

# Northeast Regional Ocean Council Ocean Planning Update

New England Fishery Management Council  
January 29, 2019

Nick Napoli  
NROC Ocean Planning Director

1. Correspondence (January 29-31, 2019) M

#14



**NORTHEAST OCEAN DATA**  
Maps and Data for Ocean Planning in the Northeastern United States

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**DATA EXPLORER**

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**THEME MAPS**

View curated maps and data on key topics

- Marine Life & Habitat: Mammals & Turtles, Fish, Birds, Habitat
- Commercial Fishing
- Marine Transportation
- Energy & Infrastructure
- Aquaculture
- Recreation
- Restoration
- Cultural Resources
- National Security
- Water Quality
- Bathymetry, Eelgrass, Habitat Classification

**CASE STUDIES**

- Leveraging Ocean Data for Economic and Ecological Viability**  
Aquaculture, Commercial Fishing, Energy and Infrastructure, Marine Life, Marine Transportation, Recreation
- Cost Savings for Connecticut's Ocean Planning Process**  
Aquaculture, Commercial Fishing, Energy and Infrastructure, Marine Life, Marine Transportation, Recreation
- Increasing Maritime Safety and Improving Weather Forecasts Through Siting of a New Wave-Monitoring Buoy**  
Commercial Fishing, Marine Life, Marine Transportation, Recreation

**VIDEO TOUR**

Introduce to the Northeast Ocean Data Portal

0:00 / 1:06

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**FEATURED MAP**

Fishing Vessel Traffic and Renewable Energy

**NEWS**

- Jul 28, 2018  
**Panel Discussion on Northeast Ocean Data and Ocean Policy to Be Hosted by Environmental Business Council on September 26**
- Aug 10, 2018  
**Thousands of Updated Marine Life Maps Reflect Recent Observations, New Species, New Species Groups**
- Jul 20, 2018  
**New Vessel Traffic Data and Maps Now Available on Northeast Ocean Data Portal**

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A new seasonal map for common eider is one of 1000s of updated marine life maps on the Northeast Ocean Data Portal.  
<https://t.co/Zhr6G6J0Y>
- Northeast Ocean Data @NEOceanData**  
ET @PortMARCOWe recently refreshed our library of 1000s maps of fish, birds & marine mammals. Find out what's new at: <https://t.co/8Rfwaaz2Dn>

Aug 21 reply retweet 4 days ago

News Archives



# Northeast Regional Ocean Council

- Formed by the New England governors in 2005
- Voluntary forum for states, federal agencies, and other regional organizations (rotating state and federal co-chairs)
  - Healthy Ocean and Coastal Ecosystems Committee
  - Coastal Hazards Committee
  - **Ocean Planning Committee**



**NROC**  
Northeast Regional  
Ocean Council

# NROC Ocean Planning Committee

- Began regional ocean planning activities before Obama-era Executive Order
- Established the Northeast Ocean Data Portal in 2009
- Supported the development of the 2016 Northeast Ocean Plan by the Northeast Regional Planning Body (under Obama-era EO)
- June 2018, Trump Administration Executive Order
  - eliminates the RPB
  - points to regional ocean partnerships (ROP) that are “voluntarily convened by governors”
  - allows for those ROPs to express regional priorities for federal coordination

# NROC Ocean Planning Committee

- Since June 2018 release of new EO
  - Hosted two full-day public meetings
  - Conducted interviews with over 50 individuals from a wide range of sectors/interests
  - Agreed to advance regional priorities under NROC Ocean Planning Committee with an expanded membership
  - Identified and communicated regional priorities to the federal Ocean Policy Committee



December 6, 2018

Ms. Mary Neumayr  
Council of Environmental Quality  
Co-Chair, Ocean Policy Committee

Mr. Michael Kratsios  
Office of Science and Technology Policy  
Co-Chair, Ocean Policy Committee

Mr. Deerin Babb-Brott  
Executive Director  
Ocean Policy Committee

Sent via email to [Deerin\\_S\\_Babb-Brott2@ostp.eop.gov](mailto:Deerin_S_Babb-Brott2@ostp.eop.gov)

Dear Ms. Neumayr, Mr. Kratsios and Mr. Babb-Brott:

The Northeast Regional Ocean Council (NROC), the Regional Ocean Partnership (ROP) for the New England states, respectfully submits this letter which describes regional ocean management priorities and requests continued and increased cooperation from federal agencies to advance these priorities.

NROC is a state and federal partnership that was established in 2005 by the Governors of Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine, and Vermont to coordinate and collaborate on cross-jurisdictional ocean issues. Federal agencies have been involved as equal partners with the states since the inception of NROC. In addition to its core membership, NROC is structured to include voluntary participation from additional federal and state agencies, federally recognized tribes, the New England Fishery Management Council, and other regional partners and ocean stakeholder groups.

Ocean planning has been a priority for NROC since its formation. In recent years in New England, there has been increased interest and proposals for offshore wind and marine hydrokinetic energy generation facilities, liquefied natural gas terminals, aquaculture operations, telecommunications cables, energy transmission cables, and offshore sand mining. These potential activities present new economic opportunities that need to be coordinated with important existing economic sectors, including fishing, shipping, tourism, and recreation. These new activities also need to be considered for their potential interactions with the region's unique ecological resources. As a result, marine plans for state waters in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the State of Rhode Island have been in place since early 2010 and the State of Connecticut is currently developing a plan for its share of Long Island

# NROC Ocean Planning Committee

- 2019 NROC Ocean Planning Committee Focus
  - Northeast Ocean Data Portal and regional data priorities
  - Best practices for regulatory and management decision-making
    - Use of data
    - Early consultation and pre-application practices
    - Stakeholder engagement
    - Agency and interjurisdictional coordination
  - Regional forums for emerging/important issues



## NORTHEAST OCEAN DATA

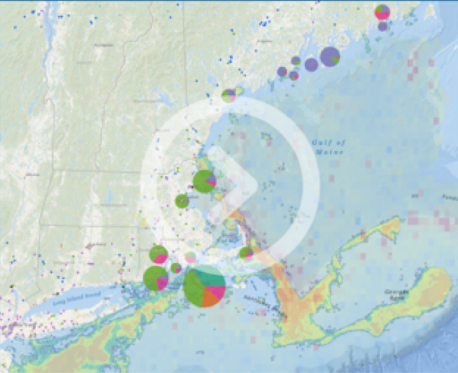
Maps and Data for Ocean Planning in the Northeastern United States

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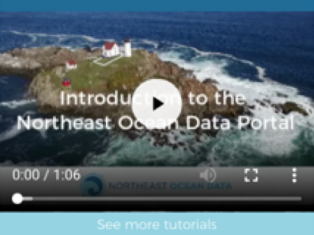
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### THEME MAPS

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Marine Life & Habitat  
Mammals & Turtles // Fish // Birds // Habitat



Commercial Fishing



Marine Transportation



Energy & Infrastructure



Aquaculture



Recreation



Restoration



Cultural Resources



National Security



Water Quality

[Bathymetry](#) // [Eelgrass](#) // [Habitat Classification](#)

### CASE STUDIES



**Leveraging Ocean Data for Economic and Ecological Vitality**

Aquaculture - Commercial Fishing - Energy and Infrastructure - Marine Life - Marine Transportation - Recreation



**Cost Savings for Connecticut's Ocean Planning Process**

Aquaculture - Commercial Fishing - Energy and Infrastructure - Marine Life - Marine Transportation - Recreation



**Increasing Maritime Safety and Improving Weather Forecasts Through Siting of a New Wave-Monitoring Buoy**

Commercial Fishing - Marine Life - Marine Transportation - Recreation

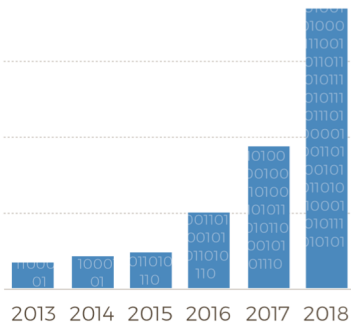
[More Case Studies](#)

- Source of over 4,000 map products showing the footprint of activities and resources
- Federal, state, and stakeholder provided data
- Customized to address regional stakeholder and agency needs
- Informed and vetted by regional stakeholders and experts



# Portal Use

## INCREASE IN OVERALL SITE USE & DATA DOWNLOADS



Bandwidth  
increased  
**7x**  
2015-2018

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 14, 2018

Dr. Walter Cruickshank  
Acting Director  
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Dr. Cruickshank:

As long-time supporters of both the offshore wind and fishing industries, we write to urge the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) to continue to pursue policies for the offshore wind leasing and permitting process that will help minimize conflicts among developers, the fishing industry, and other stakeholders.

Massachusetts and Rhode Island have championed offshore wind and set ambitious renewable energy goals. Our states understand that smart planning and consultation with stakeholders, particularly the fishing industry, will allow offshore wind to flourish in the United States, protect important ocean resources, and maintain access for existing users. However, we have heard from our constituents who believe that BOEM is not currently taking this balanced approach. This is particularly true with respect to the fishing industry.

The seafood industry is a vital economic engine for our states—supporting 89,868 jobs in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.<sup>1</sup> For example, in 2016, \$327 million of seafood was landed in New Bedford, MA and \$56 million in Point Judith, RI.<sup>2</sup> These communities, which have suffered federally-declared fishery disasters over the last decade, can ill-afford additional hardship resulting from a faulty development process.

We have seen the offshore wind development process work successfully off the Rhode Island coast, where the nation's first offshore wind project currently provides energy to the residents of Block Island and beyond. With a strong reliance on collaborative and meaningful engagement, Rhode Island's experience proved that offshore wind and other marine industries can operate in harmony. We should apply these lessons to projects off the East Coast.

Though we recognize BOEM utilizes roundtable discussions, liaisons, and initiatives such as "Smart from the Start" to improve communication between the fishing industry and wind developers, many of our constituents consider the existing efforts to be ineffective. These interactions come after a lease is awarded, missing the better opportunity to identify conflicts and mitigate potential harms before awarding a lease. Similarly, we are not confident that BOEM has met the charge set out in the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA) that BOEM

<sup>1</sup> <https://repository.library.noaa.gov/view/noaa/16121>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/commercial-fisheries/commercial-landings-other-specialized-programs/total-commercial-fishery-landings-at-major-us-ports-summarized-by-year-and-ranked-by-dollar-value/index>

## COMMERCIAL FISHING DATA VIEWS [VESSEL MONITORING SYSTEM DATA]



March 10, 2017  
BOEM announces  
3 unsolicited bids  
for offshore wind  
leases in federal  
waters south of  
MA and NY

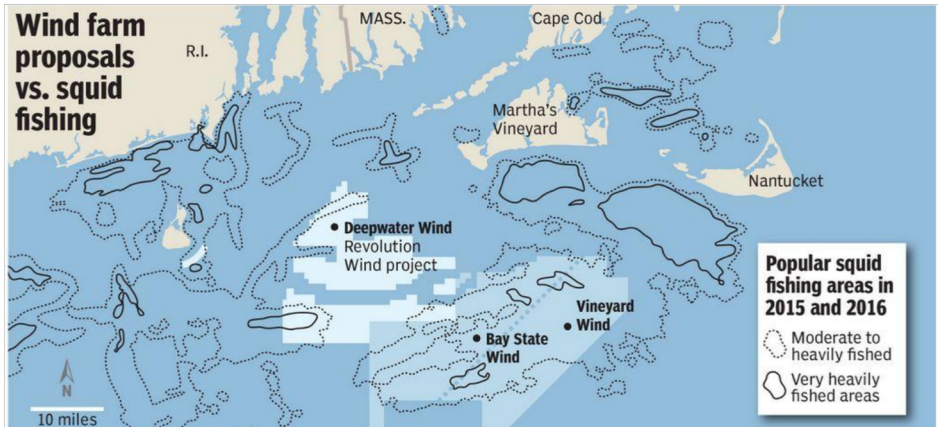
April 14, 18 - 20  
New England Fishery  
Management Council  
meetings



fewer  
views before

greater and more frequent  
views after

## Wind farm proposals vs. squid fishing



SOURCE: Energy Management, Deepwater Wind, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Northeast Ocean Data

PROVIDENCE JOURNAL GRAPHIC

# Select Uses of the Northeast Ocean Data Portal

## Planning and Management

- New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) Deep Sea Coral Amendment Alternatives
- NEFMC Clam Dredge Exemption Framework Alternatives
- USCG waterways management, including deploying aids to navigation and ice breaking assets
- USCG Port Access Route Study (PARS) – Nantucket Sound
- US Navy identify areas for testing underwater autonomous vessels and potentially affected stakeholders
- NOAA charts
- CT Blue Plan for Long Island Sound
- NY Geographic Information Gateway
- NYSERDA Offshore Wind Master Plan
- Boston Harbor Barrier Feasibility Study
- MA oil and hazardous materials flow study

## Regulatory and Siting

- Northeast Wind Energy Area Transit Corridor Development
- Vineyard Wind EIS
- New York Draft Wind Energy Areas
- NEMAC Mussel Farm sited in Mass Bay – first shellfish farm in federal waters on Atlantic Coast
- NERACOOS wave buoy sited in Cape Cod Bay to inform mariners transiting the canal
- Manna Fish Farm Alternative Siting Analysis
- Proposed Atlantic Link Transmission Cable through the Gulf of Maine – proposed and alternative routes and permitting process details provided via Portal
- States use Portal to inform coastal effects test and federal consistency under CZM
- Consultants supporting permitting and leasing, and developing custom apps for regulated clients

## Regulatory and Siting (continued)

- EPA to review other agency EA and EIS and comment on other agency actions
- USACE regulatory division permitting
- NOAA Office of Habitat Protection and Protected Resources Division consultations
- BOEM Guidelines for Renewable Energy Activities
- Massachusetts Aquaculture Siting Tool – MA-ShellFAST

## Education and Research

- UMass Dartmouth; UMass Boston
- UMaine
- Brown
- Boston University
- URI
- Island Institute
- Pew
- Old Dominion University