

## GROUND FISH ADVISORY PANEL REPORT ON MARINE PLANNING

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received an overview of this agenda item from Mr. Kerry Griffin, Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) staff. The GAP also reviewed [Marine Planning Committee \(MPC\) Report 1](#) (Agenda Item F.4.a, MPC Report 1, April 2023) and other Briefing Book materials.

The GAP emphatically and sincerely thanks the Council for the [March 2023 action](#) requesting the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) rescind the current Brookings and Coos Bay, Oregon Call Areas and that BOEM not proceed on identification of draft Wind Energy Areas (WEAs) at this time. This was a bold, courageous action that is likely unprecedented in terms of a Regional Fishery Management Council calling BOEM to account and requesting direct action to address a flawed process. Thank you.

While the GAP is guardedly optimistic that BOEM will heed the Council's call for action, as well as the enormous volume of public and policy maker input that urgently expresses related requests; it is still possible that BOEM will proceed with identifying and announcing WEAs. Therefore, the Council should be prepared to respond with the same strength of purpose demonstrated thus far. The GAP anticipates that the MPC will continue to track this issue, coordinate information flow to/from Council advisory bodies, and develop recommended Council actions. **The GAP recommends the Council highlight the need to track this as a priority for the MPC.**

Specific to MPC Report 1, the GAP provides comments about three topic areas: (1) status of California offshore wind energy leases, (2) request for a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) for the five California leases, and (3) request for cumulative impacts analysis.

### Status of California offshore wind energy leases

The MPC report highlights that stipulations in the California leases require lessees to develop Fishery Communication Plans “for communicating with fisheries stakeholders prior to and during activities in support of the submission of a plan.” The MPC notes that lessees could choose to reach out to the Council to consult about the scope and contents of their Fishery Communication Plans and/or the Council could proactively engage with lessees to this end. The GAP recommends the Council do the latter. **That is, the GAP recommends the Council proactively engage with lessees about the communication plans because it is consistent with the approach already employed by the Council and because Council input into the development of these communication plans should be beneficial to lessees, fishery participants, and the Council.**

### PEIS for California Lease Areas

In line with the MPC recommendation, **the GAP also recommends that the Council submit a letter to BOEM urging the preparation of a PEIS for the five California leases and that this letter include clear direction that tribal consultation needs to include Treaty tribes located outside of California.** The GAP agrees with the background and rationale provided by the MPC.

## Cumulative Impacts Analysis

The MPC report notes MPC discussions about the need for “a cumulative impacts analysis on potential areas and on existing areas and potentially using scenario planning to inform an analysis.” Offshore Wind (OSW) development in Federal waters off the west coast is likely to have region-wide impacts on Council-managed fisheries and oceanographic processes. These cumulative alterations of the California Current Ecosystem should be analyzed at the regional level. **Therefore, the GAP recommends that the Council request BOEM develop cumulative impacts analyses for west coast OSW development activities to facilitate a complete and comprehensive understanding of the region-wide effects from OSW is available to ensure Council and Council family engagement is fully informed.**

PFMC  
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