MARINE PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT ON MARINE PLANNING ISSUES

The Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Council) Marine Planning Committee (MPC) met on September 30, 2022, to consider marine planning issues and to initiate development of a report to the Council. The MPC received presentations on suitability modeling related to offshore wind (OSW) energy planning, the United States Coast Guard's report on the Pacific Coast Port Access Route Study, the West Coast Oceans Alliance, and other topics. The MPC meeting was recorded and is available on the MPC meeting webpage. The MPC provides a summary of items discussed at the September 30th meeting and a list of current and upcoming events.

The MPC received an overview of Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) activities from Mr. Rick Yarde and Ms. Lisa Gilbane. The MPC appreciates the continued communication and interest in helping the MPC keep up to date with the OSW leasing process and related activities.

California

A Programmatic Environment Impact Statement (PEIS) has been initiated for the Pacific Region oil and gas platform decommissioning activities on the California Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). According to BOEM, the PEIS should provide for efficient review of forthcoming decommissioning activities. A draft PEIS should be available sometime in October with a standard 45-day comment period. Given the likelihood of the PEIS being a lengthy document and uncertainty as to how much time will be available for review, the Council should consider using the quick-response letter format for Council comments and/or requesting an extension from BOEM and the Department of the Interior's (DOI) Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, which has regulatory oversight for DOI's OCS activities.

On October 5th, BOEM published the Final Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Morro Bay Wind Energy Area (WEA) with a Finding of No Significant Impacts (C.6, Attachment 2). Given that BOEM intends on holding the lease auction by the end of 2022, and likely in mid-December, it is very likely that the Final Sale Notice (FSN) for both the Humboldt and Morro Bay WEAs will be published in advance of the November Council meeting. There will be at least a 30-day waiting period between publication of the FSN and conducting the lease sales. These WEAs include five individual lease opportunities.

In the Proposed Sale Notice, BOEM proposed to grant bidding credits to establish a community benefit agreement with a community or stakeholder group whose use of the geographic space of the Lease Area, or whose use of resources harvested from that geographic space, is directly impacted by the lessee's potential OSW development. BOEM also proposed bid credits for workforce and supply chain development. The Council provided detailed comments and questions to BOEM about these bid credit concepts.

Oregon

Mr. Rick Yarde provided an update on BOEM's process for narrowing the existing Oregon Call Areas off Coos Bay and Brookings down to WEAs. In response to concerns raised by stakeholders, BOEM will now use the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS) suitability

modeling to aid in the identification of draft WEAs. The draft WEAs will open another round of public comments before BOEM announces final WEAs. BOEM will not announce draft WEAs until next year. The MPC appreciates BOEM's efforts toward a more comprehensive approach to WEA identification. Using the suitability analysis could be a step toward a better understanding of impacts to fisheries and how impacts could be avoided and minimized.

MPC members again raised the question of a cumulative impacts analysis, especially given the Brookings Call Area's proximity to the Humboldt WEA in northern California. BOEM said the agency may look at cumulative impacts, but only for activities allowed during a site assessment plan. The MPC still contends that a broader environmental analysis, including cumulative effects, should be done prior to identifying Call Areas or WEAs.

Dr. James Morris from the NCCOS, within the National Ocean Service at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), presented on "Ocean Planning to Inform Wind Energy Siting." BOEM and NOAA have entered into an Interagency Agreement to conduct suitability modeling for wind energy siting. To date, they are working in four regions – Oregon, Gulf of Maine, Gulf of Mexico, and Central Atlantic using the same methods applied to Aquaculture Opportunity Areas (AOAs) and described in the AOA atlases for the southern California Bight and Gulf of Mexico.

Suitability modeling begins with the overlay of 10-acre grid hexagons over the space (e.g., Coos Bay and Brookings Call Areas, Oregon) with the goal of developing a suitability score for every grid cell. The main inputs to the model are maps of multiple aspects of ocean resources and uses with a metric for each meant to represent the degree of compatibility with wind energy. Grid cells are then compared to develop relative suitability of the entire ecosystem, identifying hotspots of conflict and opportunity. The model is based on rules (weights) and methods that can support comprehensive environmental review.

Data inputs represent multiple aspects of ocean resources and uses, and are categorized into submodels (e.g., fisheries industry and operations such as existing cables, national security, logistics and factors related to where wind energy would be most successful; and natural and cultural resources such as protected species). The submodels may include maps of logistics and economics related to where wind energy would be most successful. Constraints are assigned as appropriate for the unique characteristics for each region. A score of zero means an area is not suitable for siting with a score of one indicating compatibility. Most values will fall in between one and zero. The success of this effort will depend in part on the public being able to understand these scores, and for fisheries, how they relate to potential economic impact. A final relative suitability score is calculated for each grid cell by combining scores across submodels, then model outcomes are analyzed and used in siting decisions. As an example, Dr. Morris described the approach and outcomes from the modeling conducted for wind energy siting in the Gulf of Mexico.

For Oregon, data acquisition is ongoing with 432 data layers cataloged so far. BOEM plans to continue engagement with state agencies and will have more of this kind of less-formal engagement with stakeholders in coming months; scheduling details are to be determined. This tool is new to BOEM's Pacific Region and represents one important piece of a larger whole including a continuum of information gathering. Ultimately details about the model design (e.g.,

weighting of data layers) is a BOEM decision, but there will be an opportunity for the Council to see model outputs and provide feedback. BOEM suggested the next time they attend an MPC meeting they might talk specifically about how fisheries data are being factored into the model. BOEM does not yet have all the data that they expect to use and anticipates comments and recommendations from Council and others about data during future opportunities for input. Comments and recommendations are also welcome during forthcoming stakeholder engagement opportunities as well as during the formal comment period on the draft wind energy areas.

Washington

BOEM continues to review two unsolicited lease requests (Olympic Wind and Hecate Wind) that have been submitted for areas off Washington.

United States Coast Guard (USCG) Pacific Port Access Route Study (PAC PARS)

Commander Brendan Harris presented information on the USCG's Draft PAC PARS report. At its September meeting, the Council directed the MPC to develop a quick response letter for submission by the October 25th deadline. The letter will have already been finalized by the beginning of the November Council meeting. An informational summary of the issues is included as Appendix 1 of this report.

West Coast Oceans Alliance

The MPC heard a report from Mr. John Hansen, Director of the West Coast Ocean Alliance (WCOA). The WCOA builds upon previous regional ocean coordination activities carried out through the West Coast Regional Planning Body (2014-18), the West Coast Governors Alliance on Ocean Health (2007-2015), and the West Coast Ocean Partnership (2015-18). The WCOA engages state, Tribal, and Federal government partners in a collaborative non-regulatory forum to pursue consensus-driven activities carried out by members in support of more effective and transparent ocean management and planning on the U.S. West Coast. The WCOA is the designated Regional Ocean Partnership (ROP) for the West Coast and brings together its members through regular remote meetings and select in-person meetings. The states of California, Oregon, and Washington participate in the WCOA along with several Federal agencies and approximately 15 West Coast Tribal governments. Presently the formal composition of the WCOA is not finalized, as the WCOA expects to draft a new charter in 2023. The Council is currently considered a Partner of the WCOA, and previously was a formal ex-officio member of the West Coast Regional Planning Body. The WCOA also facilitates the ongoing discovery of, connectivity to, and sharing of data and science from all relevant entities through its partner organization West Coast Ocean Data Portal.

Starting in late 2022 the WCOA will begin receiving new funding included in the Federal government's Inflation Reduction Act, to be administered by NOAA in support of four active ROPs in the U.S. (West Coast, Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, and Gulf of Mexico). Each ROP will receive approximately $2M per year over the next five years to support their respective ocean planning activities, ocean data coordination, outreach and other related efforts as determined by respective ROP members. The WCOA is initially planning to use these using these funds to develop a new 5-year strategic plan and increase its capacity for ocean planning and stakeholder engagement with a focus on issues including offshore wind energy, new ocean data tools, ocean aquaculture, and Tribal engagement, among others. The MPC had some discussion with Mr.

Hansen on how the Council could engage in workshops on offshore wind and looks forward to more dialogue on how to effectively partner with WCOA efforts.

NOAA Request for Comments on Resident Perceptions of OSW Energy Development
NOAA published a Federal Register Notice (FRN) on information collection, request for comment on submission to the Office of Management and Budget for Review and Approval; Comment Request; Resident Perceptions of Offshore Wind Energy Development Off the Oregon Coast. The FRN describes the intent to collect information that "*will be used by BOEM, NOAA, and others to understand what is important to communities; understand how differing values and perceptions across communities influence local receptivity to proposed development; and improve communication efforts targeted to residents, enabling agencies to more effectively and efficiently direct outreach and community inclusion activities*." Comments are sought on four specific items:

1. Whether the proposed information collection is necessary, including whether the information will have practical utility;
2. Accuracy of our estimate of the time and cost burden for this proposed collection, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
3. Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
4. Minimize the reporting burden on those who are to respond, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Upcoming events, meetings, and comment opportunities
The following activities are expected over the succeeding months, but do not have specific dates established:

- BOEM Draft PEIS on oil rig decommissioning (likely October)
- BOEM issuance of Final Sale Notice for California OSW Lease Sales (likely October)
- BOEM California Lease Auction (likely December)
- NOAA Aquaculture Opportunity Areas Draft PEIS (late 2022 or early 2023)
- BOEM identification of draft WEAs off Oregon (late 2022 or early 2023)
- BOEM designation of final WEAs off Oregon (likely early 2023)

PFMC
10/11/22

Appendix 1: Informational Summary of the Pacific Coast Port Access Route Study (PAC PARS)

Commander Brendan Harris provide the MPC an overview of the Draft PAC PARS. The PAC PARS and accompanying Enclosures and Appendices can be found on the USCG website at Port Access Route Study Reports | Navigation Center (uscg.gov). The public comment period closes on October 25, and the MPC is currently drafting a QR letter for the Council's consideration. Much of the content of that letter was informed by the update CDR Harris provided and the question and answer session that followed. We thank CDR Harris and Lt CDR Ettinger for their presence and willingness to answer the questions posed.

The PAC-PARS was initiated in 2021[1] to determine whether new or modified vessel routing measures were needed to ensure safety of navigation along the U.S. Pacific Coast due to the quickly evolving demand for use of coastal waters. The PAC PARS evaluated historic use of marine waterways off the U.S. west coast utilizing available datasets (coastal vessel traffic and port vessel traffic) and public outreach. Federal law necessitates such a study, if the USCG proposes new or modified routing measures. As a result of the study, the USCG is making the following recommendations (See Attachment 1):

- A 15NM-wide coastwise fairway that follows existing vessel traffic patterns and connects with existing Traffic Separation Schemes (TSSs) (Strait of Juan de Fuca, San Francisco, Santa Barbara and Los Angeles - Long Beach) and key ports
- A 5NM-wide nearshore fairway north of San Francisco
- A Coastal Fairway Zone that overlays the existing D13 Crabber-Towboat Lanes
- The removal of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) recommended routes located offshore of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
- Continued support for the voluntary practice of bulk chemical and petroleum carriers to keep 50NM offshore without charted lanes in accordance with the 2002 Pacific States/British Columbia Oil Spill Task Force recommendations.

"Fairway" is defined, by regulation, as "a lane or corridor in which no artificial island or fixed structure, whether temporary or permanent, will be permitted.[2]" They are intended to provide unobstructed approaches for vessels using U.S. ports.

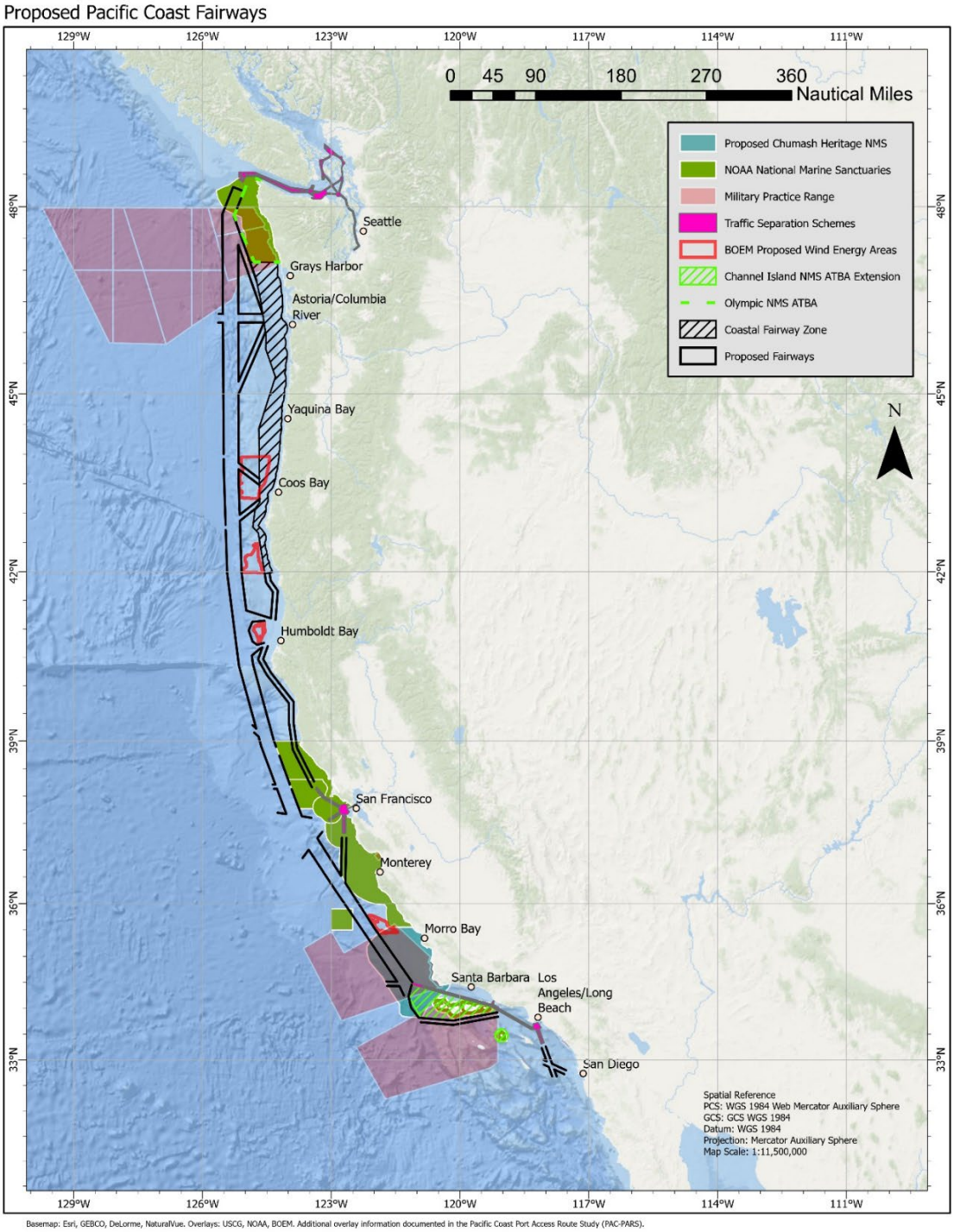
As noted earlier, the public comment period closes on October 25. The USCG will then review the comments and make final edits. Provided there are not substantial edits, which could necessitate another round of public comments, the Final PAC PARS would be submitted to USCG Headquarters. The USCG would then begin the rulemaking process implementing the

[1] The following supported the Study's initiation in 2021:
- NOAA's proposed expansion of the Area to be Avoided around the Channel Islands
- BOEM Call Areas and Wind Energy Areas
- Proposed Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary
- New offshore infrastructure/activities – Offshore renewable energy platforms, aquaculture, commercial and governmental space activities
- Military exercises
- Increasing vessel traffic

[2] 33 CFR 166

recommendations contained in the Final Study. (Note that the USCG map below identifies "BOEM Proposed Wind Energy Areas" off CA and OR; however the areas off OR are Call Areas, and likely larger than WEAs, which have not yet been delineated.)

PAC PARS Recommended Fairways



See - Content - Pacific Coast Port Access Route Study (PAC-PARS)... (uscg.mil)