

## HABITAT COMMITTEE REPORT ON MARINE PLANNING

The Habitat Committee (HC) received a presentation from Kerry Griffin and Steve Scheiblaue summarizing relevant topics from the Marine Planning Committee's (MPC's) February 2, 2023 meeting and G.3.a, MPC Report 1. With regard to offshore wind (OSW) energy planning and development on the Pacific Coast, the HC has concerns related to draft Wind Energy Area (WEA) comment period timing, subsea electrical transmission cable routing, and spatial suitability modeling.

The comment period for draft WEAs may only be 30 days, which would not allow adequate time for the Council to submit comments. The HC recommends that the Council either request a longer comment period from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) or ensure the MPC is prepared to respond quickly. HC members are tracking this and are standing by to help with a quick response letter. There is no date set for release of BOEM's draft WEAs.

If the Council decides to submit a letter to BOEM as recommended by the MPC, the HC requests the opportunity to weigh in on the topic of impacts of cable corridors on habitat. The HC is especially concerned with the prospect of potential cable routes over Heceta Bank and Essential Fish Habitat Conservation Areas in the Coos Bay Call Area vicinity, as mentioned in MPC Report 1.

The HC notes that the spatial suitability modeling discussion and Slide 41 in Appendix 1 of MPC Report 1 is focused on the commercial fisheries submodel. Other submodels, such as the habitat submodel, may reduce the suitability of potential WEA siting. These and other considerations such as recreational fishing, should not be overlooked in Council recommendations to BOEM.

PFMC  
03/06/23