEM is a member of the interagency Wind Turbine-Radar Interference Mitigation Working Group, or WTRIM.

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): One of this group's primary goals is the development of technology driven mitigation solutions.

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): A summary of ongoing and planned national security and military use activities are described in Section D.2.7,

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): and Tables D 1 through 14 of the draft PEIS. Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you. Okay, our next question for you is, "for offshore wind, how can you deem this as green energy when each turbine will need 187 gallons of grease and 40 gallons of," I think I think they meant to say, "hydraulic fluid?"

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Can you help respond to that for us?

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): Yeah, sure. Once again, thank you for your question. Fluids, like oil, grease, and fuel

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): are necessary components for each

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): wind turbine located offshore to be operational.

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): While petroleum products are used in different components of the broader project. It is important to note that there are measures taken to prevent spills or release of fluids into the ocean.

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): The draft PEIS addresses scenarios of unanticipated release of spills into receiving waters of a fluid,

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): or other substance, such as fuel,

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): chemical contaminants, hazardous materials, suspended sediment, invasive species, trash or debris.

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): Additionally, developers would prepare what is called an Oil Spill Response Plan, and will be expected to comply with U.S Coast Guard

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): and BSEE regulations relating to prevention and control of oil spills.

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): Similarly on the onshore side, releases could potentially occur from construction, equipment or activities,

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): resulting from horizontal directional drilling. All wastes generated onshore would comply with applicable State and Federal regulations, including the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act,

Srinivas Vishnubhotla (BOEM): and the Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Regulations. Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you. Thank you, Srinivas, for helping answer some of these questions.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Now we'll move on to Stephanie Sharuga.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Stephanie, if you can please share your video and help answer a few more questions for us.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Hi, okay, so the first question we have for you is, "how does BOEM verify that Lessees will stay in compliance with required AMMM, for example, noise levels?"

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): So, thank you for the question. So, as has been previously mentioned, BOEM has a number of obligations under the National Environmental Policy Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act to protect marine species.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): Advancing new appropriate mitigations is what we consider a critical, you know, for striking a balance between wind development and also the potential impacts to the marine environment. And ensuring compliance of that.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): Constructing large offshore wind facilities is known to be a relatively noisy undertaking, so the following measures are specifically aimed to reduce acoustic impacts to marine species.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): So, we have long term Passive Acoustic Monitoring or PAM introducing, we also have introducing a received sound level limit for impact pile driving,

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): sound field verification at every pile, and also, real time PAM detection during construction activities. So, these will all have reporting and monitoring requirements to ensure that compliance is taking place.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): Should these particular AMMMs, so AMMM, be required in the future as conditions of the COP approval. So, COP again, being the Construction Operations Plan. BOEM has identified the anticipated enforcing agency in Appendix G of the draft Programmatic EIS. So that's where you can find that specific information.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): And for more information specific to the proposed mitigations that we have to reduce potential acoustic impacts of the offshore wind, we're going to have a link put in the chat as well, that you can refer to.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Great, and there it is. Okay.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Stephanie. Okay, for our next question or set of questions. I think we'll have 2 of you that will be answering questions for us. So, Jen Bosyk, if you could share your video, I think you'll be answering the next several questions for us.

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): Yes, I believe so.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Yes. Okay, welcome. The question we have for you is,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: “does cement release toxins that are damaging to the marine life?”

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): So, thanks for the question, and apologies in advance for all of the technical words I'm about to drop. But I'll try to like jump to the, to the bottom line here, which is cement itself doesn't release toxins that are damaging to marine life. So, cement is made from a mixture of materials. It contains lime, silica, alumina, and those materials react to hardened and bind with an aggregate like crushed rocks.

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): So, the chemical reaction that occurs when all of those things combine,

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): it's called hydration, and all the materials kind of melt together to form the cement.

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): But once that is fully cured, it's inert. So, speaking just broadly about cement, and for any purpose, you know.

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): It's possible, I guess, that there may be some small contamination on processing equipment. Things like that. But, generally speaking, cement is inert and isn't going to leak anything hazardous into the marine environment.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, thank you. Okay, next question we have for you is, “how does BOEM justify destroying the marine environment or the ocean,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: by claims to promote protecting the environment?”

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): Yeah, so this one is, it's a good question. So BOEM's responsibility is really about managing development of the Outer Continental Shelf. So, the Federal lands underneath the water, the Federal waters. So, it's our job to manage the energy, mineral, geological resources, and our charge is to do that in an environmental and an economically responsible way. And that includes overseeing the development of renewable energy.

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): So anytime you have this sort of infrastructure project, or you have development in the offshore., there's always going to be real tradeoffs.

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): And so, you know, there's going to be risks, there's going to be benefits. And it's, it's ultimately our job

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): to use processes like the National Environmental Policy Act, and these conversations that we have with the public to

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): share the information about those benefits, about those risks. It's also our job to inform the people that are making the decisions like, what are those benefits? What are those risks?

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): And so, it's

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): our job just to disclose that and to analyze it, and to do our best to really provide that that information. And then, whether an offshore wind farm is developed or not. There's going to continue to be demand for electricity. Which will come from something, and there's going to be environmental impacts associated with that.

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): So again, through this process, it's our job to talk about the impacts and share those.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay. Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Next question we have for you is, “please clarify the status of the Empire Wind 1 and 2 projects.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Why is this meeting held during the workday?” Two-part question.

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): Okay, so just to, I guess, to jump to the meeting question first. So, this one obviously is, I think it was scheduled for beginning at 5:00 o'clock Eastern Time. We do have several other meetings that are happening, in hopes that folks will be able to participate. I know that information is up on BOEM's website.

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): There's, I think, 3 in person meetings, and then another virtual meeting. So, lots of opportunity there to participate again. And then regarding Empire Wind 1 and Empire Wind 2.

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): So those projects just to be clear, are not part of the 6 lease areas. When we talk about the New York Bight leases, we're talking about 6 particular areas, none of which are where Empire 1 and Empire 2 are being developed. So back in November of 2023, DOI, the Department of the Interior, announced the approval of the construction and operation of the Empire Win project offshore New York.

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): So, Empire Wind U.S.,

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): proposes to develop two offshore wind facilities known as Empire Wind 1 and Empire Wind 2, and that lease area is located about 12 nautical miles south of Long Island, and about 16.9 nautical miles. Also, like nautical miles. That's rough. It's like, it's pretty close to stats, like a regular mile. So just for context for people. That's about how far it is. So, and together those projects would have a total capacity of 2,076 megawatts,

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): that BOEM estimates could power more than 700,000 homes each year. And we will put a link in the chat that points to our website about Empire Wind, if you want more information or have additional questions on that one.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Jen, I think, and there's the link in the chat now. Next question we have for you is, “how will offshore wind projects prevent destruction of all sea life from zooplankton to the blue whale?”

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): Yeah. So, thanks for this question. And for you know the clear concern about marine life. It's a concern that BOEM shares and BOEM takes its, takes our responsibility to consider the impacts of offshore wind seriously. So, this analysis that we've been talking about, this Programmatic EIS, is an example of the types of review that BOEM does before we would approve any activities in the offshore environment.

Jen Bosyk (BOEM): And really it boils down to, as I was saying earlier, like this disclosure and consideration of all the benefits and risks that are associated with development.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: And next question, I believe Stephanie Sharuga is going to help us answer. So, thank you, Jen. Appreciate it. Stephanie, if you can share your video again and come back on with us.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): I'm in here.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, so Stephanie, the question we have for you is, "what is the effect of seafloor site preparation activities and what alternatives are considered and what AMMMs are considered?"

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): Thanks for this question. So BOEM anticipates that different site preparation activities would be completed to ensure that both the turbine foundations and the submarine cables would not be affected by debris or other hazards during the installation process.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): These activities include, there's kind of a range of things, and they include debris clearance, boulder relocation, and then pre-installation surveys. And some of this may result in temporary benthic habitat disturbance.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): We do have 20 AMMMs, or AMMM, measures that are in place and are identified that could reduce these impacts to the benthic resources.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): For example, by avoiding sensitive benthic habitat or minimizing boulder relocation and scour, adding scour protection. So, there's kind of a variety, and these AMMMs can be found in Appendix G of the PEIS. So, more detail on them is located in that appendix.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, thank you. Next question we have for you is, "how are you handling the glauconite issue?" I said that correctly.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): Yes. So, this, this one has a little bit longer of a response just to provide a little bit of background on glauconite, since it's something that not everybody has heard of before, or familiar with. So, glauconite is, it's often referred to as we call like green sand, because of its very characteristic green color. It is characterized by really low strength and very low weathering resistance.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): It's composed of a number of different things. But it's fundamentally, it's like a potassium, iron, aluminum kind of silicate. And it's formed within shallow marine environments.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): So, the particularly unique mechanical properties of glauconite have a lot of potential engineering implications for construction activities. And these sands can be characterized through geophysical and geo-technical investigations,

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): you know, of, of areas.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): And BOEM has previously published a paper to describe these glauconitic sands, including details on the characteristics of the glauconite deposits, typical locations that contain these sands, and then also how they're they affect offer wind installation. And we'll drop the link for that paper in the chat.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): But fundamentally, these glauconite sands, we do recognize that they may be present in the New York Bight lease areas, and depending on the classification of the glauconite sands

that are present, and you know their locations, you know, there could be challenges associated with the potential offshore wind development in those areas.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): And so glauconite sand presence has been analyzed in the PEIS, and you can find that particular discussion in Section 3.5.6, which is Impact in Vibratory Pile Driving section.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): And again, we'll put the link for the paper on glauconite sand in the, in the chat.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, thank you. Let's see, we have another question for you. "Are your subject matter experts independent of offshore wind?"

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): So,

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): short answer is very much, yes. So, all of our subject matter experts, including myself, we are employees of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management or BOEM.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): All BOEM subject matter experts have a really wide variety of expertise, covering sort of the entire range of possible environmental and, you know, socioeconomic topic areas that we consider, you know, as part of our EIS analyses.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): And our subject matter experts, you know, we really rely on the best available science in our particular subject matter areas. And this includes,

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): a lot of different types of information and data related to renewable energy both collected in the U.S., but also internationally. And then we also have, you know, rely on a lot of variety, like quite a variety of studies as well, that are funded both by BOEM as well as others.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Great. Okay, thank you.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Another question here is, "is the spacing of turbines sufficient to reduce wake effect, sediment plumes which have been shown to be a large problem in the North Sea if they are less than one mile apart?"

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): So, thank you for this question. The impacts of this wake effect are discussed in Appendix B.1.4 of the draft PEIS and it focuses primarily on discussing atmospheric conditions like temperature and moisture.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): Sediment plumes, however, are going to often be associated with the presence of different structures on the seafloor, and sediment plumes are often very localized, and the sediment suspension would lead to potentially interim and localized impacts.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): Things like water depth, current strength and sediment type are going to be some of the big factors that, you know, affect sediment plumes.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): As you know, project, you know, sometimes these projects in the North Sea, sometimes tend to be in shallower water, so.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, thank you. Next question, and I think we have one more question after that. And, then we're going to wrap up our question-and-answer session tonight. Stephanie, you get the last two. The question is, "can you reshare the timeline slide?"

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): So, we will have the recording of the meeting posted on the New York Bight PEIS website, and the presentations will be included as part of that recording.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): I'll all kind of share a brief recap of information that was on that particular timeline slide. So, the draft Programmatic EIS was published on January 12th, 2024.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): And the public comment period will close on February 26th, 2024.

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): We tentatively expect to publish the final Programmatic EIS in October of 2024, and tentatively expect to issue the record of decision or ROD in December 2024.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay, thank you. And our final question is, "when will the video of this meeting be available on your website? And will it include participants' comments?"

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): So, the recording of this meeting will be posted on the New York Bight PEIS website within 2 weeks, following this meeting. And yes, the recording will include all the public comments that were provided during the meeting. So, it's the full, the full recording of the meeting,

Stephanie Sharuga (BOEM): including this Q&A section as well.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Wonderful. Okay, thank you, Stephanie.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: That concludes our question-and-answer portion for this evening. I want to thank all of our subject matter experts for providing

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: such thoughtful responses, and I want to thank all of our participants who submitted such thoughtful questions. I do see that while we were going through the public comment period and the Q&A session that some folks submitted additional questions to the Q&A pod.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: As we mentioned earlier in the meeting, we were not, we'll not be accepting additional questions after the public comment session from today. However, there is an opportunity for you to ask your questions still, at the next public meeting. The next virtual meeting, which is identical to this one is on February 13th, and I think we have information in the chat a few times about when that is,

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: and how to access it. We also have 3 in-person, open house style meetings next week, where you can talk directly with the subject matter experts here tonight and others, and get your questions answered there as well.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Okay.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: So, with that, we have come to the end of our meeting today. I want to thank again, everybody for your time and participation. I'm now going to turn it over to Jessica Stromberg for some closing remarks. Jessica is the Chief of the Environmental Branch for the Renewable Energy, for Renewable Energy, and in the Office of

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: the Renewable Energy Programs at BOEM. So over to you Jessica for some final remarks.

Jess Stromberg (BOEM): Thank you so much, and good evening, everyone. As mentioned, my name is Jess Stromberg, and I am the Chief of the Environment Branch for Renewable Energy

Jess Stromberg (BOEM): in the Office of Renewable Energy Programs at BOEM, and I want to thank Kearns and West and, and BOEM staff for holding a successful virtual public meeting for the New York Bight Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. We had a really great turnout this evening, and to everyone that participated in the meeting today, I want to thank you for spending these last few hours with us, and for the many thoughtful comments and questions that were submitted. All of the comments that were received today and during the comment period,

Jess Stromberg (BOEM): will be assessed and considered by BOEM during preparation of the final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. And so, I hope this has been a good forum for you to share comments on aspects of the analysis that are of concern, and that, you also found our answers to the questions to be both useful and responsive.

Jess Stromberg (BOEM): And I just want to assure everyone that your input is essential to ensuring that the analysis is sufficient and supported by the best available science. And I want to reiterate what's been shared multiple times that there are multiple methods

Jess Stromberg (BOEM): available to provide Your comments on the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement by the deadline, which is February 26th, 2024, and you can give them through the regulations.gov portal and/or by mail. And I think we've got additional information that will post in the chat again, about how to comment and it's also available on BOEM's website.

Jess Stromberg (BOEM): Just as a reminder, as was mentioned previously, a recording of today's virtual meeting will be posted on BOEM's New York Bight Draft Programmatic EIS virtual meeting room webpage. So, I want to thank everyone again for participating in today's virtual public meeting, and I hope everyone has a good rest of your evening.

Briana Moseley, Facilitator, Kearns & West: Thank you, Jessica, and thank you again everyone for your time today. And this meeting is officially adjourned. Thank you.