



# Preliminary Fisheries Perspectives

BOEM Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task  
Force for the Gulf of Maine

December 12, 2019

# Ongoing (and Expected) Fishery Engagement

- States – Working Groups in NH, MA, CT, RI, NY, NJ
- Federal - BOEM Task Force; BOEM “listening sessions;” NMFS/NEFSC/NEFMC/ASMFC engagement
- Regional - Regional Planning Bodies→NROC, data portals
- Developers – Leaseholding *and* prospective (100s of individual meetings)
- Academic institutions, other research activities
- Various federal, state, local public comment periods
- AND MORE!

RODA’s role: Try to make sense of this for fishermen, minimize duplication of effort, maximize impact of engagement



# About RODA

- Goal
  - To coordinate science and policy approaches to managing development of the Outer Continental Shelf in a way that minimizes conflicts with existing traditional and historical fishing.
- How
  - Broad membership-based coalition of fishing industry associations and fishing companies with an interest in improving the compatibility of new offshore development with their businesses.
  - “Strength in Numbers!”
  - MoU with NMFS and BOEM to improve *science* and *communications*
  - Limited (but high-impact) studies regarding mapping, fishermen-derived data, etc., plus partnerships for research coordination/prioritization (ROSA, etc.)



# RODA Membership Relevant to GOM

- Spans from community groups to large corporations and individual operators with GOM fishing operations, covering most regional fisheries, including:
  - Associations: Maine Lobstermen's Association; Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association; Maine Coast Fishermen's Association; Fishing Partnership Support Services; Groundfish Sectors X and XIII; Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Alliance
  - Businesses: O'Hara Corp; Lund's Fisheries; Atlantic Capes
  - Vessels fishing in GOM from as far south as NJ
  - And more – and growing constantly



# Gulf of Maine (GOM)

- Floating projects are no-fish areas

- Fishing in the GOM
  - Diverse in gear type and targeted species
  - Occurs throughout the GOM
  - Networked chains/anchors
  - Freely moving interarray cables?
    - ➔ Incompatible with mobile and fixed gear
- Siting is key!



## Major Fisheries Occurring in the GOM

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- Lobster
- Groundfish
- Herring
- Mixed trawl
- Scallop fishery (mostly off MA)
- Monkfish
- Whiting
- Jonah Crab
- Shrimp (currently closed but expected to re-open)





# Gear types used in GOM

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- Pots
- Trawl
- Purse seine
- Pair trawl
- Dredge
- Gillnet
  
- None of these gear types are compatible with floating projects



# Fishing Activity in GOM

- Happens everywhere
- Fisheries vary greatly by location
  - Northern GOM (nearer ME/NH) can differ to what's happening further south (nearer MA)
- Priority areas vary by fishery, e.g.:
  - EFP areas for red hake/rawl – economically important
  - Cultivator Shoals – important groundfish spawning
  - Rye Beach, SW of Isle of Shoals – “hotspot” for herring fishery
  - Wilkinsons
  - Platts
  - The Kettle
  - The edges of closed areas, e.g. Jeffrey's & Cashes



# Feedback from Fishermen

- Desire for RODA to help coordinate feedback from fishermen
  - Organized informational meetings prior to BOEM GOM Task Force
- The same fishery could have multiple gear types used
  - Feedback from users of each gear type is necessary as each gear type fishes differently
- State and Federal permit holders
  - Feedback from both permit holder groups is necessary to capture all user groups in the GOM
- Request USCG conduct a PARS to determine navigational safety needs *prior to* any WEA designations



# Feedback from Fishermen

- Lobster Zones in Maine
  - Maine lobstermen are assigned to 1 of 7 zones
  - Fishermen from other states are not restricted to a zone
  - Wind projects developed in one zone would:
    - Prevent ME lobstermen from fishing if they are assigned to that zone
    - Shift effort from other states to the unaffected zones

