



2022 OWRC Work Group Work Plan and Progress Report

Reporting Period: January 2022 – December 2022

Work Group Webpage: <https://www.midatlanticocean.org/offshore-wind-regional-collaboration/>

Work Group Leads: Kevin Hassell (NJ) | Michael Snyder (NY) | Marianne Ferguson (NOAA) | Wright Frank (BOEM)

Work Group Members: Work group membership is open to government entities operating in the five Mid-Atlantic states and the District of Columbia that are willing to participate in work group activities. Members are expected to contribute on monthly work group calls and assist with project implementation.

Current Members Include:

| Last Name | First Name | Organization |
|-----------|------------|--------------|
| Carpenter | Andrea | DOD |
| Lipsky | Andrew | NOAA |
| Bristow | Avalon | MARCO |
| Hooker | Brian | BOEM |
| Nolan | Casey | MDNR |
| Felins | Erica | US Navy |
| Beaty | Julia | MAFMC |
| Hassell* | Kevin | NJ DEP |
| Leiske | Kristi | DNREC |

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|-------------|-----------|----------------|
| McLean | Laura | NYDOS |
| Bullin | Leann | BOEM |
| Ferguson* | Marianne | NOAA |
| Snyder* | Mike | NY DOS |
| Handell | Naomi | USACE |
| Lewandowski | Naomi | DOE |
| Napoli | Nick | NROC/MARCO |
| Kubico | Stephanie | EPA Region III |
| Janeski | Todd | VA |
| MacDonald | Tony | Monmouth UCI |
| Frank* | Wright | BOEM |

* Co-Leads

Work Group Goals and Objectives:

There is extensive state and federal activity related to planning and siting offshore wind (OW) in the Mid-Atlantic. The Biden Administration has made OW a priority as part of their climate agenda through Executive Order 14008, Sec 207. The Offshore Wind Regional Collaboration (OWRC) will provide a forum for interested MACO members to share and receive information about meetings and decision points related to offshore wind in the Mid-Atlantic, identify potential collaborative activities as needed, and engage with interested stakeholders from time to time. The OWRC works with the [Ocean Mapping and Data Team](#) to identify data needs and how to obtain those data. It also compiles information about best practices and identifies issues that would benefit from closer collaboration that are not already being addressed by other offshore wind working groups in the region. In addition, the OWRC is committed to working with MACO to support its commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) and seeks to incorporate DEIJ objectives into its work.

Much of the work conducted by the Mid-Atlantic Offshore Wind Regional Collaboration builds on Section 2.4.2 in the [2016 Mid-Atlantic Ocean Action Plan](#) (“...facilitate greater collaboration around ocean energy issues in the Mid-Atlantic”) by creating a forum for regular inter-agency discussion around offshore wind development in the region.

Additionally, the OWRC's work relates to Action 4 of the Ocean Energy chapter in the 2016 Ocean Action Plan: "...use the Data Portal to enhance access to data, environmental reports, and proposed offshore wind development activities." For example: there are currently extensive data requests related to offshore wind, and agency coordination to boost the Portal for use as a resource could help address these.

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1 -

Description: Convene regular calls, approximately bi-monthly, to facilitate inter-agency information exchange that may include:

- Identification of topical areas/needs for regular discussion, and timely topics requiring more in-depth discussion;
- Identification of research and data needs, including those that can be communicated to the OMDT;
- Updates from entities involved in offshore wind;
- Identification of opportunities for collaboration and to work across organizational lines;
- Timing of federal and/or state public input opportunities (both for input from MACO entities and public) -- incorporate in MARCO event calendar;
- Identification of potential webinar topics and other stakeholder engagement opportunities as needed; and
- As agreed, work together to provide substantive input on specific offshore wind data topics as needed.
- Track trends on technology development and how these may be applied in the Mid-Atlantic region.

Stakeholder Involvement Scope and rationale

Members of the OWRC will build on input received from the previous Ocean Forum and other webinars and stakeholder engagement as described above, and will coordinate with the Steering Committee and Forum Planning Team in planning the Regional Ocean Forum. The work group will also pursue additional opportunities for webinars and other stakeholder engagement. (See Activity 2.) The work group will seek to engage diverse groups in its outreach efforts as outlined in the MACO DEIJ statement.

Expected Completion Date:

A1 Progress Period: January 2022 - June 2022

Three meetings were held during the first progress period on February 22, March 29 and May 31. During these meetings, the work group established a transmission sub-committee and is identifying priorities for accomplishing Activity 4 (see below). The Ocean Conservancy gave a briefing on their new report, *From Power to Policy - Federal Actions to Deliver on America's Offshore Wind Potential*.

The MARCO Offshore Wind Regional Collaboration webpage has been updated to contain timely information and provides a robust list of state, federal and regional resources involved in offshore wind.

A1 Progress Period: July 2022 - December 2022

ACTIVITY 2 -

Description:

Develop and host at least one webinar(s) or other outreach activities as identified by the members of the OWRC. Topics may include:

- Status of current efforts and public outreach related to planning for and following up on the Annual Regional Ocean Forum;
- Information regarding offshore wind development, siting, management, and technology, with a focus on how Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice is being considered in offshore wind planning and development.
- Ensure Portal data uploads early in public comment period: Discuss the possibility of uploading key data layers when COPs are published or at the start of public comment periods (e.g., maximum work area, indicative turbine layout, cable corridors). Update these to “approved” at Record of Decision (ROD).
- Host a webinar about transmission planning as a follow-up from transmission webinar series held in partnership with NROC in 2021
- Regular stakeholder updates to be provided as needed

These webinars will either be open to the public and/or targeted to relevant and diverse interested groups. The OWRC will seek to provide opportunities for stakeholder input and during each webinar.

Expected Completion Date:

A2 Progress Period: January 2022 - June 2022

Webinar topics have been brainstormed based on feedback from the MACO Annual Ocean Forum which was held in May 2022.

A2 Progress Period: July 2022 – December 2022

ACTIVITY 3 -

Description:

OWRC will continue to work with MARCO to develop a shared calendar of events (e.g. BOEM Information Exchanges, state activities, major activities of the other offshore wind groups). The calendar will be posted on the MARCO website. Members of the OWRC will also share internal events deadlines as necessary.

The calendar will be posted to the MARCO website. This activity will involve regular coordination between the members of the Mid-Atlantic Offshore Wind Collaboration and other entities as appropriate to identify relevant events.

Expected Completion Date:

A3 Progress Period: January 2022 - June 2022

The shared calendar of events is updated regularly. The following OWRC partner events were listed on the MARCO calendar:

- MAFMC Council Meeting
- MAFMC Webinar Series: Climate Change Scenario Planning: Oceanographic, Biological, Social and Economic Drivers of Change
- Teachers on the Estuary Workshop: Creating a Coastal Acidification Module for Mid-Atlantic Teachers
- NROC Aquaculture Webinar Series: Aquaculture in New England Federal Waters: Regulation, Public Engagement and Interjurisdictional Coordination
- RWSC: What is the Regional Wildlife Science Collaborative webinar
- Responsible Offshore Science Alliance (ROSA) Advisory Council Meeting

A3 Progress Period: July 2022 - December 2022

ACTIVITY 4 -

Description:

Identify opportunities to expand inter-regional coordination on transmission challenges and opportunities through one or more of the following:

- Identify regional considerations for offshore cable corridors in federal waters associated with new WEAs/Lease Areas in the Mid-Atlantic. Coordination offers many potential benefits including consolidating the total number of transmission cable corridors, providing consolidated guidance to new lessees in planning pre-

construction surveys, providing a common understanding around suitable burial depth(s), post-installation monitoring, etc.

- Inform MACO members on options that incentivize existing projects to plan for increased capacity to mesh with other future projects.
- Encourage identifying common pathways for new cables that could be granted through cable easements on existing leases that have already undergone environmental review. This approach could streamline NEPA reviews.

Expected Completion Date:

A4 Progress Period: January 2022 - June 2022

A transmission sub-committee was formed to identify regional considerations for offshore cable corridors in federal water. The sub-committee convened on June 17 to identify the area of study and has identified physical, biological and social/cultural challenges to siting cables in federal waters. A poll was sent to members and identified a future OWRC meeting topic to “encourage communication and when appropriate collaborate between lease holders with potential to land in the same state”. The sub-committee includes OWRC members from NOAA, DOE, USACE, NJDEP, DNREC, and NYDOS.

A4 Progress Period: July 2022 - December 2022

ACTIVITY 5 -

Description:

Facilitate information exchange and coordination as needed with other regional offshore wind groups. Specifically, the OWRC will work to build consensus across OWRC members on priority environmental & fisheries research & monitoring needs that can be implemented through research and mitigation funds, potentially by building or linking to reference hubs of studies planned, underway, and/or completed.

The OWRC will conduct outreach activities across existing groups to understand existing data collection gaps, including:

- RWSC, which is compiling an Ongoing & Pending Offshore Wind & Wildlife Research Database
- ROSA, which is looking at research related to Offshore Wind and Fisheries
- BOEM's Renewable Energy Studies Program
- Other groups/key topics

Expected Completion Date:

A5 Progress Period: January 2022 - June 2022

Continued coordination with the RWSC through MARCO co-hosting and overlapping participation between several RWSC subcommittees and sector caucuses and MACO membership.

A5 Progress Period: July 2022 - December 2022

