

MARINE PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT ON MARINE PLANNING ISSUES

The Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Council, PFMC) Marine Planning Committee (MPC) met online September 29, 2023, to discuss items relevant to the November Council meeting. The MPC will also convene on November 1, in person, in conjunction with the November Council meeting.

California Update

The MPC received updates from Crystal D'Souza and Mike Conroy on California specific items. Four pieces of legislation made it to the Governor's desk and had not yet been signed by the Governor as of September 29. These include [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 3](#) (Offshore wind energy: reports); [Senate Bill \(SB\) 286](#) (Offshore wind energy projects); [SB 605](#) (Wave and tidal energy); and [AB 1373](#) (renewable energy purchasing).

The five California offshore wind (OSW) leaseholders are developing the required Agency, Tribal, and Fisheries Communications plans (FCP). The three Morro Bay lessees provided draft FCPs for Council consideration at its September meeting. The two Humboldt Bay lessees (RWE and Vineyard Offshore) produced a joint FCP (Agenda Item C.3, Attachment 2) and requested comments. RWE and Vineyard Offshore have scheduled a hybrid meeting to discuss their draft joint FCP for 5 p.m., October 10. Comments on the joint draft FCP will be taken through November 10.

Oregon Update

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) continued community outreach in September relative to the announcement of Draft Wind Energy Areas (WEAs) off Oregon.

- The [BOEM Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force met virtually on September 18](#), during which time BOEM presented the information related to the draft WEAs to the Task Force Members and fielded questions about the BOEM/National Center for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS) spatial suitability model and next steps in BOEM's planning process. Following the formal Task Force adjourning, public comment was taken, and a court reporter documented verbal comments.
- BOEM held a virtual fisheries-focused meeting the evening of September 18. The purpose of the meeting was to share the Draft WEAs with seafood industry members and provide additional information about the NCCOS suitability model. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) presented the methods used to generate data in the fisheries submodel (see appendix E of the Draft [NCCOS Report](#)) and responded to questions about fisheries data. BOEM fielded clarifying questions on next steps in the process, and also provided a court reporter to accurately document verbal public comment.
- BOEM held three public meetings/workshops on the draft WEAs in September: one in Gold Beach on Sept. 26, one in Coos Bay on Sept. 27, and one in Brookings on Sept. 28. The meetings were not designed specifically to receive oral comments but rather for BOEM to share information about the BOEM process and Draft WEAs with community members.

Stations were set up to share specific information about the draft WEAs, such as marine mammals and the BOEM timeline. One station included a computer where members of the public could write up their comments and submit them online. One group not affiliated with the seafood industry in Oregon [staged protests](#) at each meeting. By most accounts, the meetings were well attended.

- Additionally, Rep. David Gomberg, working with the Midwater Trawlers Cooperative, held an evening listening session in the evening on Friday, Sept. 29. The goal was to give people and fishermen on the Central Coast a chance to air their opinions on the proposed WEAs, even though the WEAs weren't in the vicinity of the Central Coast but stakeholders from the area may fish in the draft WEAs or be affected by OSW development in those areas.

On Sept. 8, the Oregon Ocean Policy Advisory Council voted to move forward with amendments to the Oregon Territorial Sea Plan (TSP) Part 4 (undersea cables). Next, this package will go to the Land Conservation and Development Commission for adoption, then for state rulemaking.

Washington

The Washington Coastal Marine Advisory Committee's (WCMAC) regular September meeting occurred on September 13 and was held virtually. The meeting recording can be viewed on TVW's (Television Washington) [website](#), and meeting materials are available to download from the [WCMAC EZview page](#). The agenda included a number of OSW related items (all time references are to the hour and minute of the TVW recording where the item begins):

- At the WCMAC's request, Midwater Trawlers Cooperative Executive Director Heather Mann presented and engaged in discussion with the WCMAC on fisheries stakeholders' perspectives on the Oregon OSW experience (begins ~1:00).
- Carrie Sessions, Governor Inslee's Senior Policy Advisor for Environment and Water, presented to the WCMAC on two main items. First was an update on a delegation tour she and others from ports, counties, and tribal governments in the state took to Scotland and Denmark in April 2023 focused on OSW supply chain development (begins ~2:12).
- Ms. Sessions also provided an update on the Governor's Office's perspectives on OSW next steps (~2:24). In brief, Ms. Sessions noted that they were still evaluating options and looking for feedback but were looking closely at hiring a consultant to help evaluate options for a Washington specific planning and engagement process. She highlighted that OSW needs to be evaluated as a possible tool in the state's plan to decarbonize its economy by 2050. At the same, they fully recognize that important questions are being raised about impacts to the ecosystem, fisheries, and tribal treaty rights, the transmission grid, and how to achieve a comprehensive and transparent evaluation and planning process. The consultant would be asked to engage with tribes and stakeholders, including the WCMAC, with the goal of making recommendations to the Governor on specific design elements for BOEM and state planning processes, on scientific studies that could be frontloaded into the process, and to assess the resources the state would need to implement the recommended process elements. Lastly, she noted that independent of the evaluation of OSW siting off the state, the Governor's Office is looking to support supply chain development for deployment of OSW in other states and around the world.

- There was also an update and discussion on the work of the WCMAC OSW Committee (~2:47).
- Jennifer Miller and Carlos Gomez from BOEM provided a brief presentation covering updates on their activities in California and Oregon and answered questions from the WCMAC (~3:16).

NMFS report

NMFS is working on comments for BOEM on the OR draft WEAs. At BOEM's Sept 21 fisheries informational webinar, NMFS and ODFW provided an overview of the fisheries analysis and recommendations for the fisheries submodel of the NCCOS model for siting the OR WEAs, similar to the presentations given to the MPC and PFMC (February and March respectively). Some of the California developers have been providing agency communication plans for agency comment. NMFS and BOEM are considering opportunities for MPC feedback on the West Coast fisheries report that NMFS is working on, funded by BOEM's Environmental Studies Program.

West Coast Ocean Alliance

The West Coast Ocean Alliance (WCOA) has scheduled two in-person meetings in October. A Tribal Summit will take place October 16 and 17 and will include both federally recognized and non-federally recognized tribes. A meeting of WCOA members will take place on October 18 and 19. WCOA is also planning on hosting an OSW summit, tentatively scheduled for March 12 and 13 of 2024, location to be determined. Members of the MPC noted the March 2024 Council meeting is scheduled to run through March 11.

WCOA is also planning to conduct a review of aquaculture off the U.S. West Coast. This would include an inventory of current and proposed aquaculture projects and development of a best practices guide. This effort is expected to take at least two years.

WCOA is also beginning a fellowship program. They are anticipating having four fellows beginning in October.

MPC's first in-person meeting

The MPC will hold its first ever in-person meeting on November 1, 2023, in conjunction with the November Council meeting (see MPC Agenda in November Briefing Book materials). The MPC will discuss OSW, aquaculture, comment opportunities, and other expected activities in 2024, with the purpose of developing constructive and useful advice to the Council. The MPC will also discuss ways to develop comments that incorporate a cumulative, coast-wide approach to OSW planning. In addition, the MPC will receive updates on the PacFEM project, on the joint Humboldt Bay FCP, and other updates as necessary. The MPC may submit a supplemental report for Council consideration.

Upcoming events

[Floating Wind USA 2023](#), San Diego, California, November 29 – 30, 2023.

PFMC
10/12/23