



# 2023 OWRC Work Group Work Plan and Progress Report

**Reporting Period:** January 2023 – June 2023

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

**Work Group Leads:** Kevin Hassell (NJ) | Michael Snyder (NY) | Marianne Randall (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

McLean	Laura	NYDOS
Bullin	Leann	BOEM
Randall*	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

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### **Work Group Goals and Objectives:**

There is extensive state and federal activity related to planning and siting offshore wind (OSW) in the Mid-Atlantic. It is recognized that the Biden Administration has made OSW a priority as part of their climate agenda, through Executive Order 14008, Sec 207. An offshore wind energy-focused group 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.

Much of the work conducted by the OWRC will build on Section 2.4.2 in the 2016 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 Collaboration’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.”

Through inter-agency coordination and stakeholder engagement, Mid-Atlantic Offshore Wind Regional Collaborative (OWRC) seeks to identify regional data needs related to offshore wind and how to obtain those data, and compile information about best practices and identify 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, Justice, and Accessibility (DEIJA) and seeks to incorporate DEIJA objectives into its work.

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## ACTIVITIES

### ACTIVITY 1 -

Description: Facilitate inter-agency information exchange through regular convenings, including approximately quarterly virtual meetings and an annual in-person meeting. Topics for discussion include but are not limited to:

- 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, including but not limited to:
  - Planned Ports
- 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), these will be incorporated into the 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.

Non-work group members may be invited to participate in these meetings for topic-focused discussions, or additional calls may be scheduled as needed (for example, fisheries and related issues).

#### 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 Annual Mid-Atlantic 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 DEIJA statement.

#### **Progress Report (January 2023 to June 2023)**

The full OWRC work group has held the first two quarterly meetings on March 23 and June 22. During these meetings, work group members have provided agency updates, identified areas for potential collaboration with offshore wind efforts in the region, discussed topics of interest for the 2024 Transmission Workshop such as community benefit agreements, regional

transmission goals, and state transmission collaborations. Further, the OWRC has reviewed feedback from the 2023 Mid-Atlantic Ocean Forum, specifically, which topics of interest should be included in the Transmission Workshop in 2024. The top two topics of interest, from a participant poll, include equitable distribution of resources and benefits and regional collaboration on bringing transmission lines onshore. OWRC has discussed and begun compiling a list of planned ports related to offshore wind activities such as transportation of equipment and workers, fabrication of materials, and access to transmission. Finally, invited speakers from other organizations have presented their progress and lessons learned, including Stephanie Watson from the Maine Governor's Office on the Maine's Roadmap to Responsible Use of Offshore Wind.

The work group identified the need for and began to compile a list of [planned and permitted construction](#) of ports related to offshore wind industrial and installation needs. This list (with location and status of the process) will appear as a data layer on the Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal when completed.

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## **ACTIVITY 2 -**

### **Description:**

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

- Offshore wind energy transmission planning and status - "Offshore Wind Transmission Webinar Series 2.0." This webinar would be a follow-up from transmission webinar series held in partnership with NROC in 2021, and would build on the outcomes of the 2022 Mid-Atlantic OWRC Transmission Subcommittee.
- Research and information on turbine designs and layouts to optimize generation (e.g., reduce wake effects).
- Learn about new or innovative offshore wind technologies/approaches, such as: multi-use wind farms, floating wind turbines, and energy storage solutions.
- Other stakeholder updates 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:** Ongoing

### **A2 Progress Period:** January 2023 - June 2023

A planning group was created to design the Offshore Wind Transmission Workshop Series and met on February 3, 17, April 11, and June 13. The first part of the Workshop Series, [Federal and State Perspectives on Offshore Wind Transmission Planning](#), was held at MACO's 5th Annual Ocean Forum on May 17th. During this session the status of offshore wind on the East

Coast and current transmission studies at the federal and state levels was presented from representatives of the Department of Energy, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management and New Jersey Board of Public Utility. Community benefit agreements were also introduced with specific examples from developers that were currently in place or planned to be in place. At the closing of the session a short survey was given asking attendees to rank offshore wind transmission topics from most to least important/interesting. The results will serve as guidance on what to cover at the in-person workshop originally planned for October of this year. Due to scheduling constraints and conflicts, this workshop has been rescheduled for March 2024.

MARCO has written and distributed an [RFQ](#) to hire a contractor to assist with workshop facilitation. At the time of this report the hiring process is ongoing.

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### **ACTIVITY 3 -**

#### Description

OWRC will examine what equitable distribution of offshore wind benefits looks like. This will be done through stakeholder surveys and other engagement activities (for example, virtual or in-person workshops). The results of this effort will provide insight for OWRC members on data needs, outreach activities, and other planning efforts needed to increase equitable distribution of benefits.

**Expected Completion Date:** Ongoing

#### **Progress Report (January 2023 to June 2023)**

The list of [planned and permitted construction](#), as mentioned in Activity 1, is part of the process to determine the communities that may benefit from offshore development through workforce development, training, and other investments. The work group has also identified the need to determine where transmission lines are planned to come ashore and how this will impact and benefit communities.

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### **ACTIVITY 4 -**

#### 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. 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. The Current Agency Actions and Comment Opportunities webpage will continue to be updated regularly.

**Expected Completion Date:** Ongoing

## Progress Report (January 2023 to June 2023)

Internal deadlines for comments on publicly released documents have been shared among the group, including the RWSC Science Plan and the Department of Energy's National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors. During this reporting period, MARCO experienced staff turnover, which has hindered progress on this activity. One activity was posted on the MARCO Events Calendar: New Jersey Wind Institute Research Symposium on April 14.

The Current Agency Actions and Comment Opportunities webpage has been updated regularly.

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## 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 a database of ongoing and pending research related to offshore wind and wildlife that will inform the RWSC integrated science plan to inform future research activities.
- [ROSA](#), which is looking at research related to Offshore Wind and Fisheries
- [BOEM's Renewable Energy Studies Program](#)
- [DOE/NREL Atlantic Offshore Transmission Study](#)
- NYSERDA E-TWG, M-TWG, and F-TWG
- State Fisheries Compensation Group
- Other groups/key topics

RWSC subcommittee information, including rosters and meeting summaries, can be found on its website: [www.rwsc.org/science-plan](http://www.rwsc.org/science-plan)

**Expected Completion Date:** Ongoing

## Progress Report (January 2023 to June 2023)

The OWRC responded as needed to the RWSC requests for information on their Science Plan (released for public comment in July).



