



Gulf of Maine: Next Steps for Commercial & Research Planning & Leasing

Office of Renewable Energy Programs

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September 28, 2022



Next Steps for Offshore Wind in the Gulf of Maine

- On August 19th, BOEM published two documents in the Federal Register:
 1. Request for Interest (RFI) – first step in the **commercial** leasing process for the Gulf of Maine
 2. Request for Competitive Interest (RFCI) – next step in processing the State of Maine's **research** lease application
- The publication of these notices initiated two separate 45-day comment periods, which close on October 3rd.

Gulf of Maine: Commercial & Research Tracks



Starting the Planning Process in the Gulf of Maine: First Steps

Commercial Track

Request For Interest (RFI)

Non-Competitive Leasing Process: Commercial Lease



YES

Competitive Commercial Leasing Process

Call for Information

Area Identification (Wind Energy Areas)

Proposed Lease Areas

SALE

Final Lease Areas

Comment Period

Determination of Competitive Interest

NO

Environmental Assessment

Non-Competitive Research Lease Issuance

Request For Competitive Interest (RFCI)

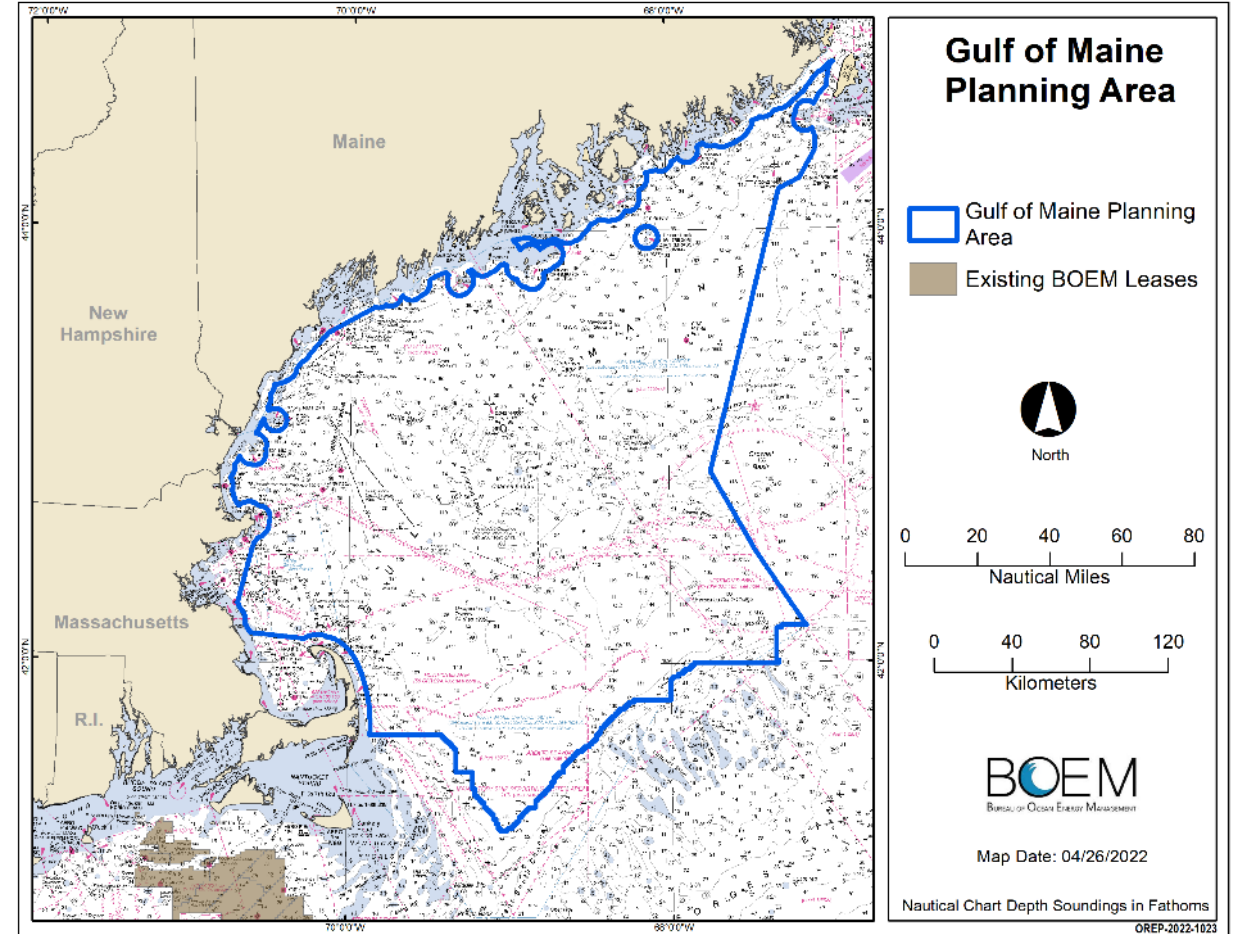
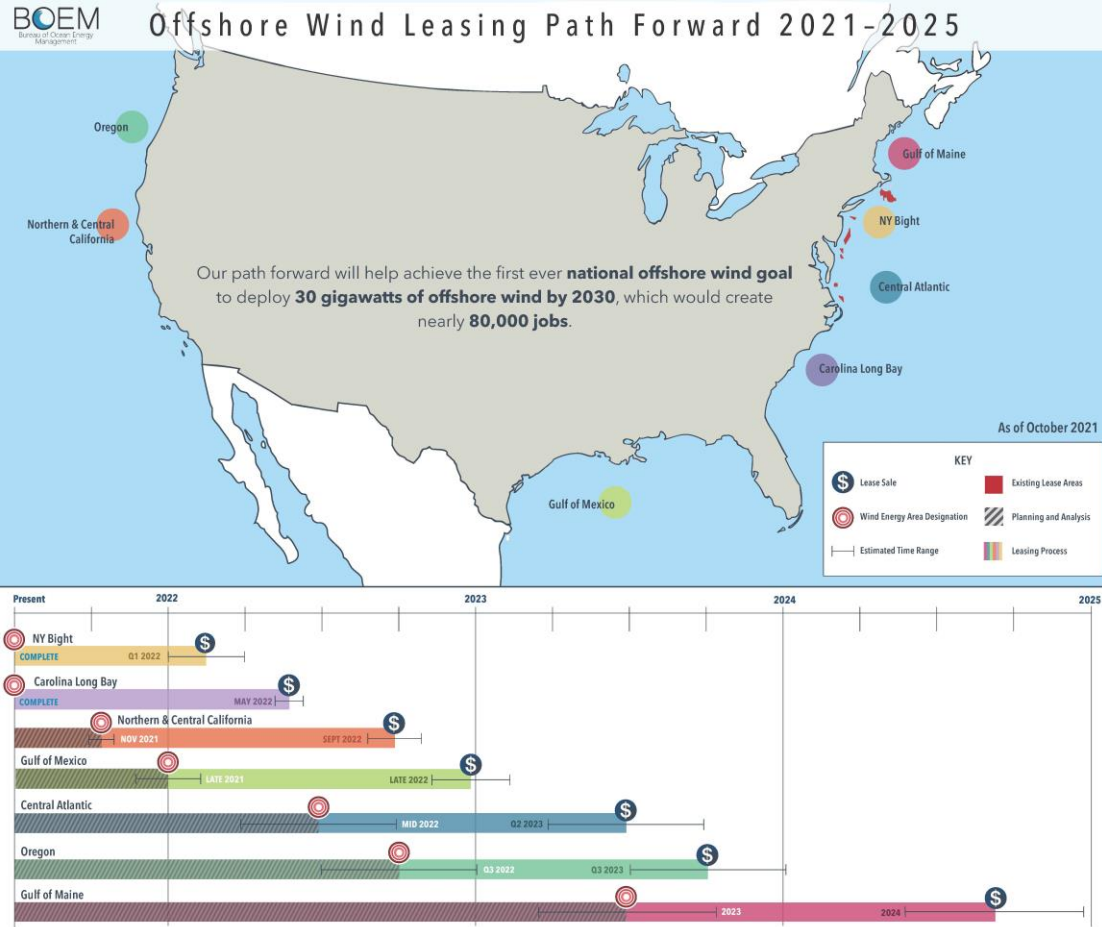
Non-Competitive Leasing Process: Research Lease

Research Track

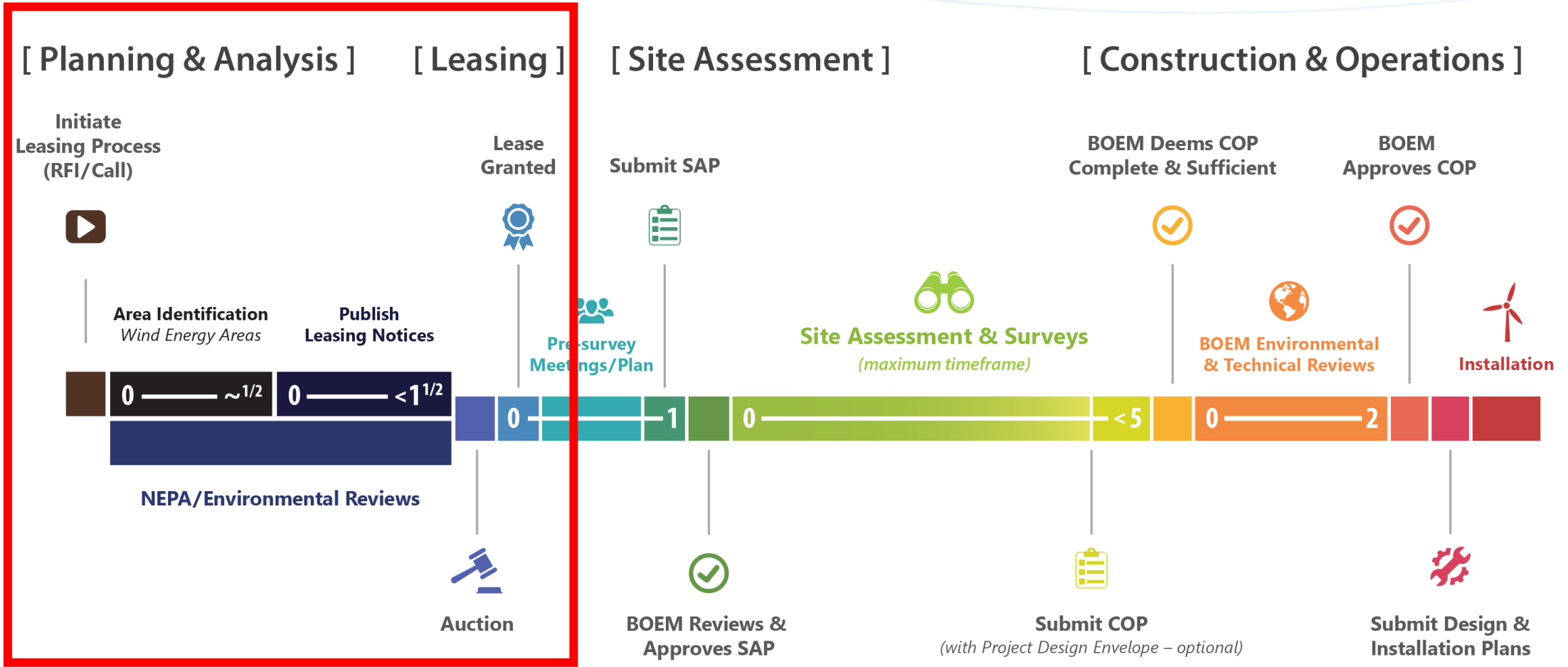
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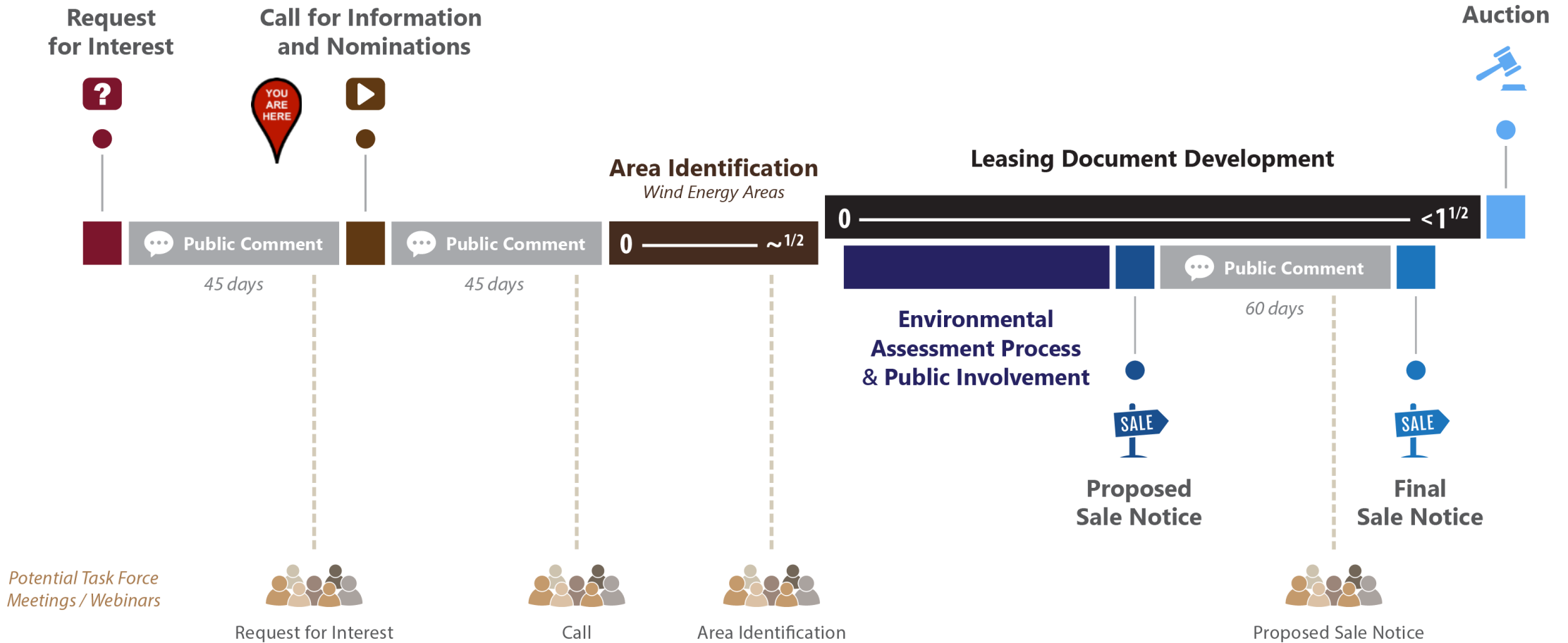
Gulf of Maine: Commercial Planning & Leasing Process



Renewable Energy Process: From RFI/Call to Operation



Commercial Leasing in the Gulf of Maine



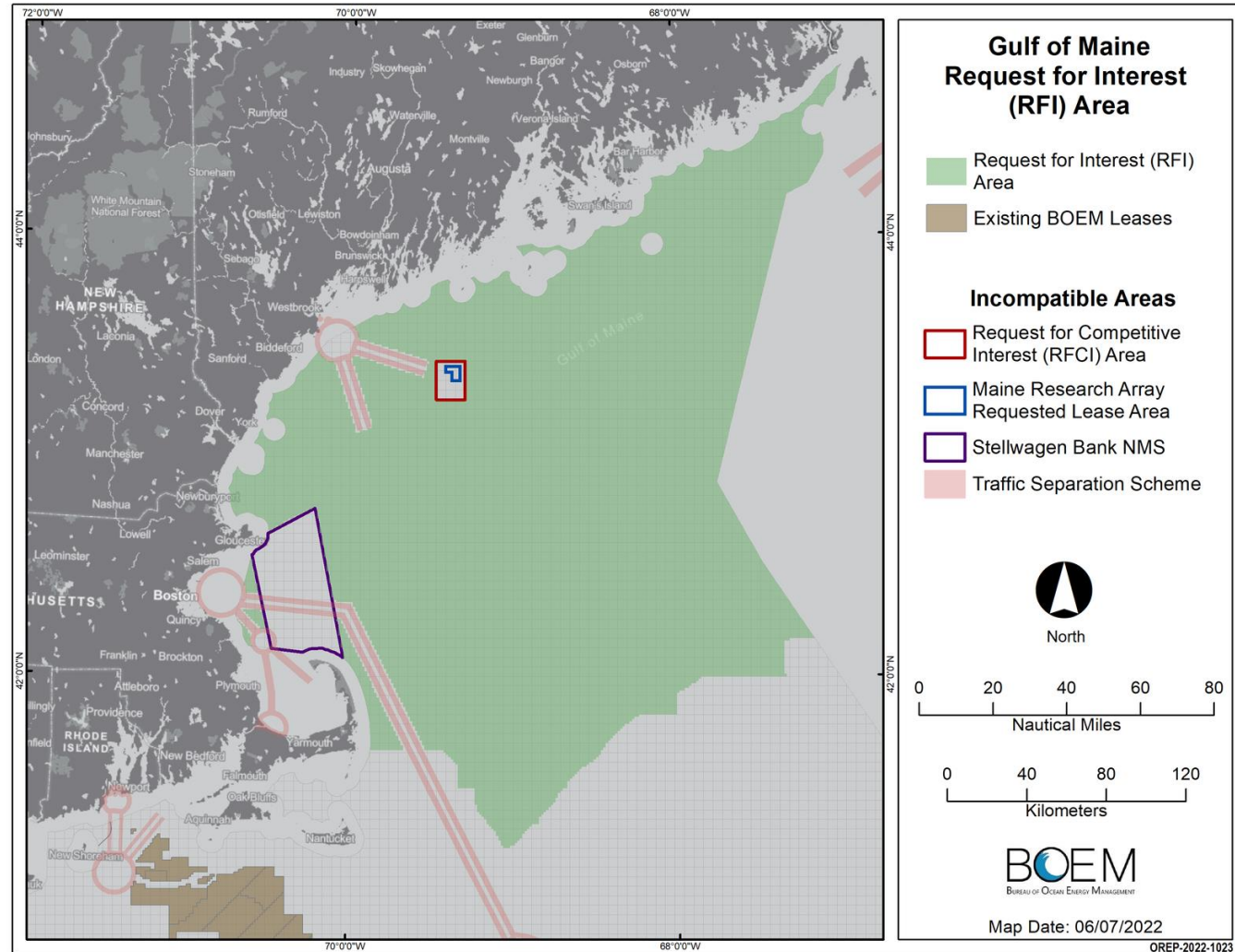
Gulf of Maine: Request for Interest (RFI)

Gulf of Maine Task Force

- Second Task Force Meeting: **May 19, 2022**
 - Request For Interest (RFI)
[Development Framework](#) (Draft RFI Area)
 - [Engagement Approach](#) (2022-2023)

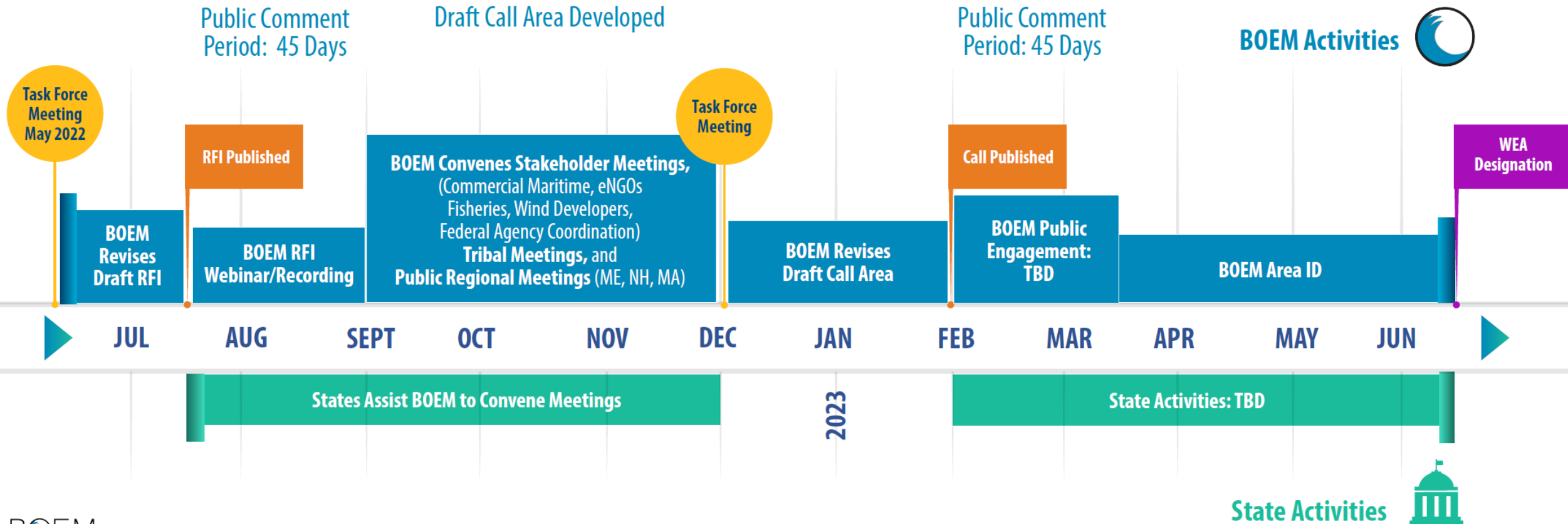
RFI

- Follows RFI Development Framework
 - Removes “incompatible areas”
 - TSSs, Stellwagen NMS, RFCI Area
 - 13,713,825 acres (area will be significantly reduced in subsequent planning phases (Call Area, Wind Energy Area))
- Requests Information from interested/affected parties
 - “Data Inventory” on BOEM website



Commercial Leasing in the Gulf of Maine: Planned Engagement

Gulf of Maine Engagement Approach Moving from the Request for Interest to Wind Energy Area Designation



NOTE: This is a draft discussion document, and the dates of proposed meetings and planning/leasing milestones are all tentative.



Commercial Leasing in the Gulf of Maine

Improving Best Available Science & Modeling

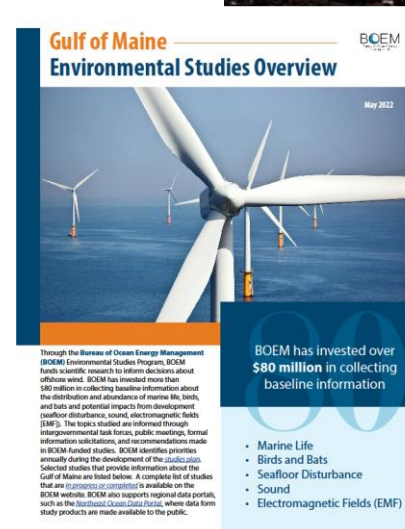
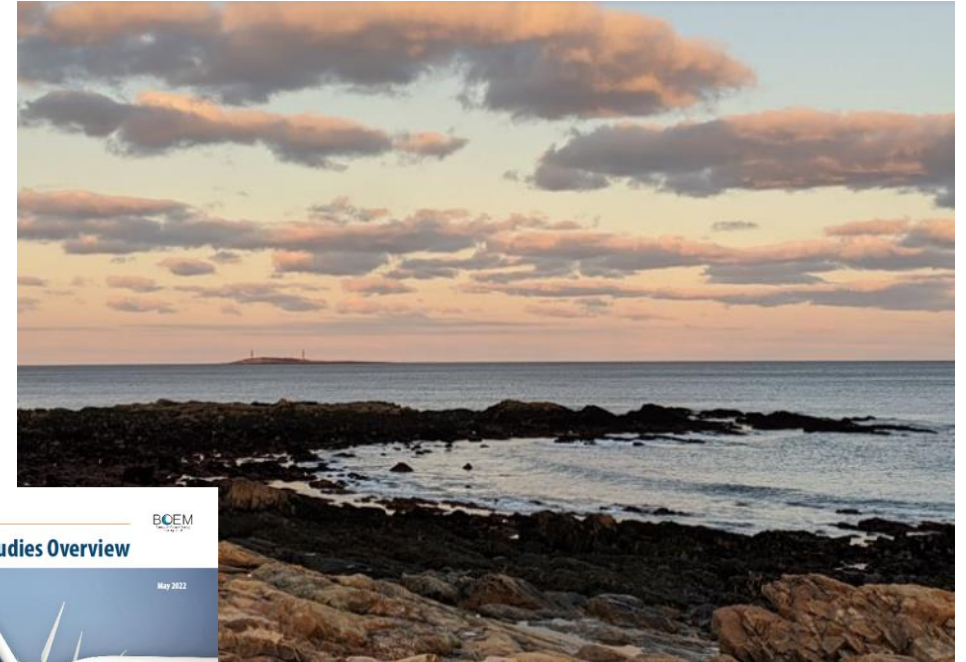
- BOEM Studies:
 - Standardizing Integrated Ecosystem Based Assessments (**SIEBA**)
 - Ecological Baseline Study of the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf Off Maine
 - Comprehensive Assessment of Existing Gulf of Maine Ecosystem Data and Identification of Data Gaps to Inform Future Research
- **Ecosystem Based Management (EBM) Modeling:**
BOEM SIEBA Study + NOAA NCCOS Collaboration

Engagement

- Starting with an RFI (optional) to expand opportunities for comment
- 2 Task Force meetings prior to publishing RFI
- Released Engagement Approach (2022-2023)
- 11 Draft Call Area meetings planned for Fall 2022

Transparency

- RFI Development Framework
- Publication of decision memos
- Publishing data inventory with RFI



[Gulf of Maine Studies Fact Sheet](#)

Gulf of Maine: Commercial Leasing Milestones

| Milestone* | Action | Target Date** |
|---|---|----------------|
| Publish Request for Interest | Publish RFI <i>45-Day Comment Period</i> | Q3 2022 |
| Publish Call for Information & Nominations | Publish Call <i>45-Day Comment Period</i> | Q1 2023 |
| Area Identification | Designate Wind Energy Areas (WEAs) | Q3 2023 |
| Lease Sale | Proposed Sale Notice (PSN) | Q4 2023 |
| | Final Sale Notice (FSN) | Q2 2024 |
| | Hold auction | Q3 2024 |

* Task Forces are incredibly valuable tools in the leasing process and **several meetings** can be expected, likely to be scheduled around significant process milestones.

** Dates of planning/leasing milestones are all tentative.

Gulf of Maine: Research & Commercial Tracks



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Non-Competitive Leasing Process: Research Lease

Research Track

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State of Maine's Research Lease Application

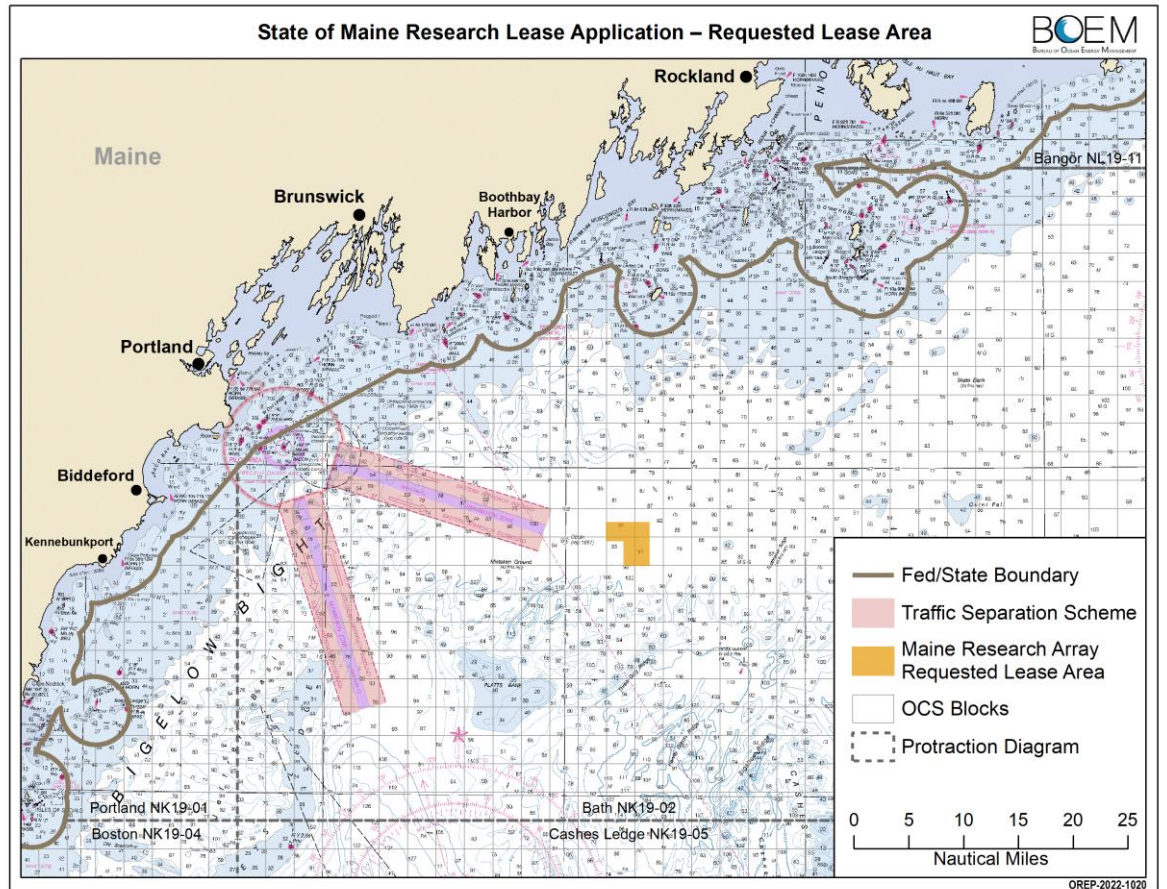
State of Maine Research Array

Maine submitted a research lease application (Oct. 2021) for a floating research array in Federal Waters

- ~25 nmi from the mainland; 15 Square Miles (~10,000 acres)
- ≤ 12 Floating Turbines (up to 144 MW)
- Research Framework:
 - Human Dimensions
 - Ecosystem & Environment)
 - Technology Development

BOEM Process: Unsolicited Lease Request

- Qualifications (Legal, Technical, Financial)
- Request for Competitive Interest (RFCI)
 - 45-day comment period

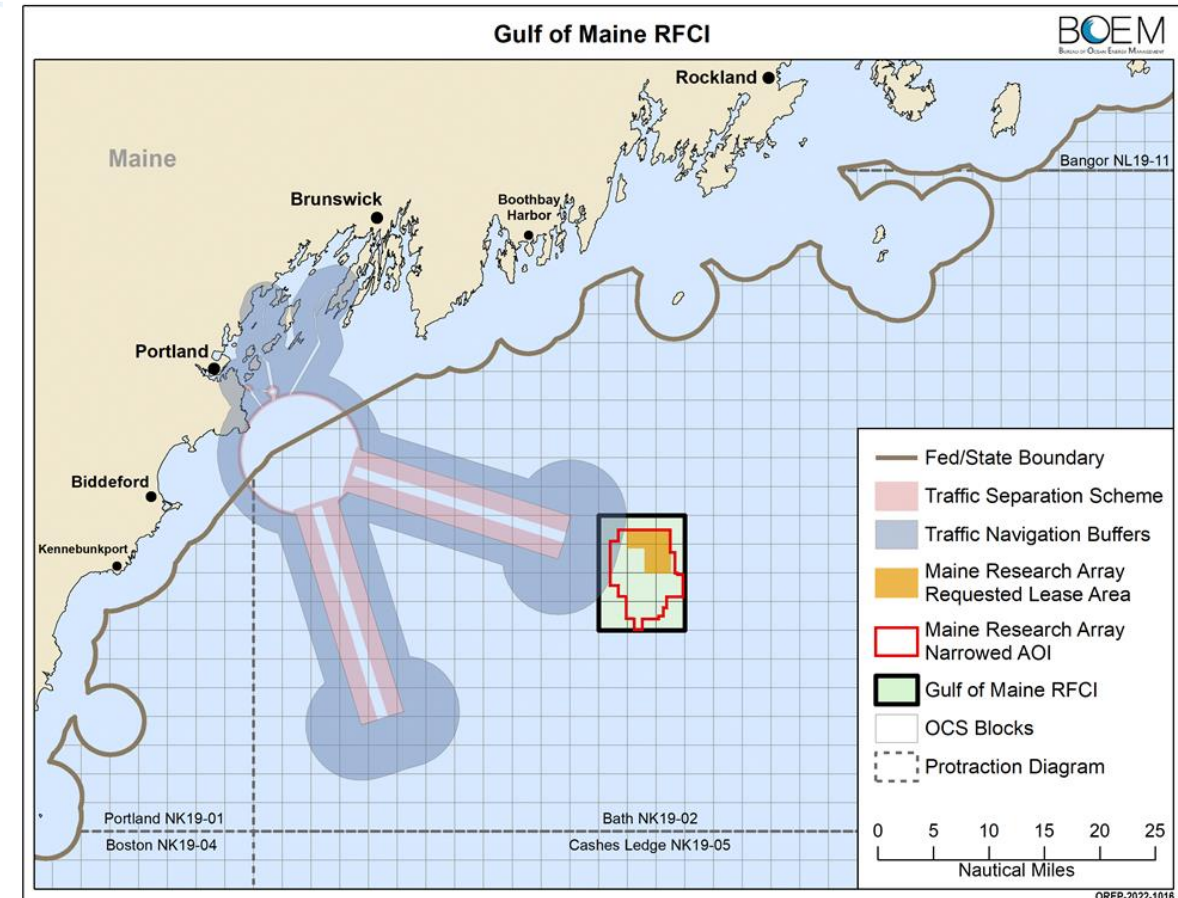


[BOEM Website: State of Maine Research Lease Application](#)

Gulf of Maine: Request for Competitive Interest (RFCI)

RFCI

- **RFCI Area**
 - Expands upon lease area requested by Maine
 - Only 1 lease of 10,000 acres will have potential to move forward (no more than 12 floating turbines)
- **Conceptual Research Framework**
 - Mirrors Maine Research Application
- **Next Steps:**
 - After comment period closes, review any indications of interest and public comments, then make determination:
 - Competitive Interest → Competitive Leasing Process
 - No Competitive Interest → Suitability Analysis, Environmental Assessment, Lease Negotiation



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AUGUST 2022



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Research Track

AUGUST 2022



State of Maine Research Lease Application – Timeline

| Milestone | Action | Target Date |
|--|--|----------------|
| Request for Competitive Interest (RFCI) | Publish RFCI in FR <i>45-Day Comment Period</i> | Q3 2022 |
| Determination of Competitive Interest | BOEM reviews indications of interest <i>4 weeks</i> | Q4 2022 |
| | BOEM publishes determination of no competitive interest (DNCI)* | Q4 2022 |
| Environmental Assessment | Publish Draft EA <i>30-Day Comment Period</i> | Q1 2023 |
| | | Q2 2023 |
| | Publish Final EA | Q2 2023 |
| Issue Research Lease | Execute Lease | Q2 2023 |

*Timeline for non-competitive leasing process

How to Comment

- BOEM is published two documents in the Federal Register:
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- BOEM's [How to Comment](#) Fact Sheet



Fisheries Mitigation Guidance - Timeline

- Fall/Winter 2021:
 - Publication of Request for Information to identify ideas and considerations from the fishing community, offshore wind energy developers, and other to inform the draft guidance. **COMPLETE**
- Early Winter 2022:
 - Work in consultation with NOAA/NMFS, state fishery and coastal management agencies, and technical experts to develop draft guidance. **COMPLETE**
 - Develop draft guidance considering comments received. **COMPLETE**
- Early Spring 2022:
 - BOEM internal review. **COMPLETE**
 - Collaboration with state and Federal partners. **ONGOING**
- Late Summer 2022:
 - Publish draft guidance and discuss with constituents. **COMPLETE**
- Fall 2022
 - Review comments and develop a strategy for addressing them in final guidance. **ONGOING**
- Early 2023
 - Issue final guidance. **UPCOMING**

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