



Meeting Summary

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

Gulf of Mexico Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force Meeting

Wednesday, July 27, 2022

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. CT

I. Introduction

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) convened its third Gulf of Mexico Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force Meeting on July 27, 2022. The meeting was held remotely via webinar using the Zoom webinar platform. Participants included representatives from federal and state agencies, tribal nations, and local governments. Participating members of the public included representatives from industry, academic and research institutions, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Approximately 72 Task Force members and 317 members of the public attended.

The meeting's objectives were to:

- Overall purpose: Facilitate coordination and consultation among federal, state, local, and tribal governments regarding offshore wind energy and the renewable energy leasing process on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) in the Gulf of Mexico (GOM).
- Seek feedback from Task Force members on the Draft GOM Renewable Energy Draft Environmental Assessment (EA).
- Seek feedback from Task Force members on the two Preliminary Wind Energy Areas (WEAs) in the GOM.
- Provide opportunities for public input on the topics being considered by the Task Force.

Recordings of the meeting proceedings along with each meeting presentation are available at the following link: <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/gulf-mexico-intergovernmental-renewable-energy-task-force-meeting>.

The meeting consisted of a suite of presentations on the Draft EA and the two preliminary WEAs in the Gulf of Mexico region, Task Force members sharing relevant information related to offshore wind energy in the Gulf, and multiple opportunities for Task Force member clarifying questions and discussion. A public input opportunity followed the close of the formal Task Force meeting. The meeting agenda is available in Appendix A.

This meeting summary document summarizes key outcomes and the next steps from the meeting. It is not intended to be a detailed transcript. It focuses on discussions and Task Force member input shared rather than the formal presentations made. The meeting was facilitated by Kearns & West.

This meeting summary is organized into the following sections:

I. Introduction

- II. Task Force Discussion Highlights
 - A. Welcome and Opening Remarks
 - B. Task Force Meeting Overview
 - C. Discussion of the Draft GOM Renewable Energy Environmental Assessment (EA)
 - D. Discussion of the Draft GOM Renewable Energy Wind Energy Areas (WEAs)
 - E. Task Force Member Updates
 - F. Next Steps & Closing Remarks
- III. Public Input Opportunity
- IV. Appendices
 - A. Agenda
 - B. Task Force Member Participation List

II. Task Force Discussion Highlights

A. Welcome and Opening Remarks

1. *Eric Poncelet, Facilitator, Kearns & West.* Eric Poncelet welcomed participants to the third Gulf of Mexico Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force Meeting. Mr. Poncelet began the meeting by acknowledging the importance of Tribal Nations in the development of offshore renewable energy in the Gulf of Mexico (GOM) region. BOEM respects tribal sovereignty and self-governance, and will continue to engage federally recognized tribes through government-to-government consultations.

2. *Amanda Lefton, Director, BOEM.* Director Lefton welcomed participants to the third Gulf of Mexico Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force Meeting. Ms. Lefton explained the role of the BOEM within the Department of the Interior as the lead agency that oversees offshore wind. She conveyed that the nation is ready for an energy transition that combats climate change, creates good-paying union jobs, and ensures economic opportunities are accessible to all communities. She stated that the Gulf of Mexico will be invaluable in accomplishing the Biden-Harris Administration's goal of deploying 30 gigawatts of offshore wind by 2030. Ms. Lefton reviewed BOEM's process in identifying the two Draft WEAs, which included gathering public feedback and incorporating the best scientific data available. Ms. Lefton also highlighted BOEM's continued partnership with NOAA as a critical aspect of the process, and she concluded by stating that BOEM is committed to a transparent, inclusive, and data-driven process that results in the Gulf of Mexico flourishing.

3. *Mike Celata, Regional Director, BOEM Gulf of Mexico Region.* Regional Director Celata reviewed the background of how the Intergovernmental Task Force was established, which included BOEM's original recommendation that the Task Force focus on the Gulf of Mexico region. He noted that BOEM's path includes a proposed lease sale in the Gulf in early 2023. While BOEM is in the early planning stages, Mr. Celata expressed confidence that the process will result in a sustainable and successful offshore wind industry in the Gulf of Mexico. The Gulf of Mexico has access to existing oil and gas infrastructure to support offshore wind, experience with global marine shipbuilding and America's manufacturing supply chain, high wind capacity from Texas and Louisiana in federal waters, and the skilled workforce needed to support these initiatives.

B. Task Force Meeting Overview

Eric Poncelet, Kearns & West facilitator, reviewed the meeting's structure, webinar instructions, agenda, and then introduced the meeting conveners and Task Force members, which included representatives from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), elected officials and representatives, tribal nations, state and federal agencies, and local officials from the GOM region. The Task Force member participant list is available in Appendix B.

C. Draft Gulf of Mexico Renewable Energy Environmental Assessment

1. Michelle Nannen, NEPA Coordinator, Gulf of Mexico Renewable Energy Lease Issuance Draft Environmental Assessment. Michelle Nannen provided an overview of BOEM's Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for renewable energy leases in the Gulf of Mexico. The EA analyzes the impacts of issuing up to 18 leases within the Call Area, as well as the site characterization and site assessment activities associated with those leases. This EA differs slightly from previous Atlantic EAs in that the Gulf EA analyzes the entire Call Area rather than specific Wind Energy Areas (WEAs) to allow for greater flexibility in the future identification of WEAs. Analysis of specific projects occurs later in the process and will be followed by a lease being obtained and a Construction and Operations Plan (COP) being submitted.

Ms. Nannen reviewed the early 2022 scoping comment period and the consultations BOEM undertook with state and federal agencies that informed the Draft EA. The Draft EA considers three alternative scenarios with varying levels of renewable energy activity in the Gulf, and these analyses identified Impact-Producing Factors (IPFs) on resources associated with proposed action in the region. From there, BOEM eliminated resources from the Draft EA if the analysis showed that negligible or less impacts would occur as a result of wind energy leases. Negligible impacts had to be found for both a single OCS wind energy lease and for 18 OCS wind energy leases in order for the resource to be eliminated from further consideration. For any resources that have adverse impacts as a result of wind energy leases, protective measures called Standard Operating Conditions (SOCs) can be utilized to reduce or eliminate potential risks to resources, and the EA helps outline to a decisionmaker which SOCs can apply to leases and plans. If chosen by the decisionmaker, the SOC will be detailed in the Final Sale Notice and lessees will be required to comply through lease stipulations and/or as conditions of the site assessment plan.

Ms. Nannen reviewed the schedule and the process for comments and participation. Comments on the Draft EA can be submitted on the EA through <https://www.regulations.gov/>. Oral testimony is also welcome through the Intergovernmental Task Force meetings or other virtual public comment meetings. For more information, visit <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/gulf-mexico-activities>. Meeting participants should follow-up with additional questions to Michelle Nannen and Helen Rucker.

2. Task Force Member Comments and Discussion

Potential Impacts

- *Comment: It would be valuable and appropriate to consider cable layouts in a regional Gulf of Mexico EA for wind energy because offshore wind energy projects exist within a larger ecosystem of projects that require electrical capacity. Siting issues may arise if cable layouts are not considered until an actual project is in development.*
 - *Response: The EA does not look at a specific cable routes, but it does consider the potential impacts of surveys that would occur between the Call Area and the shoreline where potential cable routes may be surveyed. Those impacts are*

addressed in the Draft EA, but site-specific cable routes will not be considered until later in the process when a Construction and Operations Plan (COP) is submitted.

- *Comment: BOEM should outline the impacts of potential failures to comprehensively remediate sites after the end of a wind project's useful life in the EA. Decommissioning is an important consideration for Gulf states, both in terms of its environmental impact and in terms of its fiscal impact.*
 - *Response: Decommissioning will be considered later in the process when site-specific analysis is required based on the details of a COP.*
- *Question: How many buoys will be placed in the Gulf for data collection?*
 - *Response: BOEM anticipates one or two buoys per lease.*

EA Process

- *Question: Has the step where BOEM publishes a proposed sale notice for comment before the final sale notice been eliminated from the process?*
 - *Response: No, there will be a proposed sale notice before a final sale notice is published.*
- *Question: Will there be other Gulf of Mexico WEAs that BOEM will consider in the future?*
 - *Response: The EA analyzes up to 18 lease sales, so while there will be an auction in early 2023, that does not preclude additional WEAs from being identified for future lease sales.*
- *Comment: Port Fourchon is excited by the possibilities for offshore energy and applauds BOEM's efforts. We encourage BOEM to review more areas to allow the wind energy industry to make informed decisions about where they would like to be.*
- *Question: Does BOEM prefer comments on both the Draft EA and the two Preliminary WEAs be submitted together under one cover, or should they be separated into two separate comment opportunities?*
 - *Response: BOEM prefers separating comments so that they can be properly responded to in both processes.*
- *Comment: BOEM should consider extending the comment period for the Draft EA to at least 45 days to allow ample time to review the very large document. Government agencies have difficulty reviewing and responding to large documents in 30 days, and BOEM should consider 45 days for all comment periods moving forward.*
 - *Response: BOEM will discuss that internally and recommends that you submit that comment in writing so that we can respond appropriately.*
- *Question: Will BOEM continue to analyze these two WEAs as they are solidified?*
 - *Response: Yes, BOEM will continue to review the wind energy areas because each WEA will probably contain two or three leases.*
- *Question: If other WEAs are offered in the future, will those be open to comment?*
 - *Response: Yes, any future WEAs will also have comment periods.*
- *Question: What is the proposed approach that BOEM is considering to Section 106, and will a Gulf programmatic agreement be developed similar to those in place or being developed for East Coast and West Coast wind development?*
 - *Response: Letters were sent to state, tribal, and other stakeholders offering the opportunity to participate in Section 106 consultation, and BOEM is following up to make sure that these invitations to consult were received. For programmatic consultation, BOEM's lead is exploring options and will coordinate with BOEM leadership and parties to determine the best approach.*

D. Draft Gulf of Mexico Renewable Energy Wind Energy Areas (WEAs)

1. *Tershara Matthews, Chief of Emerging Programs, BOEM Gulf of Mexico Regional Office.* Tershara Matthews provided background and an overview of the renewable leasing process, as well as discussed next steps within the wind energy area identification process. Ms. Matthews stated that BOEM is currently in the Area Identification/Environmental Assessment phase after completing the Request for Interest and Call for Information and Nominations. Once the EA and WEAs are finalized, a proposed sale notice will go out with a 60-day comment period, followed by the final sale notice. The actual auction date is anticipated to take place in early 2023 and will occur 30 days after the final sale notice is announced. Ms. Matthews discussed the comments that BOEM received and incorporated in previous phases, including major comments that detailed requests for BOEM's consideration. BOEM also consulted with wind energy companies to identify the industry's areas of interest within the Gulf. BOEM actively engaged with stakeholders over the last 18 months by holding more than 100 meetings and events.

Ms. Matthews informed participants that BOEM partnered with NOAA to utilize NOAA's Ocean Planning Model, which allowed BOEM to narrow down the two WEAs by eliminating "no-go areas" and ranking the remaining options within the Call Area. This led BOEM to select two WEAs: Area I and Area M. Area I is roughly 26 nautical miles off the coast of Galveston, and Area M is about 56 nautical miles from Lake Charles. These areas were selected due to a variety of factors, such as competitive interest, less national security concerns, proximity to shore and points of interconnection, reduced impacts to shrimping, and enough acreage to contain smaller lease sale areas.

2. Task Force Member Comments and Discussion

Preliminary WEA Identification and Addressing Conflicting Uses

- *Question: Would the 20 nautical mile buffer within the WEAs foreclose development in state waters? Additionally, the effect of the 20 nautical mile buffer is that only 9-19 nautical miles from shore has no activity. Would the federal government start leasing at 20 nautical miles offshore?*
 - *Response: BOEM only has jurisdiction in federal waters. BOEM has no jurisdiction over the state waters from 0-9 nautical miles offshore, so the buffer does not apply there. From 9-19 nautical miles offshore, the buffer is applied. BOEM would start leasing 20 nautical miles offshore.*
- *Comment: The inclusion of the 100-400 meter buffer for Rice's Whale is very much appreciated by the Marine Mammal Commission to ensure greatest protections for this critically endangered species.*
- *Comment: NOAA commends the process undertaken by BOEM to identify these Preliminary WEAs, and the lesson learned is that starting with a large area allows for the best available science to inform decisions when narrowing WEAs.*
- *Comment: The U.S. Coast Guard stresses the two nautical mile buffer from existing fairways to allow for safe egress during emergencies while avoiding heavy port traffic and large ships.*
- *Question: Have potential land use conflicts with offshore carbon sequestration been considered? Do we have a sense for how large buffers around wind turbine moorings should be to allow for carbon dioxide pipelines and injection wells?*
 - *Response: While BOEM has preliminary considerations in its analysis for carbon sequestration locations in the Gulf, it is still working on a carbon sequestration assessment with limited information to determine where those locations would be.*

As more data provides clarity, BOEM will most likely need to go through another deconflicting step before considering more WEAs for leasing.

- *Question: Why was Area I selected as a Preliminary WEA even though it has more conflict with shrimp trawlers and NMFS' Protected Resources Map than adjacent options like Area J?*
 - *Response: Competitive interest was higher in Area I than Area J, which is a major factor in BOEM's process. Area J is also further offshore and is therefore inferior to Area I in terms of commercial viability, proximity to points of interconnection, and proximity to shore. Additionally, there are some shrimping areas in Area I that will likely be omitted later in the area identification process.*
- *Comment: BOEM has done a wonderful job in its stakeholder engagement and deconflicting processes within the Gulf of Mexico region.*

WEA Identification and Leasing Processes

- *Question: Will there be a roadmap for further auctions?*
 - *Response: Yes, eventually BOEM will have a roadmap. This may not occur until 2023 when BOEM is better situated with an existing auction, but it is BOEM's expectation to eventually lay out a plan in the Gulf for additional WEAs. This is just the beginning of BOEM's efforts for offshore wind energy in the Gulf of Mexico.*
- *Question: How will unsolicited lease requests be evaluated? In particular, is there going to be the potential to use the same type of marine spatial planning to evaluate unsolicited lease requests?*
 - *Response: The first step in the process of unsolicited lease requests is to publish it in the Federal Register to gauge competitive interest. Once competitive interest is determined, BOEM will review comments and ocean planning will likely be utilized to better understand that area. Before that happens, a developer must prove their qualifications.*
- *Question: Will Community Benefit Agreements be part of the lease process in the Gulf of Mexico?*
 - *Response: Community Benefit Agreements are part of the Proposed Sale Notice (PSN), and once the WEAs are finalized BOEM will release the PSN. I (Tershara) believe California's PSN had community benefits up to 20% to support other initiatives within local communities, and BOEM is closely reviewing California's PSN as a guiding document. BOEM is internally discussing Community Benefit Agreements for the Gulf of Mexico lease auction.*

E. Task Force Member Updates

Mr. Poncelet invited Task Force members to provide updates on the topic of offshore wind energy in the Gulf of Mexico. Task Force members in attendance were given the opportunity to ask clarifying questions or offer additional updates or comments. Formal updates were provided as follows.

1. *Harry Vorhoff, Deputy Director, Office of Governor John Bel Edwards, Coastal Activities.* Harry Vorhoff updated meeting participants on the state of Louisiana's priorities for offshore wind. Mr. Vorhoff expressed excitement that one of the two Preliminary WEAs is off of Louisiana's coast and noted that Louisiana is very bullish on wind energy's role in furthering climate goals, diversifying energy production, and supporting the economy and workforce. Mr. Vorhoff commended BOEM for its efforts in engaging stakeholders, educating constituents, and avoiding future conflicts.

Mr. Vorhoff highlighted a few pieces of legislation for Task Force members to track. Act 443 from the most recent Louisiana legislative session streamlines the wind leasing process in state waters in Louisiana, increases the maximum acreage per wind lease from 5,000 acres to 25,000 acres, and

directs the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources to draft criteria for royalties, lease terms, and requirements for financial security. House Continuing Resolution 25 asked the Louisiana Public Service Commission to investigate the benefits and costs to achieving an offshore wind demonstration project by 2026 to facilitate commercial development, whether in state waters or federal waters. With regard to proposed legislation at the federal level, the Reinvesting In Shoreline Economies and Ecosystems Act (RISEE Act) would lift the cap for Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA) revenue-sharing for offshore energy and allocate 37.5% of any future federal revenue from offshore wind to states adjacent to the wind energy production. The RISEE Act also stipulates that 12.5% of future federal revenue will fund a coastal resilience fund that will utilize competitive grants to support resilience efforts for coastal communities. The proposed Budgeting for Renewable Electrical Energy Zone Earnings (BREEZE) Act also lifts the GOMESA cap while requiring that 50% of offshore wind revenue from federal waters goes to adjacent states and 37.5% goes to the North America Wetlands Conservation Fund to benefit coastal communities.

2. Tom Ortiz and Kelly Brooks, Texas General Land Office (GLO). Mr. Ortiz began GLO's update by emphasizing that offshore wind should not be viewed in isolation from other new offshore energy land-use programs. GLO views offshore wind as an enabler for a variety of new energy programs that could lead to "offshore energy supercenters" that produce massive amounts of energy. Mr. Ortiz reiterated his earlier concern that waiting until a specific offshore wind project is underway before considering cable siting and capacity could fail to properly synchronize offshore wind with other offshore energy production activities, which could reduce the offshore area's overall impact. Mr. Ortiz detailed the opportunity for producing green hydrogen offshore using desalination, which would provide a secondary benefit of additional freshwater resources being available for drought-stricken communities or during natural disasters scenarios. Mr. Ortiz mentioned carbon sequestration as another offshore investment opportunity that should be considered when thinking about offshore wind and cable siting in the Gulf. A holistic regional approach, rather than waiting for project-specific plans, is required from the federal government to ensure that the Gulf's full energy production potential is capitalized on.

Kelly Brooks discussed land use conflicts that GLO sees as critical to address as offshore wind expands in the Gulf. Ms. Brooks examined BOEM's Preliminary Wind Energy Area I off the coast of Galveston and its relationship with existing offshore resources. Examples of these resources include coastal restoration projects, oil and gas leases, carbon sequestration, well heads, pipelines and easements, and Significant Sediment Resource Areas (SSRAs). Ms. Brooks noted the importance of considering all of these existing resources, as well as any future investments, when planning offshore wind development in the Gulf. Land use conflicts and electrical transmission siting challenges are plentiful in the region and should be considered holistically rather than in a piecemeal fashion for each individual new wind project.

3. Maureen Kallgren, Marine Transportation Specialist, U.S. Coast Guard (USCG). Maureen Kallgren presented on USCG Navigation's role for policies and rulemaking, active USCG activities in the Gulf of Mexico, and guidance on studies that apply to developers and states on offshore development. USCG's roles and responsibilities for Offshore Renewable Energy Installations (OREI) are to protect all mariners, property, and the environment, ensure safe navigation routes, and reconcile conflicts between waterway users. USCG has a mandate to reconcile the need for safe access routes with all the other needs of the area involved, so USCG considers wind energy, fishing, recreation, tourism, and other priorities that mutually coexist in a given area. Ms. Kallgren pointed out that USCG

Navigation cooperates with BOEM for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) purposes, provides consultations for responsibilities under Section 106, and helps develop Navigation Safety Risk Assessments (NSRAs) that are provided to BOEM as part of a Construction and Operations Plan later in the process. Ms. Kallgren reviewed the Coast Guard's operational commands and district commands in the U.S., noting that district commands are responsible for performing relevant studies to offshore wind like Waterways Analysis and Management System (WAMS) and Port Access Route Studies (PARS). Ms. Kallgren informed attendees that all OREI external guidance can be found on U.S. Coast Guard Navigation Center's (NAVCEN) website at www.navcen.uscg.gov. The most up-to-date navigation vessel inspection circular (NVIC) provides guidance and recommendations for how to evaluate mitigations when submitting a COP, and USCG anticipates publishing robust revisions in 6-9 months. Ms. Kallgren ended her presentation by discussing whether a PARS will be needed in the Gulf of Mexico for offshore wind, as well as outlining Preliminary WEAs I and M.

4. Cheri Hunter, Renewable Energy Coordinator, Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE). Cheri Hunter began her presentation by explaining BSEE's role in developing the framework to maintain an effective safety and environmental compliance program for OCS renewable energy. BSEE and BOEM have separate duties, with BSEE utilizing regulations along with various programs to ensure environmentally responsible offshore energy production. Ms. Hunter clarified that BSEE and BOEM are collaborating to install processes that smoothly transition coordination with the offshore wind industry so that as projects move through their life cycles, safety and environmental protections remain top priorities. Ms. Hunter explained that while Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) regulations for workplace safety apply in nearly all U.S. work environments, renewable energy facilities are not bound to the same restrictions as offshore oil and gas; however, Ms. Hunter added that BSEE will consider OSHA's standards as a baseline but may employ alternate regulations where necessary to ensure the same level of safety. Ms. Hunter clarified that even though offshore wind facilities are unmanned, BSEE is taking the potential risks to workers as seriously as possible environmental risks. Rapid expansion of the renewable energy workforce means protecting workers, and BSEE is actively partnering with organizations across the globe to develop health and safety standards.

5. Delfina Montano, Regional Energy Coordinator, Region 2 of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Ms. Montano highlighted USFWS' efforts to support offshore wind energy in the Gulf, noting that she serves as the coordinator for the bi-regional team assembled to provide technical support and expertise to BOEM. Ms. Montano reviewed the spatial mapping resources that USFWS shared with BOEM on the topics of avian space use conflict, wind energy, and bird migration pathways. Ms. Montano detailed recent aerial surveys in the Gulf that will inform a radar proof-of-concept project. This radar project is in collaboration with USGS and NOAA, and will help USFWS's proposed rulemaking on migratory birds in the Gulf that will apply to offshore wind. Ms. Montano stressed the importance of the Gulf of Mexico as a critically important and unique region for migratory birds.

6. Task Force Member Discussion

- *Question: Are current PARS considering the impact of roughly 25 new LNG export facilities being planned or constructed along the Gulf Coast?*
 - *Response: USCG's district 8 commander is still in the process of determining whether a PARS is required. If a PARS is conducted, then yes it will consider all future shipping traffic and infrastructure investment.*
- *Question: Would the BSEE unified command also include remediation or enforcement of leaks or other failures of Class 6 UIC carbon storage wells? It is possible for a carbon storage*

well to blow out in the same manner as an oil or gas well, so BSEE might want to consider this.

- *Response: The slide on unified command responses was mostly focused on the discovery of an unexploded ordnance (UXO), or if a UXO should explode. BSEE does require response plans or regulations for other facilities like the one mentioned, but those spills would be liquids involving stored petroleum.*

F. Closing Remarks and Next Steps

Tershara Matthews reviewed future actions for BOEM over the next few months. Once comments and feedback are provided to senior leadership, BOEM will release a series of items to the public. These items include an Area Identification (ID) memo, lease areas, auction format and Proposed Sale Notice (PSN), the final EA, issue the Final Sale Notice (FSN), and propose their Lease Auction. Tershara reminded attendees that the comment period for both the Draft EA and the two WEAs closes on August 19 and provided the information to submit written comments.

Mr. Poncelet reminded participants that the presentations and meeting recordings will be made available following the Task Force Meeting. He noted that Kearns & West will also develop a meeting summary, which will also be posted to the Gulf of Mexico Task Force webpage. Regional Director Mike Celata offered closing remarks to formally adjourn the Task Force Meeting. He thanked everyone for their valuable contributions, noting that BOEM has several follow-up action items as a result of this meeting. Tershara Matthews closed the meeting by reminding attendees that any follow-up questions can be emailed to her, Idrissa Boube, or John Filostrat in BOEM's Public Affairs office.

III. Public Input Opportunity

Mr. Poncelet invited participating members of the public to share questions or comments on all topics covered during the Task Force meeting. Some questions and comments were shared orally by members of the public, while others were submitted via chat and read aloud by Mr. Poncelet. A recap of this discussion, organized by major theme, is provided below.

Design and Process

- Several commenters reflected on the importance and detailed nature of the Draft EA and Preliminary WEA documents and requested that BOEM extend the comment period.
- A commenter noted that they are working to develop a program that integrates power from an offshore grid with renewables, hydrogen, carbon sequestration, and existing oil and gas sub-sea power systems. Their understanding is that BOEM is very focused on a long-term integrated solution that accomplishes this. Is there any guidance or input that BOEM has in this space?
 - Response: BOEM has been working to move towards a holistic, regional approach that solves these transmission integration issues. Our team will be reaching out to Tom Ortiz from GLO after this meeting to further discuss this topic and hopefully fit it within our future actions.
- A commenter expressed support that a Preliminary WEA is close to Galveston, TX. This location has many inherent advantages, such as proximity to Galveston Channel and environmental benefits created through green and marine initiatives. Galveston has imported more than 10,000 wind turbines since 2007 and has an airport that could benefit future offshore wind energy projects.
- A commenter found BOEM and NOAA's smart siting approach using the best-available data in order to mitigate impacts from offshore wind to be helpful. BOEM should continually update its offshore siting and development process with new survey data so that the offshore wind

industry can be nimble in adjusting to changes in information. Relatedly, will BOEM release a memo detailing the Draft WEAs soon?

- Response: The memo is a new step in BOEM's process and will be published once feedback on the Draft WEAs is considered and the final WEAs are released.
- A commenter requested that BOEM expand on why meteorological tower technologies are considered outdated, while others still consider them state-of-the-art.
 - Response: The Atlantic region's EAs and SAPs all utilized meteorological (met) buoys instead of towers, so we determined that, moving forward, met buoys should be expected.
- A commenter acknowledged the importance of offshore wind energy to the state of Texas due to its grid crisis and energy demand, and agreed with GLO that integrated solutions are required instead of focusing on individual projects' capacities and transmission requirements. Challenges exist in terms of synchronizing different electric grids and their way of allocating the cost of electric transmission, but this is still the best path forward.
- A commenter expressed appreciation for BOEM's efforts to coordinate with NOAA's National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS) and expressed support for future collaboration to deconflict shrimping and other forms of fishing through the siting, engineering, and installation processes by tweaking the WEAs.
- A commenter noted the challenges associated with pipelines conflicting with offshore significant sediment resource areas. Is BOEM considering the possibility of a designated corridor containing all offshore pipelines and cables?
 - Response: BOEM is working hard to remove those abandoned pipelines and contacting those companies to make sure that significant sediment resource areas are available for use. We placed these sediment areas in the constraints model of our ocean planning so that these areas would not be further burdened. BOEM is also thinking of starting a regional transmission team with states' point of contacts to inform us on the best possible transmission routes that avoid significant sediment resource areas off Louisiana and Texas.

Environmental Impacts

- A commenter noted that if an integrated and regional approach to transmission is undertaken, each part of the integrated solution has its own environmental impacts that need to be addressed in the planning process. Solutions and their environmental impacts must be known ahead of time to ensure sustainable offshore wind projects.
- A commenter asked if Michelle Nannen could provide more information on what kind of potential effects and activities associated with site assessment and characterization will be occurring on in-shore habitats, and to clarify whether coastal land use was eliminated from the draft EA because of minimal impacts on it as a result of buoy installation or survey activity.
 - Response: For land use, BOEM looked at the installation of buoys offshore and vessels going in and out of ports that could affect land use, specifically port usage. Because buoy installation or survey activity impacts were found to be negligible, we eliminated coastal land use from that stage in the process. More information can be found within the appendices of the Draft EA.
- A commenter expressed appreciation for BOEM's thoughtful and patient approach to leasing, and reminded everyone that on July 25th, the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management announced 140 programs in support of President Biden's

Justice40 Initiative. The commenter encouraged BOEM to explore these programs and disclose the extent to which their impacts are considered low or negligible to BOEM.

Safety

- A commenter noted that they had submitted a letter to BOEM earlier this year outlining their demands for requiring high labor standards within these lease areas. Offshore wind is of great concern to the labor movement in Texas because laborers such as plumbers, pipe fitters, seafarers, longshoremen, construction workers, and others will be affected by these leases. Texas' anti-worker laws lead to worse working conditions than other states, and the Biden administration needs to take stronger action to deliver on the promise of good union offshore wind jobs in Texas. This information does not appear in the draft EA or the Preliminary WEAs. Strong labor, equity, and safety standards need to be present in BOEM's Gulf leases.
- A commenter expressed appreciation regarding BSEE's emphasis on making sure that clean jobs are also safe jobs.

Stakeholder Engagement

- A commenter noted that there is a tremendous opportunity for transition from the oil and gas industry, and a lot of that will come down to education and continuing to hold events like this Task Force meeting. Having events where both the general public and industry can attend allows BOEM to demystify offshore wind and keep key stakeholders engaged. Education and awareness in terms of business case analyses to supply chain and workforce development will be critical pieces of the puzzle within the Gulf.

IV. Appendices

A. Agenda

Gulf of Mexico Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force Meeting

July 27, 2022

9:00 AM – 1:00 PM CT

Webinar Information (Zoom)

URL: <https://kearnswest.zoom.us/j/84261979274?pwd=ZzkzTEJNb3RoSG1HOGR3YW00UjZPQT09>

Webinar ID: 842 6197 9274

Passcode: 443291

**Registration is required for members of the public to attend the Task Force meeting.*

Register here: https://kearnswest.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_7T8KcSQqJup2QNLpo70iw

Meeting Purpose and Objectives

- Overall purpose: Facilitate coordination and consultation among federal, state, local, and tribal governments regarding offshore wind energy and the renewable energy leasing process on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) in the Gulf of Mexico (GOM).
- Seek feedback from Task Force members on the Draft GOM Renewable Energy Draft Environmental Assessment (EA).
- Seek feedback from Task Force members on the two Preliminary Wind Energy Areas in the GOM.
- Provide opportunities for public input on the topics being considered by the Task Force.

Time (CT)	Item	Presenter(s) or Related Parties
8:45 a.m.	Join the Webinar • Opportunity for Task Force members and the public to log into the virtual platform and get technical support as needed	• Task Force Members • Members of the Public
9:00 a.m.	Welcome & Opening Remarks	• Tribal Acknowledgement • Amanda Lefton, BOEM Director • Mike Celata, Regional Director, BOEM Gulf of Mexico Region
9:10 a.m.	Task Force Meeting Overview • Webinar instructions & guidance • Task Force introductions • Agenda review	• Eric Poncelet, Facilitator, Kearns & West

Time (CT)	Item	Presenter(s) or Related Parties
9:20 a.m.	Discuss Draft GOM Renewable Energy Environmental Assessment (EA) - Overview of Draft GOM Renewable Energy EA - Task Force comments and discussion	- Michelle Nannen, BOEM - Task Force Members
9:55 a.m.	Discuss Draft GOM Renewable Energy Wind Energy Areas (WEAs) - Overview of Draft GOM WEAs - Task Force comments and discussion	- Tershara Matthews, BOEM - Task Force Members
10:30 a.m. <i>(we will pause for a 15-minute break around 11:00 a.m.)</i>	Task Force Member Updates (70 min) - Overview of State Renewable Energy Goals (LA, TX) - U.S. Coast Guard - Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Other Task Force member updates, clarifying questions, and discussion	- Harry Vorhoff, State of Louisiana - Tom Ortiz and Kelly Brooks, State of Texas - Maureen Kallgren, USCG - Cheri Hunter, BSEE - Delfina Montano, USFWS - Task Force Members
11:50 a.m.	Next Steps and Closing Remarks	- Tershara Matthews, BOEM - Mike Celata, BOEM
11:55 a.m.	<i>Task Force Meeting Adjourns</i>	N/A
12:00 p.m.	Public Input Opportunity and Discussion Opportunity for public input on topics under Task Force discussion	- Eric Poncelet, Kearns & West - Members of the public
1:00 p.m.	<i>Adjourn</i>	N/A

B. Task Force Member Participant List

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

Gulf of Mexico Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force Roster*

**Task Force Roster as of July 27, 2022. Task Force members are noted alphabetically by organization or agency.*

U.S. Elected Officials & Representatives

1. Kathee Facchiano – U.S. House of Representatives, Office of Congressman Clay Higgins (LA-03)
2. Paul Sawyer – U.S. House of Representatives, Office of Congressman Garret Graves (LA-06)
3. Megan Miller – U.S. House of Representatives, Office of Congressman Steve Scalise (LA-01)
4. James Quinn – U.S. Senate, Office of Senator Bill Cassidy
5. David Stokes – U.S. Senate, Office of Senator John Kennedy

Tribal Governments

1. Melissa Darden – Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana
2. Dakota John – Coushatta Tribe
3. Shirell Dardar – Grand Caillou/Dulac Band of Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw
4. Johnna Fisher – Jena Band of Choctaw Indians

State of Alabama

1. Chris Blankenship - Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
2. Scott Brown – Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM)
3. Lance LeFleur – ADEM

State of Louisiana

1. Timothy Hardy – Breazeale Sachse & Wilson
2. Brian Abshire – Calcasieu Parish
3. Scott Trahan – Cameron Parish
4. Clair Marceaux – Cameron Parish Port
5. Camille Manning-Broome – Center for Planning Excellence
6. Jonathan Rhodes – City of New Orleans
7. Bren Haas – Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority
8. Jonathan Bourg – Entergy Louisiana
9. Flozell Daniels – Foundation for Louisiana
10. Chett Chasson – Greater Lafourche Port (Port Fourchon)
11. Colette Pichon Battle – Gulf Coast Center for Law & Policy
12. Michelle Gonzales – Jefferson Parish
13. Cynthia Lee Sheng – Jefferson Parish
14. Archie Chaisson – Lafourche Parish
15. Gregory Bowser – Louisiana Chemical Association
16. Brad Lambert – Louisiana Economic Development (LED)
17. Don Pierson – LED
18. Joseph Breaux – Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry
19. Chuck Brown – Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

20. LourdesIturralde – DEQ
21. ThomasHarris – Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
22. Mark Hogan – DNR
23. Sara Krupa – DNR
24. Jason Lanclos – DNR
25. Keith Lovell – DNR
26. Charles Reulet – DNR
27. Eric Kalivoda – Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
28. Jack Montoucet – Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
29. Mark Moses – Louisiana Division of Administration, Office of Facility Planning and Control
30. Patrick Banks – Louisiana Division of Administration, Office of Fisheries
31. Cheston Hill – Louisiana Division of Administration, Office of State Lands
32. Harry Vorhoff – Louisiana Governor's Office of Coastal Activities
33. Pat Arnould – Louisiana Governor's Office of Indian Affairs
34. Chandler C. Vidrine – Louisiana Governor's Office of Indian Affairs
35. Tyler Gray – Louisiana Mid-Continent Oil & Gas Association
36. Nicole Hobson-Morris – Louisiana Office of Cultural Development, Division of Historic Preservation
37. Sam Jones – Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's Office
38. Craig Greene – Louisiana Public Service Commission
39. Brandon Frey – Louisiana Public Service Commission
40. Joe Orgeron – Louisiana House of Representatives (District 54)
41. Clay Schexnayder – Louisiana House of Representatives (District 81)
42. Page Cortez – Louisiana State Senate (District 23)
43. Patrick McMath – Louisiana State Senate (District 11)
44. Robert Verchick – Loyola University, New Orleans
45. Helena Moreno – New Orleans City Council
46. Kirk Lepine – Plaquemines Parish
47. Richert Self – Port of Lake Charles
48. Brandy Christina – Port of New Orleans
49. Guy McInnis – St. Bernard Parish
50. David Hanagriff – St. Mary Parish
51. Gordon Dove – Terrebone Parish
52. Karen Gautreaux – The Nature Conservancy of Louisiana
53. Terrence Chambers – University of Louisiana at Lafayette
54. Dane Hebert – Vermilion Parish

State of Mississippi

1. Lynn Chambers – Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ)
2. Mike Freiman – MDEQ
3. Trent Jones – MDEQ
4. Krystal Rudolph – MDEQ
5. Chris Sanders – MDEQ
6. Willa Brantley – Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR)
7. Joe Spraggins – MDMR
8. Jamie Miller – Mississippi Development Agency
9. Mike Hainsey – Mississippi Military Communities Council
10. Mike Johnson – Mississippi Military Communities Council

11. Jim Craig – Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH)
12. Les Herrington – MSDH
13. Bill Moody – MSDH
14. Anne Hall Brashier - Office of Mississippi Governor Tate Reeves
15. Nick Lewis – Office of Mississippi Governor Tate Reeves
16. Kristen Windham – Office of Mississippi Governor Tate Reeves
17. Jon Nass – The Port of Gulfport

State of Texas

1. Jacquelyn Boutwell – Texas General Land Office (TXGLO)
2. Jeff Burroughs – TXGLO
3. Brice Finley – TXGLO
4. Kevin Frenzel – TXGLO
5. David Green – TXGLO
6. Robert Hatter – TXGLO
7. Mark Havens – TXGLO
8. Melissa McCutcheon – TXGLO
9. Tom Ortiz – TXGLO
10. Melissa Porter – TXGLO
11. Jason Smalley – TXGLO
12. Tony Williams – TXGLO
13. Robin Riechers – Texas Parks and Wildlife
14. Laura Zebehazy – Texas Parks and Wildlife

Federal Agencies

1. Christopher Daniel – Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP)
2. Blythe Semmer – ACHP
3. David Saunders – Bureau of Indian Affairs
4. Cheri Hunter – Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement
5. Michael Lignowski – Department of Defense (DOD)
6. Steven Sample – DOD
7. Nate McKenzie – Department of Energy (DOE)
8. Maya Whalen-Kipp – DOE
9. Shaikh Taimur – Environmental Protection Agency
10. Cindy Whitten – Federal Aviation Administration
11. Timothy Bialecki – Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)
12. Robert Fares – FERC
13. Cori Carraway – Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council (FPISC) Agencies
14. Vicki Cornish – Marine Mammal Commission
15. David Dale – National Marine Fisheries Service
16. Sophie Godfrey-McKee – National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
17. David Kaiser – NOAA
18. Kerry Kehoe – NOAA
19. Kristin Ransom – NOAA
20. Brian Rosegger – NOAA
21. Noah Silverman – NOAA
22. Heidi Stiller – NOAA
23. Andrew Strelcheck – NOAA

24. John Walter – NOAA
25. Dusty Pate – NPS
26. Walt Musial – NREL
27. David Blalock – U.S. Army Regional Environmental and Energy Office (REEO)
28. Stanley Rasmussen – U.S. Army REEO
29. David Carr – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
30. Susan Gibson – USACE
31. Scott Kiernan – USACE
32. Susan Mabry – USACE, Galveston District
33. Katherine Taylor – USACE, Galveston District
34. Dave Soileau – USACE, New Orleans District
35. Jacob Aulner – U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)
36. George Detweiler – U.S. Coast Guard
37. Maureen Kallgren – USCG
38. Shawn Danoff – U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)
39. Brian Hill – USDOT
40. Chuck Ardizzone – U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)
41. Dawn Gardiner – USFWS
42. Kirsten McDonnell – USFWS
43. Delfina Montano – USFWS
44. Kevin Reynolds – USFWS
45. Luela Roberts – USFWS
46. John Tirpak – USFWS
47. Marty Tuegel – USFWS
48. Christine Willis – USFWS
49. Randy Wilson – USFWS
50. David Diamond – U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)
51. Gregory Steyer – USGS
52. Prianka Sharma – U.S. Small Business Administration