

Fisheries Technical Working Group (F-TWG) Meeting Summary

Thursday, February 18th, 2021 from 2:30pm to 5:30pm ET
Virtual Meeting

Background

This meeting summary describes key discussion points and action items from the Fisheries Technical Working Group (F-TWG) virtual meeting, which was held on Thursday, February 18th through a virtual meeting platform.

Goals for the meeting included:

- Update the Fisheries Technical Working Group (F-TWG) on various ongoing and upcoming activities.
- Solicit input from F-TWG on key issues and ideas.
- Adhere to our ground rules for an effective meeting (stay on track, let others speak, be respectful, focus on the substance not the people)

There were 47 F-TWG members and other stakeholders in attendance through the Teams meeting/conference line. Staff from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), Tetra Tech, the Consensus Building Institute (CBI), and The Cadmus Group, were also present to provide technical, facilitation, and logistics support.

This summary is organized to align with the structure of the meeting agenda ([Appendix A](#)). Opinions are generally not attributed to specific F-TWG members. F-TWG members are referred to interchangeably in the summary as stakeholders and F-TWG members. This summary identifies areas of agreement as well as the different perspectives offered during meeting presentations and discussions.

Action Items

The following key next steps resulted from the meeting:

- Discussion on the release of the Offshore Wind Job Opportunities for Mariners Report and RCG Press Release
- Developers provide more information on project updates to the F-TWG in the next meeting
- More detailed discussion of the Fisheries Compensation Document in the next meeting following F-TWG review period
- F-TWG members should share additional topics they would like to discuss with the F-TWG or any concerns about proposed topics with Morgan Brunbauer, Morgan.Brunbauer@nyserda.ny.gov.

Opening Remarks

The meeting opened with a review of meeting ground rules, F-TWG goals, and the F-TWG's mission. Morgan Brunbauer of NYSERDA and Pat Field of CBI welcomed the group and underscored that the F-TWG is a forum for discussion between the commercial fishing community and offshore wind developers to provide advice and input to New York State (NYS).

New York State OSW Updates

Program, research, and science updates were shared for the New York 2020 Offshore Wind (OSW) Solicitation, NYSERDA-funded fisheries research projects, and updates from the Environmental Technical Working Group (E-TWG).

Update of 2020 Solicitation

Solicitation launched in July 2020 to procure at least 1,000 MW and up to 2,500 MW of offshore wind power in New York State. Evaluation criteria were based off price (70%), economic benefits (20%), and viability (10%). NYSERDA received four bids for offshore wind projects and complementary infrastructure investments.

Standardized Environmental and Fisheries Mitigation Plans to include the following new components:

- A narrative that describes the developer's approach and philosophy towards environmental and fisheries mitigation
- A version that highlights specific details on how such approaches and philosophies will be implemented
- New requirements to mitigate potential impacts to wildlife from noise, vessel strikes, and lighting
- \$10,000 per MW commitment from the awarded bidder to support regional monitoring of wildlife and key commercial fish stocks, \$25 million in total

New York 2020 Solicitation Awards:

- Equinor/BP, Empire Wind 2 (1,260 MW)
- Equinor/BP, Beacon Wind (1,230 MW)

Each solicitation had a port infrastructure component. The State of New York now has 5 ports with links to offshore wind (Albany, Coeymans, South Brooklyn Marine Terminal, Port Jefferson, and Montauk Harbor).

In addition, NYSERDA announced \$20 million for an offshore wind training institute, and a \$3 million solicitation to support Disadvantaged Communities and priority populations to promote workforce development for OSW supply chains in New York State.

New York Power Grid Study

- Report published 1/19/2021
- Through radial lines, 9,000 MW of offshore wind generation can be integrated without requiring major bulk transmission upgrades
- Potential development of meshed configuration of offshore transmission which will provide flexibility

OSW Opportunities for Experienced Mariners Report

NYSERDA has commissioned a study to:

- Understand the skills and qualifications held by the local maritime study to determine the most applicable jobs to mariners
- Identify ways for experienced mariners to supplement their income
- Focused mainly on supplemental part-time work, while allowing the maritime industry to maintain their traditional means of making a living

NYSERDA's primary goal is to keep the fishing industry fishing. The unapproved and unsolicited press release by RCG about the report was also discussed with the F-TWG. A path forward meeting with the fishing industry was determined as the best course of action for further discussion about the issue.

Updates on NYSERDA-Led Projects

Kate McClellan-Press of NYSERDA provided updates on activities recently support by the E-TWG and that may be of interest to F-TWG members.

E-TWG Updates

The E-TWG has supported a number of initiatives to develop a scientific research framework to understand the effects of OSW development on birds and bats in the Eastern United States (2/2021) and another project on environmental data standardization and sharing supporting data transparency requirements for OSW projects (4/2021).

2020 State of the Science Workshop

NYSERDA held their second State of the Science Workshop in November that focused on sharing knowledge on cumulative impacts to wildlife from offshore wind energy development. The workshop had over 430 attendees from 21 states and over 20 countries. NYSERDA held a post-workshop study and 88% of the respondents were satisfied with the workshop platform and logistics. Efforts have continued with work group meetings following the 2020 workshop and the workshop effort will have a culmination webinar in May 2021.

Updates on NYSERDA-Led Research

Regional Wildlife Science Entity (RWSE)

There is a current Request for Qualifications (RFQL) for a regional science entity with a similar opportunity provided by the Department of Energy Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA). This

opportunity opened on Friday and will be open until March 11th. NYSERDA has been in coordination with the Responsible Offshore Science Alliance (ROSA) for these efforts to maintain collaboration.

Coming Soon: Learning from the Experts

NYSERDA is planning an upcoming webinar series facilitated by NYSERDA's offshore wind team and featuring outside experts who will present on key offshore wind technologies, development practices, and research findings.

Research and Science Updates

There are currently 5 contracted studies with NYSERDA for ongoing research on offshore wind. Updates from the Fishermen's Knowledge Data Trust and Fishing Access within Turbine Arrays were presented during this meeting.

Fishermen's Knowledge Data Trust – Responsible Offshore Development Alliance (RODA)- Annie Hawkins

The goal of the Fishermen's Knowledge Data Trust is to provide data infrastructure that enables the industry to develop trusted science products in a secure, cost-effective way. In November 2019, the Trust received funding from NYSERDA to build the infrastructure to conduct two pilot studies: Atlantic herring and surfclam fleets that include over 80 vessels. Fishermen add in raw data, the Trust cleans the data, and executes the request. Then the approved analysts develop products, peers review the certification, permissions are removed, and the Trust develops products. Throughout the entire process, fishermen have control over their own data.

RODA is aiming to have the first draft product available in March. It will have governance processes and documentation, a secure data sharing platform, data integration, and coding.

Fishing Access within Turbine Arrays – National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)- Rebecca Green

The final report title for this study is Collaborative Development of Strategies and Tools to Address Commercial Fishing Access in U.S. Offshore Wind Farms. The goal of this project is to collaboratively develop technical strategies and tools, including new datasets and modeling, to minimize the disruption of commercial fishing within OSW arrays while also ensuring economical energy generation and safe operation for the industry. This project will address how turbines, cables, and other structures can make it difficult to fish or navigate within the vicinity of a wind farm project from an operational perspective. The scope of this project is the NY Bight OSW projects and focuses on commercial fisheries access, scallop and clam fishing operations, and wind farm design, layout, and costs. A literature review and series of interviews followed by various sub tasks (literature search, interviews, data assessment, and development of preliminary measures that minimize access conflicts) are portions of the report that have been partially drafted. Other tasks for the next phase of the study includes scenario development and analysis, validation of approach/pilot study, and information sharing and dissemination.

Follow Up and Next Steps from Synthesis of the Science Workshop – ROSA- Lyndie Hice-Dunton

This Project started in 2019 and was led by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM). The Synthesis of the Science workshop had two components- a 3-day workshop in October 2020 and a report that will be completed this spring (2021). The goal was to model best practices to successfully engage the fishing industry and to describe the current state of science, existing research, and monitoring programs. The general topics included ecosystem effects, fisheries socioeconomics, fisheries management and data collection, and methods and approaches.

The next ROSA advisory council (open to the public) is on March 5, 2021. In addition, ROSA formed an Interim Fisheries Monitoring Working Group to improve monitoring guidance and released a draft report in October, and the updated draft is anticipated to be released in February/ March 2021. This guidance builds upon existing guidance from BOEM and member expertise to highlight the best practices and elements that could help improve future monitoring plan submissions. ROSA is planning to move forward with research to address guidance, tools, and templates, project or issue-specific research and monitoring, and integrated regional research and monitoring.

Cabling Project Update – Tetra Tech- Brian Dresser

The goal of this document was to provide a background on the technical aspects and constraints of cable burial without providing suggestions on specific cable burial depths. Following the last F-TWG meeting, Tetra Tech has incorporated F-TWG member edits into the report and submitted the Final Report to NYSERDA on February 15th. Tetra Tech also provided a “Cable Burial 101” Presentation to various stakeholder groups as part of the project. The report will be available to the F-TWG once approved for release by the NYSERDA team. The report received 185 individual comments from 18 reviewers representing 15 agencies or groups, with additional input coming directly from fishermen during the “Cable Burial 101” presentation.

Other Items and Issues

NMFS Trawl Survey work to re-orient survey to post-construction – NMFS- Phil Politis and Andy Lipsky

Throughout the Northeast continental shelf, NMFS conducts various surveys (bottom trawl, scallop, clam, EcoMon) yearly. The goals of this fishery-independent data monitoring effort are to monitor abundance, distribution, and demographics of stock over its range.

There is considerable overlap with NMFS surveys in Wind Energy Areas (WEAs), and there is concern over losing information in these areas and the need to have new and adaptive surveys to better manage stocks within them. Neither the Albatross nor the Bigelow vessels can successfully conduct research activities within the current proposed 1 nautical mile spacing.

Fishery-independent research within WEAs is a challenge but also an opportunity to address scientific advice and adapt. Research indicates that species distribution, abundance, and vital rates are not the

same from within and directly outside a WEA, and continued research on this topic is an opportunity to understand this phenomenon more.

Updates in implementing a federal survey mitigation program were included in the South Fork Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), and these include:

1. Evaluate survey designs
2. Identify and develop new survey approaches
3. Calibrate new survey approaches
4. Develop interim provisional survey indices
5. Wind energy monitoring to fill regional scientific survey data needs
6. Develop and communicate new regional systems

The Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) is in the planning phase of these efforts and are in an inter-agency agreement with BOEM to develop a modeling framework to evaluate these survey impacts and alternatives through simulation.

Updates from BOEM

Comments for the South Fork DEIS are due by February 22nd. BOEM has received 13 Construction and Operations Plans (COPs) (Mayflower has recently submitted theirs) this past year that they are reviewing.

Developer Updates

Empire 1- Scott Lundin

Empire Wind 1 COP is under review and expected Notice of Intent (NOI) from BOEM this spring. Once the COP is made public, Equinor will do a deep dive of the document with the F-TWG.

Sunrise Wind- John O'Keefe

The Article VII application has been filed and the COP has been submitted. Site investigation work is currently set to wrap up in early March.

More updates from the developers will be available once they adjust to new timelines with the new administration.

Compensation Background Research to Learn From – Tetra Tech- Brian Dresser

This report covers background information on fisheries compensation agreements for both offshore wind and other marine projects. There is currently no federal or state requirement for compensation and it is currently handled on a project-specific basis.

Although this document provides a background of existing fisheries compensation programs, this document does not establish or recommend a compensation framework – the focus is on identifying common themes across existing programs.

The Report is taking a holistic approach to compensation since there are a wide variety of topics that may be defined as compensation, and another step in this report would be to define what it is and what is included in it. The Draft Report will be distributed to the F-TWG within the next few weeks, for review and comment. Insight and input from F-TWG members on the existing programs identified in the report will be an opportunity to bring a larger forum of stakeholders together and foster discussion on this highly debated topic.

Adjournment

Next Steps:

- Spring/ early summer meeting (doodle poll has sent out)

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Appendix A: Meeting Agenda

F-TWG Winter 2021 Virtual Meeting

February 18, 2021

You may join the meeting from your computer, tablet, or smartphone.

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

F-TWG Goals for Meetings

- Update the Fisheries Technical Working Group (F-TWG) on various ongoing and upcoming activities.
- Solicit input from F-TWG on key issues and ideas.
- Adhere to our ground rules for an effective meeting (stay on track, let others speak, be respectful, focus on the substance not the people)

2:30 Open Lines for On-Line Joining

2:45 Welcome, Listing of Participants, Orientation to the On-Line Platform

- Brief on TWG Purpose, Rules of the Road, Membership

3:00 New York State OSW Updates

- Update on late 2020 Solicitation – *Morgan Brunbauer, NYSERDA*
- OSW Opportunities for Experienced Mariners Report – *Morgan Brunbauer, NYSERDA*
- E-TWG associated updates
 - Follow Up and Next Steps from State of the Science Workshop on Cumulative Impacts – *Kate McClellan-Press, NYSERDA*
 - Status of the Regional Wildlife Science Entity - *Kate McClellan-Press, NYSERDA*

3:15 Research and Science Updates

- Status of various NYSERDA-funded fisheries research projects – *Update from the Principal Investigators*
 - *Fishermen’s Knowledge Data Trust, Annie Hawkins, RODA*
 - *Fishing Access within Turbine Arrays, Rebecca Green, NREL*
- Follow Up and Next Steps from Synthesis of the Science Workshop – *ROSA Executive Director*

4:00 Break

4:15 Cabling Project

- Final Report Overview – *Tetra Tech*

- Implications for siting criteria for cabling in the NY Bight and how to use report to further the conversation for co-existence

4:35

Other Updates

- Brief Update from BOEM – *BOEM*
- Empire 1 and Sunrise Updates -- *Developers*
- NMFS Offshore Wind & Federal Surveys Update - *NMFS*
- Compensation Background Research to Learn From – *Tetra Tech*
- Other

5:15-5:30

Next Steps and Adjourn

- Spring/Early Summer Meeting Date
- Future agenda items: NY projects, BOEM status, and other

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