

**GULF OF MAINE INTERGOVERNMENTAL RENEWABLE ENERGY TASK FORCE
MAY 10-11, 2023 - MEETING SUMMARY
BANGOR, MAINE**

DISCLAIMER: This meeting summary was prepared by the Consensus Building Institute (CBI), a non-profit entity contracted by BOEM to facilitate Task Force discussions. This summary is not intended to be a meeting transcript. Rather, it focuses on the main points covered during the meeting.

MEETING IN BRIEF

BOEM convened on May 10 & 11, 2023 a meeting of the Gulf of Maine Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force to facilitate coordination, consultation, and information sharing among federal, Tribal, state, and local governments regarding the renewable energy leasing process on the Outer Continental Shelf in the Gulf of Maine. The first day focused on three topics that are shaping the conversations about offshore wind: floating offshore technology, offshore wind data collection activities and associated analyses for whales and other protected species, and transmission planning. On the second day, the Task Force discussed BOEM’s leasing process in the Gulf of Maine, including detailed information on commercial leasing steps as well as Maine’s requested research lease. Both days included significant opportunities for public input.

ACTION ITEMS

Who	What
BOEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post all presentation slides, meeting summary, and meeting recording. • Review comments on the Call for Information and Nominations for commercial leasing and the Intent to Conduct an Environmental Assessment for the research lease. • Proceed with next steps in the leasing process.
Task Force members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to provide written comments on the Call Area and research lease Environmental Assessment and encourage other stakeholders to comment as well.

ATTENDANCE

50 Task Force members attended the meeting in person. In addition, 132 members of the public attended in person over the two days, including representatives from the fishing industry, interested citizens, environmental non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. At least 135 observers tuned into the livestream.

DISCUSSION

Below is a summary of key themes and topics discussed during the meeting. All presentations and recordings are posted online.

Day 1

Welcome and Opening Remarks

The meeting opened with a welcome and introductory remarks from Dan Burgess, director of the Governor’s Energy Office in Maine, and Karen Baker, Chief of BOEM’s Office of Renewable Energy Program (OREP). In addition, BOEM Project Coordinator Luke Feinberg provided a brief overview of the status and key milestones of BOEM’s process in the Gulf of Maine for commercial leasing and Maine’ research lease.

Floating Offshore Wind Technology

Walt Musial, Principal Engineer at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, offered a presentation on global trends and experience with floating offshore wind. Topics included experience from European projects, turbine spacing, anchoring systems and efforts to reduce the footprint from these systems, trade-offs in placing projects further from shore, and life-cycle carbon emissions from offshore wind. Task Force members asked questions about the most relevant research and development challenges for the Gulf of Maine, floating turbine performance in Europe and cabling between turbines. Public observers offered written questions about experience in cold waters (i.e, ice conditions and freezing), turbines’ maximum wind speeds, costs, more detail about the pros and cons on placing turbines further offshore, and disposal of decommissioned projects. Please see the recording for responses.

Offshore Wind Data Collection Activities: Analysis for Whales and other Protected Species

BOEM marine biologist Kyle Baker and BOEM acoustician Stanley Labak offered presentations about BOEM's approach and requirements for ensuring marine mammals aren't impacted by offshore wind surveys, up to date information around the unusual whale stranding event on the U.S. East Coast (with data since the event began in 2017 and likely causes of these strandings), and a detailed look at the research around potential impact from different survey equipment, which has led BOEM and other federal agencies to determine that current mitigation strategies used for site assessment are protective of marine mammals.

Transmission Planning

BOEM project coordinator Josh Gange offered a presentation about transmission from offshore wind and the BOEM-Department of Energy Transmission Planning Effort. Task Force questions focused on different types of technology and electro-magnetic fields produced, whether there is a short list of interconnection points along the shore, how the leasing process considers transmission, and existing efforts to develop backbone transmission in the Gulf of Maine. A representative from the Stellwagen Marine Sanctuary said the sanctuary may potentially define pre-planned and pre-surveyed corridors for eventual transmission.

Day 2**Welcome and BOEM's Commercial Wind Energy Leasing Process in the Gulf of Maine**

Dan Burgess and Karen Baker opened the second day of the meeting. BOEM Project Coordinator Seth Theuerkauf provided a detailed review of BOEM's commercial leasing process in the Gulf of Maine. James Morris, from NOAA's National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NOAA-NCCOS), provided information about the collaboration between BOEM and NOAA-NCCOS on spatial modeling to inform the process. Task Force questions focused around how to set appropriate sub-models and weightings for the Gulf of Maine (there was a specific suggestion to separate out natural and cultural resources), the ability to see fisheries economic impacts by port or state in the model, the way costs are factored into the model and how future changes to the Gulf are factored into the model and decision-making. In addition, Task Force members expressed concern about the lack of data around bats, the difficulties in incorporating radio telemetry and satellite tracking of birds into the analysis, and how to weave ongoing research into the process, such as NOAA's deep sea coral mapping, which has a longer timeline than the designation of potential Wind Energy Areas. Several written questions from the public were also addressed. They are included in a separate summary document of public input.

Tribal Perspectives

Tribal representatives from the Passamaquoddy Tribe of Indians, Indian Township, Passamaquoddy Tribe of Indians, Pleasant Point, Penobscot Nation, and Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians offered comments and reflections on BOEM's Gulf of Maine process. Comments focused on the importance of involving Tribes in the process, seeking assurance the submerged paleo-cultural heritage will be properly identified and avoided, concerns about potential increased use of a road leading to Eastport that impacts Tribal members, concerns about having enough time and resources to engage in the process, and a strong desire to ensure no negative impacts on ecosystems and fishing livelihoods. Passamaquoddy Tribe of Indians representatives thanked BOEM for accepting an invitation to visit the Tribe the following day.

State Perspectives

Maine (Celina Cunningham, Deputy Director of the Governor's Energy Office), New Hampshire (Mark Sanborn, Assistant Commissioner, NH Department of Environmental Services), and Massachusetts (Undersecretary Michael Judge, Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs) offered presentations on the states' priorities around offshore wind and the BOEM leasing process. A Task Force member asked Massachusetts about its lessons learned from the leasing activity south of Cape Cod and the islands.

Research Lease Application

BOEM's Luke Feinberg described next steps and key issues related to Maine's requested research lease in federal waters. Task Force participants offered comments and questions about the goals of the research lease, including: concerns that it will be done in parallel with commercial leasing, rather than ahead of commercial activity, limiting its opportunity for applied learning; doing research around interactions with bats and birds; ensuring a baseline condition is established; and monitoring the turbines themselves to confirm engineering models. Public observers offered written questions about wanting to study secondary entanglement risk for whales from fishing gear caught in mooring systems, as well as the level of environmental review that will be required.

US Coast Guard – Port Access Route Study

LCDR Jacob Aulner from the U.S. Coast Guard provided a presentation about the recently completed Port Access Route Study for the Gulf of Maine. The presentation described the data used in the study, next steps, and concerns about the location of Maine's proposed research array.

PUBLIC INPUT

People attending the meeting who weren't Task Force members had multiple opportunities to provide input, including through written questions to presenters, three public input opportunities over the two days, and informal conversation with BOEM staff and other attendees at the poster sessions before and after the meetings, as well as during breaks. Public comments and questions are summarized in a separate document that is being submitted to the public record.

PARTICIPANT LIST

Task Force members

Name		Affiliation
Lauren	Aspromonti	BOEM
Jacob	Aulner	U.S. Coast Guard
Karen	Baker	BOEM
Kyle	Baker	BOEM
Christina	Breen	Office of US Sen. Angus S. King, Jr.
Patrick	Brown	USCG Sector Northern New England
Dan	Burgess	Governor's Energy Office - Maine
Bruce	Carlisle	Massachusetts Clean Energy Center
Erik	Chapman	NH Sea grant
Pradip	Chattopadhyay	New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission
Todd	Chaudhry	USGS
Amanda	Cross	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Celina	Cunningham	Governor's Energy Office - Maine
Ralph	Dana	Penobscot Nation
Aaron	Davis	US Coast Guard
Ted	Diers	NH Department of Environmental Services
Lissa	Eng	BOEM
Lisa	Engler	MA Office of Coastal Zone Management
Luke	Feinberg	BOEM
Joshua	Gange	BOEM
James	Gillway	Town of Searsport
Naomi	Handell	USACE NAD
Brandon	Jensen	BOEM
Michael	Judge	Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Andrew	Kornacki	BOEM
Stanley	Labak	BOEM
Chuck	Loring	Penobscot Nation
Louis	Luchini	U.S. Small Business Administration
David	MacDuffee	BOEM
Paul	Maniccia	USACE
Audrey	Mayer	US Fish & Wildlife Service
Meredith	Mendelson	Maine Dept of Marine Resources

James	Morris	NOAA-NCCOS
Rena	Newell	Passamaquoddy Tribal Representative
John	Noll	State of Maine
Liz	Oliver	BOEM
Peter	Olmstead	USACE
Cheri	Patterson	NH Fish and Game Department
Blossom	Robinson	BOEM
Mark	Sanborn	New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services
Zach	Schmesser	Congressman Jared Golden
Chris	Sparkman	USCG
Tiffany	Strout	Maine - District 11
Seth	Theuerkauf	BOEM
Stephanie	Vail-Muse	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Sharri	Venno	Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians
Stephanie	Watson	Maine Governor's Energy Office
Erin	Wilkinson	Maine Department of Marine Resources
Christian	Williams	NHDES Coastal Program
Carl	Wilson	Maine Dept. of Marine Resources

Facilitation team

Name	Affiliation
David Plumb	CBI
Simenesh Semine	CBI
Laura Singer	CBI

Other attendees

Name	Affiliation
William	Anderson
Michelle	Bachman
Bonnie	Bain
Amanda	Beaulieu
Barbara	Beblowski
Michael	Behrmann
Christine	Beitl
Anne	Berleant
Caitlin	Berni
Hannah	Berten
Katy	Bland

Lydia	Blume
Deirdre	Boelke
Jay	Borkland
Damian	Brady
Benedict	Brian
Joseph	Brodie
Peter	Browne
Thomas	Carugati
Chris	Cash
Beth	Casoni
Paul	Chaiken
Stephanie	Clement
Steve	Clemmer
Larry	Clifford
Emily	Coffin
Fara	Courtney
Jennifer	Couture
David	Cowan
Dustin	Delano
David	Deutsch
Kevin	Dion
Eliza	Donoghue
Brian	Dresser
Alana	Duerr
John	Dunderdale
Craig	Francis
Ryan	Gahagan
Carol	Gildham
Matt	Gilley
Michelle	Gilmore
Sarah	Gravel
Sarah	Haggerty
John	Harker
John	Harkes
Amalia	Harrington
Matthew	Harris
Elise	Hartill
Susannah	Hatch
Thomas	Hickey
Julia	Hiltonsmith
Corey	Hinton

Fiona	Hogan
Erica	Horne
Connor	Horton
Randi	Jackson
Jessica	Jansujwicz
Ernest	Johnson
Scott	Johnston
Connor	Kasch
Kristin	Kelleher
John	Kelly
Zak	Kendall
Dan	Kennedy
Zack	Klyver
Nick	Krakoff
Janelle	Lavallee
Jerry	Leeman
Sean	Mahoney
Daniel	Martin
Patrice	McCarron
Genevieve	McDonald
Hannah	McDundy
Mike	McGuigan
Christopher	McGuire
James	McLeod
Brian	McNiff
Jack	Merrill
Stephen	Molodetz
Forrest	Moody
Michael	Murphy
Walt	Musial
Roy	Nash
Steve	O'Neill
Carol	Oldhan
Virginia	Olsen
Kate	ONeal
Timothy	Pavilonis
Lindsey	Perry
Megan	Porter
Joy	Prescott
Grant	Provost
Francis	Pullaro

Gwyneth	Roberts
Anthony	Ronzio
Jocelyn	Runnebaum
Jack	Shapiro
Emily	Shumchenia
Geoff	Smith
Todd	Sparling
Christine	Spear
Willis	Spear
Peter	Stein
Julia	Stepanuk
Tara	Stevens
Erin	Summers
Pat	Taylor
Rob	Ticha
Matthew	Tomasko
Mary	Tooley
Sherrie	Trefry
Ethan	Trembly
Pam	Trinward
Tammy	Turley
Stephen	Von Vogt
Jacob	Ward
Jake	Ward
Hannah	Webb
Chris	Weiner
Rob	Werner
Dave	Wilby
Juret	Wildwistle
John	Williamson
Kelt	Wilska
Chris	Wissemann
Carol	Woodcock
Casey	Yanos
David	Zachow
Gayle	Zydlowski