

MARINE PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT ON MARINE PLANNING

This supplemental report provides additional information to complement the Marine Planning Committee's (MPC) main report (Agenda Item C.2.a, MPC Report 1). This additional information is based primarily on the MPC's March 4, 2022 meeting that included representatives from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), and on the release of the proposed offshore wind energy Call Areas recently announced by BOEM.

BOEM Oregon Offshore Wind Energy Planning and Leasing Process

- A video recording of the meeting, presentation slides, Call Area way points, and a high level summary of the March 4 meeting are available on the meeting webpage: <https://www.pcouncil.org/events/ad-hoc-marine-planning-committee-to-hold-online-work-session-friday-march-4-2022/>.
- A high-level meeting summary is included as Agenda Item C.2.a, Supplemental BOEM Report 1.
- A figure depicting the Call Areas is attached to this report and available [HERE](#).

Questions, Discussion, and Public Comment

Below are some common threads from the question and discussion portion of the March 4th meeting:

- Many commenters requested that BOEM consider a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement covering the entire west coast in advance of designating Wind Energy Areas, with a cumulative analysis of effects.
- Commenters noted that the size of the Call Areas (2181 square miles) could produce about 17 gigawatts (GW) of offshore energy if fully built out – much greater than the Oregon goals (through State legislation HB 3375), which include a stated goal of 3GW.
- Regarding data deficiencies and interpretation issues of the fisheries data used to inform the siting process, many fisheries (e.g., some sport fisheries) and habitat data layers are missing. Furthermore, the years chosen to inform designation of the call areas are incomplete.
- Commenters noted that scientific survey transects will almost certainly be precluded in areas of offshore wind development within the Call Area boundaries. Based on conversations with a member of the NOAA NWFSC stock assessment team, a substantial portion of the surveyed hake population is found in the Oregon proposed Call Areas. The removal of the biomass and age data collected on those transects from future stock assessments would increase uncertainty and could shift trends or the estimated scale of the population in unpredictable ways. These impacts would likely result in more precautionary management actions, such as lower harvest guidelines, in response to the increased uncertainty.
- One commenter asked who is making the decisions and what metrics are used, noting that none of those metrics are publicly available. BOEM staff said they meet internally to discuss the decisions. However, one commenter noted that with inadequate information, the discussions and decisions could have long-term consequences for other ocean users.
- The common thread underlying much of the discussion and public comments was fear, uncertainty, and lack of trust.

- There were comments about the importance of identifying transmission routes, cable landing sites, and interconnection points. These nearshore and onshore components are important to identify early on to assess potential impacts on resources and uses in those areas.
- There were calls for more, and better, science *prior* to Wind Energy Areas (WEAs), leases, and call areas. And commenters reiterated that a PEIS should be completed to properly analyze potential impacts, prior to identification of WEAs. A Synthesis of the Science workshop on floating OSW infrastructure is in the planning stages, by the Responsible Offshore Development Alliance (RODA). It has been funded; and RODA members are hopeful the west coast will be well-represented.

As noted in prior advisory body statements, the MPC is accustomed to operating under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act that includes the Regional Fishery Management Councils. The Councils, particularly the Pacific Council, operate through a bottom-up, stakeholder-driven process in which fishers are an integral part of the process, participating through advisory bodies for their respective fisheries. In contrast, the BOEM process is very much a top-down process. Management actions through the Council and NMFS are judged not only by showing they will do what they are designed to do; but also whether they will have unintended consequences that will have negative impacts to fish stocks, habitats, ecosystems and/or fishing communities. The Council relies heavily on the public to participate in the process to get a full understanding of the potential consequences of the action. While not everyone will agree with a Council decision, everyone will have had a chance to communicate their thoughts and there is trust in the process.

The MPC appreciates the informative presentations by BOEM staff and Andy Lanier with the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development for demonstrating updated features available in the OROWindmap online tool and data portal.

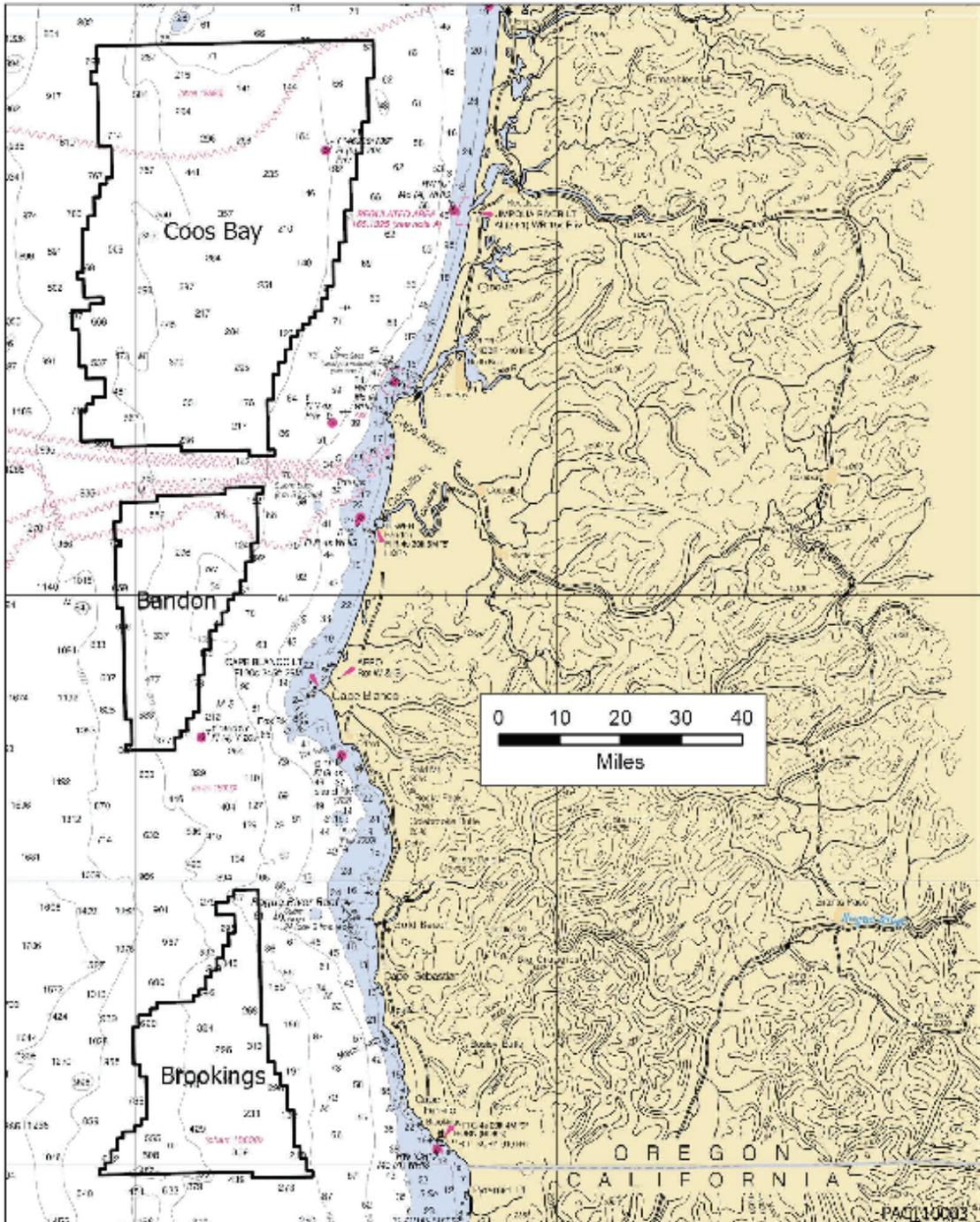


Figure: Oregon Offshore Wind Call Areas on NOAA nautical chart

PFMC
03/10/22