NYSERDA 2024 OFFSHORE WIND SOLICITATION ORECRFP24 -1

Community Offshore Wind Application

Public Version

COMMUNITY offshore wind

local clean energy for all

8.1 Fisheries Mitigation Plan

NYSERDA 2024 Offshore Wind Solicitation ORECRFP24-1

September 9, 2024

8.1 Fisheries Mitigation Plan

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

Abbreviation	Explanation
ACP	American Clean Power Association
AIS	Automatic Identification System
BOEM	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
COSW	Community Offshore Wind
COP	Construction and Operations Plan
CRADA	Cooperative Research and Development Agreement
CZM	Coastal Zone Management
EFH	Essential Fish Habitat
EMP	Environmental Mitigation Plan
EMF	Electromagnetic Fields
E-TWG	Environmental Technical Working Group
FMP	Fisheries Mitigation Plan
FR	Fisheries Representative
FTA	Fisheries Technical Advisor
F-TWG	Fisheries Technical Working Groups
ICES WGOWDF	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea Working Group on Offshore Wind Development and Fisheries
MAFMC	Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
NCCOS	National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science
NEFMC	New England Fishery Management Council
NEFSC	Northeast Fisheries Science Center
NGOs	Non-government organizations
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NYSDEC	New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
NYSERDA	New York State Research and Development Authority
[redacted]	[redacted]
RFP	Request for Proposals
RODA	Responsible Offshore Development Alliance
ROSA	Responsible Offshore Science Alliance
RWSC	Regional Wildlife Science Collaborative
SCEMFIS	Science Center for Marine Fisheries

Abbreviation	Explanation
SIOW	Special Initiative on Offshore Wind
SMAST	School for Marine Science & Technology (University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth)
SMS	Safety Management System
US	United States of America
USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
VIMS	Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences

NYSERDA solicitation requirements

Our fisheries mitigation plan addresses each requirement described in NYSERDA's fifth solicitation for offshore wind energy (ORECRFP24-1).

Table 8.1-1 Solicitation requirements

Solicitation requirement	Section
Briefly present philosophy and approach to avoiding, minimizing, restoring, and offsetting the potential fisheries impacts of the proposed Project.	8.1.1
Present how the Proposer will use research, data, and stakeholder feedback to support decision making with respect to pre-construction surveys, site design, construction, operations, and decommissioning.	8.1.1, 8.1.3, 8.1.5, 8.1.6, 8.1.8
Describe how to identify relevant stakeholders and describe communication during survey work, and design, construction, operation, and decommissioning of the Project.	8.1.2.1
Describe how the Proposer will communicate with active vessels during site assessment and construction activities and facilitate proper notification to vessels and resource managers including coordination with F-TWG and New York State agencies.	8.1.2.2
Describe how the Proposer will work with the fishing industry to collect data, publish their own work in scientific journals, and coordinate with scientists and regulators.	8.1.3
Describe plans to conduct studies to establish baseline data.	8.1.3.1
Describe plans to conduct studies to determine how the proposed Project area is used by commercial and recreational fisheries in the region.	8.1.3.1
Describe plans to conduct studies to monitor for impacts.	8.1.3.2
Describe plans to conduct studies to assess changes attributable to Project activities.	8.1.3.2
Identify opportunities to develop or invest in collaborative research with the fishing industry.	8.1.3.3
Describe coordination with members of the F-TWG during data gathering and assessment.	8.1.3.3
Identify collaborative efforts by which the industry plans to standardize scientific methods, surveys, and monitoring plans across the region to enhance data compatibility and utility.	8.1.3.3
Coordinate with third-party scientists to provide Project data and access to the Project area for studies examining environmental and fishery sensitivities and impacts of offshore wind development.	8.1.4.1
Describe how data requests will be processed and any restrictions on data provision or access that may be required to protect trade secrets or maintain site security.	8.1.4.1

Identify ways to enhance site accessibility for the advancement of scientific and technological study.	8.1.4.1
Identify any financial commitment to third-party environmental research funding.	8.1.4.2
Describe how the Proposer will consider the potential adverse impacts of infrastructure design elements on fishing in the proposed Project area.	8.1.5.1
Demonstrate that the Project area and proposed site design allows for reasonable flexibility in the site layout to accommodate changes that may be needed in the future.	8.1.5.2
Outline how the Proposer will engage with stakeholder groups such as the F-TWG and other regional fishermen and shipping and navigation to determine Project layouts that address stakeholder concerns.	8.1.5
Identify the use of benthic habitat enhancement techniques that are applicable to promote added beneficial ecological improvement while offsetting adverse impacts.	8.1.5.5, 8.1.7.2
Describe planned operational protocol to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts to fish, invertebrates and fisheries during Project construction and operation phases, and how Proposer will work collaboratively with the State, federal agencies and other stakeholders to define avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures.	8.1.6.1
Describe how the Proposer will minimize potential loss of fishing gear due to interactions with structures deployed as a result of offshore wind energy development.	8.1.6.1
Describe the approach to claims of lost gear in the event of a snag that provides for a fair and timely review of the claim and appropriate compensation of impacted parties.	8.1.6.1
Describe the process for determining when mitigation strategies are insufficient and under what conditions to rehabilitate or restore fisheries in an alternative location or when the provision of compensation of some form may be appropriate.	8.1.6.2
Identify the potential fish and fisheries impact of activities associated with subsea cable routes.	8.1.7
Describe how the Proposer will develop a decommissioning plan, including coordination with fisheries stakeholders and any elements of the plan that can be identified at this stage.	8.1.8
Describe how the Proposer will determine where fisheries compensation is warranted.	8.1.9.1
Describe how the fisheries compensation plan was developed.	8.1.9.1-2
Describe how the Proposer will coordinate with the F-TWG and other entities in the design or review of the fisheries compensation plan.	8.1.9.2

Describe how the compensation plan will be administered by a non-governmental third-party to provide reasonable and fair compensation for impacts not sufficiently addressed through other means.	8.1.9.2
Outline any additional mitigation strategies not otherwise described that would improve the Plan and reduce impacts on the fishing community.	8.1.9.3
Describe how the fisheries mitigation plan provides a roadmap for the fisheries work and provide a degree of certainty that the Proposer is committed to working collaboratively with stakeholders.	8.1.1, 8.1.10

8.1.1 Summary

Community Offshore Wind (COSW) will play an instrumental role in creating support for offshore wind and bringing energy transition benefits to New York. Our team appreciates the significant economic value of commercial and recreational fisheries. We also recognize the important role fisheries have in garnering stakeholder support for offshore wind across the region. Fishery stakeholders are among the groups most directly impacted by offshore wind development and early offshore wind projects in the United States have been challenged by fisheries participants as they have raised concerns about safety, access, navigation, environmental impacts, and the loss of fishable areas. To tackle these concerns, [redacted] Our Fisheries Mitigation Plan has a core focus on collaboration with fisheries, partner institutions, independent researchers, and other marine users to ensure we contribute to successful outcomes for offshore wind development and fishery stakeholders.

COSW is committed to **delivering sustainable energy safely, reliably, and efficiently** to the communities we serve. Our philosophy and approach to address potential impacts of offshore wind development on fishery resources and coastal communities is to **employ an avoidance-first strategy** (in line with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management [BOEM] mitigation hierarchy pyramid[1]). We strongly believe that collaborative mitigation programs with active fisheries participants' and developers' engagement are essential for overall successful outcomes.

The overall goal of our Fisheries Mitigation Plan is to **achieve net-positive results for fisheries and the marine ecosystem.** This includes generating clean energy to mitigate climate change, increasing biodiversity, and bringing other ecological, social, and economic benefits, including benefits to commercial and recreational fishing businesses throughout the region.

To deliver on our ambition of net-positive impact on biodiversity and fisheries, we have created a robust Fisheries Mitigation Plan [redacted]

[redacted]

We propose a holistic and comprehensive approach that is based on these pillars and consistent with the mitigation hierarchy intended to avoid and minimize impacts as well as create additional value to achieve our goal of net-positive benefits. We have collected and plan to accommodate input from commercial and recreational fishermen regarding the layout and design elements of the Project to mitigate our impacts and support continued fishing within the lease area. [redacted]

In addition to proactive project layout and design accommodations, [redacted] Our

[1] Guidelines for Mitigating Impacts to Commercial and Recreational Fisheries, BOEM. 2022.

[redacted]

adaptive fisheries mitigation plan (see Fisheries Mitigation Plan Standard Component) is a roadmap that will guide our efforts during development, operation, and decommissioning of this project, and demonstrates our commitment to working collaboratively with stakeholders to develop a cost-effective and environmentally responsible Project. We will invest in programs that go above and beyond the standard best practices to create net-positive impacts [redacted]

[redacted]

8.1.2 Communications and Collaboration

Communication and collaboration are at the core of our mitigation plan. We are committed to **working towards meaningful co-use of our lease site**. In line with our inclusive project development, we aim to create a two-way feedback loop with fisheries and eliminate or reduce uncertainty about potential impacts and opportunities our project will bring to commercial and recreational fisheries. The core of our approach is to: **1) Identify key stakeholder groups; 2) Ensure effective communication with fisheries; and 3) Drive continuous collaboration with the fishing industry.**

8.1.2.1 Identify key stakeholder groups

We prioritize proactive stakeholder engagement to ensure a just transition to clean, renewable energy (see Attachment 8.1-1). We have identified fisheries and other maritime stakeholders that may be impacted by our project. We have used both publicly available datasets,[3] as well as proactive outreach to commercial and recreational fishery participants, regional fishery management entities, and state and federal agencies to ensure we captured all relevant stakeholder groups.

Fisheries stakeholders potentially affected by our project are **Commercial fisheries** whose operations contribute to the local and regional economy, **Recreational fisheries** who use our project area for charter, private, and party boat fishing and **other marine interest groups** who may be impacted by our project in various direct and indirect ways.

Commercial fisheries. [redacted] Per federal VTR data, the primary species harvested from commercial fisheries in the lease area are Atlantic sea scallop and Atlantic surf clam. Key commercial ports with landings within the lease area include Atlantic City, Barnegat Light, Point Pleasant, and Cape May, New Jersey. Other ports with commercial harvest include Long Beach and Montauk, New York; New Bedford, Massachusetts; and ports in the Hampton Roads area of Virginia. Attachment 8.1-3 has maps of commercial activity in and around the lease area.

[redacted]

Recreational fisheries. Available data on recreational fisheries operating in and transiting through the New York Bight suggest that **there is limited charter and party boat recreational fishing activity within our lease area**. Outreach to local captains indicates the recreational effort for black sea bass is concentrated on wrecks outside the lease, and yellowfin and bluefin tuna are targeted seasonally in the broader area. Recreational fishing areas adjacent to the lease area include the Fingers, Triple

[3] The Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO) Data Portal, Northeast ocean Data Portal, aggregated commercial Vessel Trip Reports (VTRs) from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

Wrecks South, and the Corvallis wreck, and recreational vessels transit through Jones Inlet, New York, and other local ports.

Other marine interest groups. In addition to fishery stakeholders, our project may impact whale and dolphin- watching businesses, shore-based wildlife viewing, diving, recreational boating, sailing, surfing, and kayaking interests that currently use our lease area or potential export cable routes for their activities. Our project may also impact fishing organizations, fish dealers and processors, bait and tackle shops, fishing tournaments, marinas and boat ramps, marine tourism businesses, environmental organizations, as well as state and federal agencies and management entities.

8.1.2.2 Ensure effective communication with fisheries

We have a well-developed communication plan to ensure proactive and inclusive communication that meets fishery needs and is mindful of stakeholder fatigue (see Attachment 8.3-5). We recognize that fisheries stakeholders have many demands on their time and want to ensure each engagement is meaningful. In all of our communications, [redacted] Additionally, vessel activity within the area will be managed using a safety management system (SMS), and our survey and support vessels will maintain bridge-to-bridge communications with vessels in the area. Highlights of our fisheries communication plan[4] are included in Table 8.1-3.

8.1.2.3 Drive continuous collaboration with the fishing industry

Throughout each stage of our development, our engagement with fishery stakeholders will involve active and continuous collaboration [redacted]

8.1.3 Monitoring and research

As offshore wind develops in the US, it is imperative that we build our understanding of the effects it may have on the ecological communities in the region. The Responsible Offshore Development Alliance (RODA) published a Research Priorities report that highlights a comprehensive list of research

[4] Fisheries Communications Plan. Community Offshore Wind. 2022.

priorities identified by the fishing industry.[5] We are developing our Monitoring and Research plan in a way that directly supports a number of these research and monitoring priorities and is informed by the ROSA Offshore Wind Project Monitoring Framework and Guidelines.[6] We have also closely reviewed potential stressors, risks, and sensitivities to fish and fisheries in the New York State Wind Master Plan Fish and Fisheries Study.[7] We are committed to collaborating with ROSA's FishFORWRD database and will submit annual progress reports on our fisheries monitoring program to them.

Table 8.1-3 Key communication and collaboration activities across development phases

We are excited to have executed a **Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) with the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) of NOAA Fisheries to collaborate on the design of our monitoring program** and advancement of coordinated monitoring approaches across

[5] Research Priorities Report. RODA. 2022.
[6] ROSA Offshore Wind Project Monitoring Framework and Guidelines, ROSA. 2021.
[7] New York State Wind Master Plan Fish and Fisheries Study. NYSERDA. 2017.

lease areas in the region. The first of its kind agreement between NEFSC and an Offshore Wind Developer, this CRADA will also support the integration of the data collected through our environmental monitoring program to augment regional biological stock assessments and support implementation of portions of the NOAA/BOEM Federal Survey Mitigation Strategy.[8]

[redacted]Our monitoring and research plan is guided by three principles**: 1) Establish credible baselines, 2) Monitor, assess and quantify impacts** [redacted]**and 3) Collaborate with fisheries and research partners and coordinate with other developers**. A summary of our monitoring and research activities throughout the different phases of the development can be found in Table 8.1-4.

Table 8.1-4 Monitoring and research objectives throughout development

[redacted]

8.1.3.1 Establish credible baselines

[redacted]

[8] NOAA/BOEM Federal Survey Mitigation Strategy. NEFSC. 2022.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Site Characterization Survey Mitigation. Our project will share all non-proprietary data with BOEM and other federal partners, including NOAA Fisheries and US Fish and Wildlife Service. We have **proactively engaged with our local fisheries advisors** to identify fisheries and participants that may be operating in the lease area when surveys are planned. [redacted] Furthermore, **our team is actively working with fishermen to avoid and minimize interactions during our survey campaigns through accommodation**. [redacted]

8.1.3.2 Monitor, assess, and quantify impacts

We will monitor the impacts of our project development on the baselines established pre-construction. [redacted], we will isolate impacts from our development versus those from other sources, [redacted]. We will work closely with NOAA Fisheries and our research partners, in consultation with ROSA, RWSC, F-TWG, the fishing industry, and other developers to develop the most appropriate sampling strategies and monitoring plans.

[redacted]

We have developed **specific programs to monitor the impacts** of our project in different ways:

[redacted]

[redacted]

Our CRADA with NOAA Fisheries will enable us to collaborate on the development of our monitoring program,

8.1.3.3 Collaborate with fisheries, research partners, and other developers

Given the limited number and relative infancy of offshore wind developments in the Northeast region to date, there has historically been a lack of monitoring and research coordination amongst existing sites. Multiple regional sites working together in a consistent manner would bring additional value to the scientific understanding of how offshore wind development is affecting regional resources.

We are **committed to working with other developers and scientific partners to promote a coordinated approach to environmental monitoring** in the New York Bight region,

Collaborative research. Offshore wind development presents a huge opportunity for collaborative research with the fishing industry to both collect data, and more importantly, to inform what research is most valuable and essential for long-term sustainable fisheries in this region. To answer the multitude

of research questions surrounding the effects of offshore wind development, we must have close collaboration between researchers, fishing industry members, developers, and regulators to address concerns and promote effective coexistence. Fortunately, there are numerous regional entities that have already identified key research priorities. Research and monitoring will be coordinated through ROSA as well as Regional Wildlife Science Collaborative for Offshore Wind (RWSC) to increase transparency and data sharing. **Our CRADA with the NEFSC will inform the development of our monitoring plan that will include collaboration with other researchers and fishery stakeholders**.

Members of our fisheries team serve on the F-TWG, M-TWG, ROSA, RWSC, and ACP Fisheries Subcommittee, in addition, in 2023 Our team will engage with the F-TWG to solicit input and recommendations early in the development of our fisheries monitoring plan. We will also seek their recommendations on our efforts to promote a more coordinated approach to monitoring fisheries resources in the New York Bight. We will prepare and present summaries of our monitoring results at regional scientific and fishery management meetings.

Regional standardization. Another challenge facing researchers is the **lack of standardization in terms of data collected as well as collection methods**. This has been identified as a priority by the E-TWG in their workgroup report on Sound and Vibration Effects on Fishes and Aquatic Invertebrates.[15]

We are also committed to working with other developers to pursue the development of a coordinated fisheries monitoring program within the New York Bight. We requested the establishment of a working group to have a forum for coordination on fisheries issues among New York Bight developers and the group has been active since January 2023.

[15] Workgroup Report on Sound and Vibration Effects on Fishes and Aquatic Invertebrates. New York State E-TWG. 2020.

[redacted]

8.1.4 Supporting other research

Offshore wind sites can play an important role in supporting other research by serving as fixed platforms for research opportunities. The development of our wind farm will result in a tremendous amount of data and resources that can advance research in offshore wind development in the US. **We intend to make readily available all data to the scientific community** that is not deemed proprietary or commercially sensitive. Our lease area is centrally located and could serve as an important area to link research on migratory species and oceanographic patterns throughout the region. **Our team is committed to leveraging additional research within the lease area and supporting research partnerships that will enhance our understanding of this ecosystem**. [redacted]

8.1.4.1 Coordination with independent researchers

There are numerous oceanographic and atmospheric research institutions in the region that may want to attach research equipment to offshore wind foundations. We are prepared to collaborate with others to help facilitate more research in the region including, but not limited to, exploring the utility of project data to inform ecosystem and or other resource assessments, collaborate to prepare educational documents (e.g., ArcGIS Story Maps), provide public access to data when possible within the bounds of federal confidentiality requirements, and develop data sharing policies.

[redacted] To enhance site accessibility for the advancement of scientific and technological study, we will collaborate with independent researchers on their needs and solicit feedback on ways to improve their use of our development resources.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

8.1.5 Site design considerations

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[17] Research Priorities Report, RODA. 2022.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Safety and fishery adaptation program. Promoting safety for commercial and recreational fishermen and other mariners operating in the project area is a top priority. **Marine safety will be integrated collaboratively with the input of the fishing and maritime industries throughout our project design process and development of supporting programs.** [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

We are sensitive to feedback from commercial fishermen that their input should be considered early in the design process. Our team is resolving this issue by working proactively to bring our engineers together with fishermen to create a two-way dialogue that ensures our engineering team understands the bottom-tending fishing gear and the needs and concerns of the fishing industry. [redacted]

We are also engaged with recreational fisheries to understand their transit patterns and use of the project area. We also participated in a recreational fisheries engagement initiative recently conducted by one of our trade associations to develop pathways for industry-to-industry dialogue and collaboration with the recreational fishing community. **Our fisheries team is continuously active across the project's workstreams and meets regularly with project engineers to provide sustained fisheries input** on design elements such as turbine spacing and layout, axes of turbine orientation, and cable layouts.

8.1.6 Construction and operation

The development of any offshore wind farm has the potential to disrupt the surrounding ecosystems as well as the commercial and recreational operations in the region. With communication, collaboration, and accommodation at the core of our strategy, **our initiatives aim to develop best practices for active vessels and other commercial and recreational fishery stakeholders to avoid and minimize disruption to marine users throughout construction and operation**. We will develop protocols to minimize impacts to fish, invertebrates, and other fishery resources and to mitigate losses to fishing gear from our development. The careful development and monitoring of key performance indicators (KPIs) will ensure that we stay true to our ambition to mitigate impacts. Our approach during construction and operation has two main objectives: 1) develop effective mitigation protocols to minimize impact; and 2) monitor key performance indicators to assess impacts.

8.1.6.1 Develop effective mitigation protocols to minimize impacts

Fish, invertebrates and fisheries. We are committed to avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating impacts to fish, invertebrates, and fisheries during construction and operations. [redacted]

[redacted]

Fishing gear. While every effort will be made to avoid and deconflict fisheries impacts prior to construction and operation, the project has established a gear loss claim procedure for loss or damage to fishing gear. The procedure establishes the reporting process for fishermen who experience a gear loss or damage associated with the project's offshore operations. A Survey Fishing Gear Incident Form will be used by contracted survey vessels to report any gear interactions, and a Gear Loss or Damage Claim Form is available to fishermen who experience a gear loss or damage associated with vessels contracted to the project. Our FLs will assist fishermen with their gear loss claims. As per the lease stipulations, an annual summary of claims will be provided to BOEM.

We acknowledge the concerns expressed by fishermen regarding the need to manage many different claim processes for gear loss across developments. **To increase consistency as well as transparency, we are committed to working with other leaseholders and engaging in regional collaboration to develop consistent procedures and minimize the burden to those fishermen**.

[redacted]

8.1.7 Considerations for subsea cables

Subsea cable routing poses several complex issues that are important to address to be compatible with fisheries. Our goal is to design a cable that accounts for external hazards, constraints, and design objectives while upholding our commitment to the mitigation hierarchy pyramid. Our approach to subsea cables has four main parts: [redacted]

We are committed to following the guidelines recommended by NYSERDA's Draft Offshore Wind Cable Corridor Constraints Assessment and will optimize for minimizing and mitigating impacts while also looking for opportunities to go beyond the standards set from prior projects to address the unique constraints, opportunities, schedule, and costs for siting offshore wind cables.[19]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[19] NYSERDA's Draft Offshore Wind Cable Corridor Constraints Assessment (Attachment A), NYSERDA. 2022.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

8.1.8 Project decommissioning

Given the nascent stage of offshore wind development in the United States, uncertainty remains around what decommissioning in the region should look like [redacted]. However, we have the requisite knowledge from the decommissioning experience of our parent company, RWE, and we are committed to ensuring the safe and responsible decommissioning of our development when the time comes. We will **engage with the fishing industry to understand decommissioning considerations**, such as changing priorities and new innovations, to ensure that our decommissioning plan evolves over time. [redacted] Currently we have taken the following actions to prepare for decommissioning: 1) outlined considerations for decommissioning and 2) plan to implement temporary safety zones.

8.1.8.1 Considerations for decommissioning

We will embrace a proactive approach to avoiding and minimizing impacts throughout the decommissioning process. Though the details of our decommissioning plan will come together more as we approach the end of the project's lifetime, **we will continually account for several considerations such as regulatory requirements, impact assessment, safety, stakeholder engagement, and evolving best practices.** [redacted]

8.1.8.2 Safety zone implementation plan

Decommissioning is expected to include the implementation of temporary safety zones around vessels and turbine locations. Safety zones will be developed in coordination with the USCG, and we will update our Fisheries Communications Plan to ensure comprehensive communications methods are in place.

Decommissioning is expected to result in temporary fisheries displacement associated with the safety zones. We are committed to avoiding and minimizing fisheries impacts in the decommissioning plan. We will include impacts associated with fisheries displacement in our fishery compensation plan.

Table 8.1-6 Decommissioning considerations

[redacted]

[redacted] Compensation [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Our fisheries compensation plan will be developed in consultation with the commercial and recreational fisheries, the respective state agencies, and fisheries working groups, including F-TWG. Our marine affairs team actively participates in and supports the ongoing dialogue between eleven Atlantic coastal states, BOEM, and the Special Initiative for Offshore Wind (SIOW) focused on the development of a 3rd-party administrator to manage a claims process for fisheries compensation. We anticipate that the states' will announce a regional fund administrator in the near future that will reduce uncertainty and bring consistency and transparency to fisheries compensation throughout the region.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

8.1.10 Additional considerations

One of the key differentiators and strengths Community Offshore Wind brings to this project proposal is our **highly experienced Fisheries team**. Our team has been able to successfully leverage existing contacts with fishermen, regulators, and scientists along the east coast, as well as engage with new

[21] Executive Order 14008: Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad. 2021.

stakeholders who are local to our lease area in communities in New York. These relationships, combined with our experience and understanding of the needs and concerns of fishing communities and stakeholders, have been beneficial in developing our project. Further details about our team's professional experience can be found in our Fisheries Communication Plan (Attachment 8.3-5).

[redacted]

Fisheries Mitigation Plan for Community Offshore Wind

Version 1.0

Prepared pursuant to [contract number, date (TBD)]

with

New York State Energy Research and Development Authority

Albany, NY

Prepared by

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September 2024

Record of revision

Record of revision		
Revision date	**Description of changes**	**Revision on pages**
	Initial plan submission	All (first version of document)

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Deirdre Boelke, Fisheries Manager	Primary Point of Contact for Fisheries Mitigation Plan and commercial and recreational fisheries	[redacted]
Rick Robins, Director of Marine Affairs	Primary point of contact for marine affairs and responsibility for Fisheries Liaisons	[redacted]
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SMS	Safety Management System
US	United States of America
USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
VIMS	Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences

1. Summary

1.1. Overall philosophy and principles

This section should describe the overall philosophy and principles the developer will follow to avoid, minimize, restore, and off-set potential fisheries impacts.

Community Offshore Wind is committed to delivering sustainable energy safely, reliably, and efficiently to the communities we serve. Our philosophy and approach to addressing potential impacts of offshore wind development on fishery resources and coastal communities is to employ an avoidance first strategy. Community Offshore Wind strongly believes that collaborative mitigation programs with active fishery and developer participation are essential for overall successful outcomes. User conflicts are greatly reduced if targeted investments and mitigations are made early to avoid impacts and support sustainable use of these valuable offshore resources. Our overall goal for offshore wind development is to achieve net-positive results for the ecosystem, which includes clean energy, increased biodiversity, and other ecological, social, and economic benefits including commercial and recreational fisheries. Community Offshore Wind's vision for positive coexistence of all ocean uses includes:

- local and regional commercial fishing fleets continuing to provide seafood security for the U.S.;
- commercial and recreational fisheries continuing to thrive as engines of economic opportunity, supporting sustainable jobs, and promoting social and cultural tradition for coastal communities throughout the region; and
- offshore wind developers supporting the long-term resilience of fisheries and the seafood industry through cooperation, collaboration, and investment in the success of the fisheries as we meet the nation's demand for clean energy in a responsible manner that genuinely considers and effectively mitigates the environmental, social, and economic impacts of offshore wind development.

Community Offshore Wind has developed a comprehensive and innovative fisheries mitigation strategy that collectively will avoid, minimize, restore, and/or mitigate potential impacts on resources within the lease area and cable routes, as well as the fisheries and communities that use those areas. We recognize the important economic value and cultural role commercial and recreational fisheries have in New York and the Northeast region overall, and we will collaborate with stakeholders to continuously improve these mitigation programs over the course of the Project through decommissioning.

The following principles reflect the core values and philosophy of Community Offshore Wind:

- **Safety:** Promote the safety of fishermen, communities, project crews, and marine life, from Project design through implementation.
- **Respect:** Build trust through respect for the local knowledge, expertise, and concerns of the fishing community.

- **Understanding:** Develop a detailed understanding of the fisheries resources and uses in the area to inform the successful development of the Project.
- **Transparency:** Promote transparency through timely two-way communication that allows for sharing clear feedback and is responsive to fisheries participants and stakeholder communication preferences.
- **Efficiency:** Ensure communication and outreach activities are internally and externally coordinated to achieve efficient communications at the appropriate cadence for all fisheries stakeholder groups.
- **Equity:** Ensure engagement efforts are comprehensive across fisheries participants, stakeholders, and communities, including underserved and non-traditional constituents.
- **Adaptability:** Respond to changing fisheries participant and stakeholder needs and circumstances as an opportunity to adapt and improve communication methods and strategies.
- **Collaboration**: Build a shared, sustainable future for area fisheries and offshore wind through collaboration and inclusivity that ultimately lessens the impacts of climate change.

1.2. Overall approach to incorporating data and stakeholder feedback

This section should describe how the developer will use research, data, and stakeholder feedback to update the FMP and support decision-making throughout the life cycle of the project (pre-construction, surveys, site design, construction, operations, and decommissioning).

- Community Offshore Wind shall seek consultation and coordinate with relevant stakeholders.
- Community Offshore Wind shall review existing research and data and seek input from stakeholdersregarding data gaps to inform decisions made throughout the Project life cycle.
- Community Offshore Wind shall review and seek input from stakeholders on proposed and conductedsurvey rationales and methodologies as well as design, construction and operation, and decommissioning plans for the Project.
- To the extent that the timeline allows, pre- and post-construction monitoring shall be designed in consultation with stakeholders to improve the understanding of impacts of offshore wind energy developmentand operations on fisheries.
- Community Offshore Wind has recently executed a cooperative research and development agreement (CRADA) with NOAA Fisheries to promote the exchange of data and scientific expertise to develop an environmental monitoring program for Community Offshore Wind and to advance the integration of the data collected through the monitoring program to augment federal surveys and regional biological stock assessments.[1] This innovative consultative relationship will help ensure Community Offshore Wind develops a scientifically robust monitoring plan that incorporates updated research, data, and technical feedback throughout the life cycle of the Project.

[1] https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/feature-story/noaa-and-community-offshore-wind-partner-environmental-monitoring-program

1.3. Existing guidance and best practices that will be followed

This section should present a list of existing guidance documents, publications, tools, and/or plans that will be followed to support the FMP. Include links, if available, for all references.

Community Offshore Wind has developed a comprehensive Fisheries Communications Plan[2] informed by existing guidance documents and in consultation with commercial and recreational fishermen, as well as other stakeholders. The Communications Plan is intended to be adaptive to changing conditions and fisheries participants' and stakeholder needs and is expected to improve over time as their feedback is incorporated and as the Project matures. Our Fisheries Mitigation Plan was informed by guidance and recommended best practices that include, but are not limited to, the following resources:

- BOEM Decision Memorandum, NY Bight Final Sale Notice.[3]
- Development of Mitigation Measures to Address Potential Use Conflicts between Commercial Wind Energy Lessees/Grantees and Commercial Fishermen on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf. OCS Study BOEM 2014-654.[4]
- FLOWW Best Practice Guidance for Offshore Renewables Developments: Recommendations for Fisheries Liaison. January 2014.[5]
- Guiding Principles for Offshore Wind Stakeholder Engagement (v1 10/21). NYSERDA.[6]
- Guidelines for Providing Information on Fisheries Social and Economic Conditions for Renewable Energy Development on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf. BOEM. 2020.[7]
- Information Guidelines for a Renewable Energy Construction and Operations Plan (COP), Attachment A. Version 4.0, 2020.[8]
- Central California Joint Fisheries/Cable Liaison Committee Final Agreement Between Cable Companies and Fishermen as Amended (v. 140519).[9]
- Oregon Fishermen's Cable Committee Procedures (v. 2.6.17)[10]
- International Cable Protection Committee Government Best Practices for Protecting and Promoting Submarine Telecommunications Cables (v. 1.1). [11]
- Maine Offshore Wind Roadmap: Draft Initial Recommendations. March 1, 2022.[12]

[2] Community Offshore Wind Fisheries Communication Plan, https://communityoffshorewind.com/-/media/Project/RWE/COffshoreWind/fisheries/Final-COSW-Fisheries-Communications-Plan-v1_2022-08-24.pdf
[3] https://www.boem.gov/sites/default/files/documents/renewable-energy/state-activities/ATLW-8-NY-Bight-Final-Lease-Sale-Decision-Memorandum.pdf
[4] https://www.boem.gov/sites/default/files/renewable-energy-program/Fishing-BMP-Final-Report-July-2014.pdf
[5] https://www.sff.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/FLOWW-Best-Practice-Guidance-for-Offshore-Renewables-Developments-Jan-2014.pdf
[6] https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/-/media/Project/Nyserda/Files/Programs/Offshore-Wind/LSR-OSW-engageguide.pdf
[7] https://www.boem.gov/sites/default/files/documents/about-boem/Social%20%26amp%3B%20Econ%20Fishing%20Guidelines.pdf
[8] https://www.boem.gov/sites/default/files/documents/about-boem/COP%20Guidelines.pdf
[9] http://www.cencalcablefishery.com/uploads/2/2/6/5/22655546/140519_final_agreement_as_amended.pdf
[10] http://www.ofcc.com/Procedures2.6.17.pdf
[11] https://www.iscpc.org/documents/?id=3733
[12] https://www.maineoffshorewind.org/working-group-recommendations/environment-wildlife/

- BOEM Request for Information: Guidance for Mitigating Impacts to Commercial and Recreational Fisheries from Offshore Wind Energy Development. Nov. 22, 2021.[13]
- BOEM Draft Guidelines for Mitigating Impacts to Commercial and Recreational Fisheries on the Outer Continental Shelf. June 22, 2022.[14]
- Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council (MAFMC), February 2014. Offshore Wind Best Management Practices Workshop, Baltimore, MD.[15]
- SeaPlan, 2015. Options for Cooperation between Commercial Fishing and Offshore Wind Energy Industries, A Review of Relevant Tools and Best Practices.[16]
- New York States Offshore Wind Master Plan.[17]
- Workgroup Report on Sound and Vibration Effects on Fishes and Aquatic Invertebrates for the State of the Science Workshop on Wildlife and Offshore Wind Energy 2020: Cumulative Impacts.[18]
- The Responsible Offshore Development Alliance Research Priorities 2022. [19]
- BOEM Guidelines for Providing Information on Fisheries for Renewable Energy Development on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf. [20]
- The Responsible Offshore Science Alliance (ROSA) Offshore Wind Project Monitoring Framework and Guidelines. 2021. [21]

[13] https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/boem-2021-0083-0001
[14] https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/draft-fisheries-mitigation-guidance
[15] https://www.boem.gov/sites/default/files/renewable-energy-program/MAFMC-Offshore-Wind-Workshop.pdf
[16] https://osf.io/preprints/marxiv/sfu9e/
[17] https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/Offshore-Wind/About-Offshore-Wind/Master-Plan
[18] https://www.nyetwg.com/2020-workgroups
[19] https://rodafisheries.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/RODA-Research-Priorities_vDec1-1.pdf

[20] https://www.boem.gov/sites/default/files/documents/about-boem/Fishery-Survey-Guidelines.pdf

[21] ROSA (2021). *ROSA Offshore Wind Project Monitoring Framework and Guidelines*. Report for Responsible Offshore Science Alliance (ROSA). https://www.rosascience.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/ROSA-Offshore-Wind-Project-Montioring-Framework-and-Guidelines.pdf

2. Communications and collaboration approach

2.1. Overview and communication plan objectives

This section should provide an overview of the communication plan and objectives and its importance in fisheries mitigation.

- Community Offshore Wind will seek methods and processes to allow for a two-way flow of information between key stakeholders and developers, highlighting how feedbackinforms their decision making.
- Community Offshore Wind will provide updates to the fishing industry stakeholders in an appropriate manner that is easily accessed and widely distributed.
- Community Offshore Wind will seek collaboration with the fishing industry to use technical applications to enhance efficient communication and coordination for all on-water activities.

As described in our Fisheries Communications Plan, the goal of Community Offshore Wind is to proactively ensure that all fishing community stakeholders are informed of the Project and aware of the many opportunities for communication and input throughout the Project life cycle. Additionally, Community Offshore Wind will ensure that the Project team develops a comprehensive understanding of the individual fisheries in the project area and their social and economic significance to onshore communities within the region. The fisheries team is committed to sharing this knowledge across Community Offshore Wind's workstreams to best serve the needs of fisheries participants and communities. Therefore, the communication plan includes time and resources for the Fisheries Team to develop and present educational materials across the Community Offshore Wind Project workstreams about relevant fisheries and other ocean user groups in and around the Lease Area and potential export cable routes. We strongly believe that the more the Project team understands and appreciates the importance of regional fisheries, the more successful the overall Project will be.

The objectives of the Fisheries Communications Plan in support of these goals are as follows:

- Develop a detailed technical understanding of the current and historical fisheries operating and transiting within and around the Lease Area, and curate the knowledge and expertise of local fishermen and other experts to achieve this.
- Foster a proactive approach to promoting safety and deconflicting the operations of survey and construction crews and fishermen within the Lease Area that is based on the local knowledge of fishing communities and representatives.
- Collaborate with fisheries participants and stakeholders to apply their collective knowledge and understanding of fisheries resources and habitats to avoid and minimize impacts to the extent practicable throughout the Project life cycle.
- Recognize and balance the Project's need for detailed local knowledge with the burden of engagement for fisheries participants and stakeholders through the use of thoughtful and

efficient communication methods, and a commitment to coordinate outreach activities with other developers.

- Engage fishermen and stakeholders in identifying opportunities for cooperative monitoring and research that will contribute to the mutual understanding and successful shared use of the area.
- Develop comprehensive and inclusive stakeholder engagement strategies that are sensitive to the needs of both underserved communities and non-traditional stakeholders and foster effective two-way communication.

2.2. Project fisheries staff, responsibilities, and contact information

This section should provide a list of communication officers, their role, and name and contact information. The list should provide stakeholders with an understanding of who should be contacted for a particular issue or question. It should also include links to the project website, so readers know where to find additional information.

Community Offshore Wind has assembled an accomplished fisheries team with experience that spans decades of direct participation in state, interstate, and federal fisheries management, cooperative fisheries research, commercial fisheries development, seafood processing, and commercial and recreational fisheries. The team benefits from strong advisory support from its fisheries technical advisors/fisheries representatives who have extensive experience in their respective fisheries in the project area and broader region. The team is exceptionally experienced and is highly engaged with the fisheries community on behalf of the Project.

Sean Lucey, Fisheries Liaison (Primary Contact), has over 18 years of fisheries science and research experience working for NOAA Fisheries. He started his career with NOAA Fisheries in the NEFSC's Ecosystem Survey Branch collecting data at sea before joining their Ecosystem Dynamics and Assessment Branch as a Research Fisheries Biologist. For the last 15 years of his career with NEFSC, he served as the lead of the Northeast Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Program and was one of the lead authors of the annual State of the Ecosystem reports. He has served on numerous regional, national, and international fisheries working groups including as a core team member of the coastwide Climate Change Scenario Planning Initiative and chair of the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES) Working Group on the Northwest Atlantic Regional Seas Program (WGNARS). Sean is currently a member of the ICES Working Group on Offshore Wind Development and Fisheries (WG OWDF) and participates in various subcommittees for RWSC.

Michelle Duval, Fisheries Liaison, has extensive experience in state and federal fisheries management, serving for 10 years with North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries, representing the agency to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, which she also chaired. She currently serves on the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council as Chair of the Research Set Aside and Ecosystem and Ocean Planning Committees, and is the Council's representative on the ROSA Advisory Council. Michelle also serves on the New England Fishery Management Council's Sea Scallop, Habitat, and Ecosystem-Based Fishery Management Committees.

As Fisheries Liaison, Sean will represent the Project to the fishing community and serve as a primary point of contact for fisheries participants and stakeholders. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Engage directly with fisheries stakeholders, and with the Project's Fisheries Technical Advisors and Representatives, to develop and curate the local knowledge to avoid fisheries impacts.
- Effectively convey industry and stakeholder concerns to Project management team to identify solutions proactively and collaboratively.
- Develop a flexible two-way communications network between the fishing industry and the Project that is responsive to stakeholder needs and provides timely feedback.

Michelle Duval supports all the roles above and is another member of the team that engages directly with all fishery participants and other marine stakeholders.

Deirdre Boelke, Fisheries Manager, has over 20 years of staff experience with the New England Fishery Management Council. She worked on most fishery management plans during her tenure with the Council, including plan coordinator for the Atlantic Sea scallop and Atlantic herring fishery management plans. She was the staff lead for the Council's Atlantic Sea scallop Research Set Aside program, which coordinated cooperative research to support the management of the fishery. She also staffed the coastwide climate change scenario planning initiative and other regional and

national fishery management policy projects. Deirdre is currently an alternate on the ROSA Advisory Council, F-TWG, and RWSC Habitat and Ecosystem Subcommittee. As Fisheries Manager, it is Deirdre's role to plan and coordinate the company's engagement and collaboration with fisheries stakeholders. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Coordinate stakeholder engagement planning with fishery participants
- Coordinate fisheries monitoring and mitigation development and implementation
- Coordinate communications between the Project and state and federal fisheries managers and agencies.

Rick Robins, Director of Marine Affairs, has a background in commercial fisheries development, seafood processing and export market development, and state and federal fisheries management. He served as an Associate Member of the Virginia Marine Resources Commission, chaired the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and served as a fisheries liaison for offshore wind energy development. He engaged the Council with the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO) in its marine spatial planning process and with BOEM in the development of best practices for fisheries. He served on the Collaborative Fisheries Planning Team to develop the Collaborative Fisheries Planning for Virginia's Offshore Wind Energy Area report (OCS Study BOEM 2016-040). He served as a fisheries liaison for 3 years for an offshore wind energy project in the mid-Atlantic region.

Rick is currently a representative on ROSA, F-TWG, and RWSC Habitat and Ecosystem Subcommittee. He serves as co-chair of the ACP Fisheries Subcommittee. As Marine Affairs Manager, it is Rick's role to plan and coordinate the company's marine operations and interactions with the maritime industries. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Lead and coordinate marine affairs to support the development of the company's wind energy development projects.
- Lead engagement with all relevant maritime stakeholders, including, but not limited to: commercial and recreational fisheries, commercial shipping, owner/operators of subsea infrastructure, ports and harbors operators, the US Department of Defense, the US Coast Guard (USCG), the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), and the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement.
- Lead development of offshore wind projects' marine affairs strategies and maritime stakeholder engagement plans.
- Provide internal coordination on all marine affairs issues and considerations to support project development.

Gus Seyler-Schmidt, Marine Affairs Liaison, is a highly experienced maritime leader with multiple high-level operational and strategic roles during his over 24-year career in the U.S. Coast Guard, including working in the Departments of Homeland Security and Defense. During his career, he was responsible for executing a wide range of maritime safety and security missions, including domestic and foreign dignitary protection, combating transnational criminal organizations across the Atlantic,

Pacific, and Indian Oceans, increasing partner nation capacity in South America, Africa, and the South Pacific Islands, and countering Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated fishing in the South Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. His extensive knowledge of U.S. government interagency processes was a key asset while serving as the Military Assistant to the Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security during the COVID-19 pandemic, withdrawal from Afghanistan, and the southern border crisis. He also played a crucial role while working for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, delivering near real-time risk assessments for proposed military operations aimed at achieving national strategic objectives.

Early in his Coast Guard career, he specialized in ensuring regulatory compliance and at-sea safety for U.S. and foreign-flagged commercial vessels, U.S. commercial fishing vessels, and U.S. port facilities. As the Project's Marine Affairs Liaison, he is the primary point of contact for marine professionals and federal, state, and municipal agencies with regulatory authority over marine uses and advising on the Project's vessel selection. His responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Coordinate stakeholder engagement with professional marine users, trade organizations, and regulatory agencies.
- Coordinate and communicate navigation safety risk analysis actions to de-risk impacts to commercial mariners and increase safety of life at sea.
- Coordinate across the various Project workstreams for all marine affairs issues.
- Advise the Project on vessel class and certification requirements for work vessels.

Fisheries Technical Advisor (FTA): The role of Fisheries Technical Advisors is to provide technical expertise regarding the operations and characteristics of fisheries working in and/or transiting through the Lease Area so that potential negative fisheries impacts can be avoided, minimized, and thoughtfully considered throughout the Project life cycle. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Provide information regarding vessel movements and configuration and fishing of mobile and fixed gears in the Lease Area.
- Describe the seasonality and distribution of fisheries over time within the Lease Area.
- Provide recommendations regarding fisheries constituent identification and interaction.

Fisheries Representative (FR): Fisheries Representatives serve the interests of the fisheries for which they have knowledge and expertise and are trusted focal points for fishing industry contact and communication regarding the Project. FRs typically also serve as FTAs to provide technical expertise to the Project team. Responsibilities of FRs include, but are not limited to:

- Identify and cultivate industry concerns and proactively share those with the Project team to facilitate shared use and fisheries impact avoidance.
- Work with the Liaisons to improve and adapt the Fisheries Communications Plan and ensure it is responsive to fisheries participant and stakeholder feedback.
- Disseminate Project information to industry to promote awareness and facilitate effective outreach and engagement.

Community Offshore Wind plans to add FTAs/FRs across a range of fisheries active in the project

area and is currently recruiting for these positions. Two FTAs/FRs joined the team earlier this summer, and we are actively considering alternative approaches (e.g., regional or state panel/committee) for engaging individuals with expertise in recreational fishing and support services, based on feedback received through our outreach efforts to date.

Brady Lybarger is a commercial Fisheries Technical Advisor and Fisheries Representative from the sea scallop fishery. He is based in Cape May, New Jersey and has participated in the commercial scallop fishery since 1999. He has been a Scallop Advisory Panel member for the New England Fishery Management Council for about ten years and has participated in several Scallop Research Set Aside projects. Brady is also an avid recreational fisherman and participates in the commercial hook and line fishery, currently targeting tuna, swordfish, and tilefish. [redacted]

Chris Rainone is a commercial Fisheries Technical Advisor and Fisheries Representative from the monkfish industry. Chris has fished for the past twenty years out of Barnegat Light New Jersey. Before commercial fishing Chris worked his way through Stockton University as a commercial crabber and upon graduation, he pursued a career on the ocean. Today he is the owner operator of a gillnet vessel and primarily targets monkfish, dogfish, and other species. Throughout his vocation Chris has been actively involved in fisheries management. For the past ten years Chris has served on the NEFMC/MAFMC Monkfish Advisory Panel and has been working with the NOAA Cooperative Research Program in the collection of important fisheries data. Chris also provides scout vessel services to the Project on his 39' BHM, F/V ANNICE MARIE.

Recreational FTA/FR The fisheries team appreciates the importance of the Project and project area to the recreational fisheries in the region and as noted above, is actively developing options for recruiting Fisheries Technical Advisors/Fisheries Representatives from the recreational fishing industry and exploring other potential options such as regional or state panels/committees.

2.3. Identification of fishing industry stakeholders

This section should describe the process by which stakeholders relevant to fisheries and thefishing industry will be identified and classified by stakeholder group.

The Community Offshore Wind fisheries team has conducted an initial fisheries characterization for the Lease Area based on available commercial, recreational, and habitat data, combined with local knowledge curated through one-on-one interviews with captains and vessel owners with fishing experience in the project area.

- **Commercial fishing industry stakeholders** - According to federal Vessel Trip Report (VTR) data, commercial fisheries operating in Area 0539 are primarily Atlantic Sea scallop and surfclam, but also include summer flounder, monkfish, and inconsistent harvest of black sea bass and skates. Important commercial ports with harvest from within the Lease Area include Atlantic City, Barnegat Light, Point Pleasant, and Cape May, New Jersey. Other ports with commercial harvest include Long Beach, and Montauk, New York; New Bedford, Massachusetts; and ports in the Hampton Roads area of Virginia. The Community Offshore Wind fisheries team will focus on direct engagement with commercial fishermen in these ports and will connect with our extensive network of fishing industry leaders and state and federal regulators in the region to ensure we have identified all potentially impacted fishery participants.

  We have been and will continue to attend regional fishery meetings, conferences, and fishing industry meetings to communicate directly with fishing industry participants and stakeholders. We have interviewed commercial fishermen from the scallop, monkfish, surf clam, and trawl fisheries with direct experience in the area, and will continue to pursue detailed local knowledge through direct engagements with captains to refine our understanding of the history and operational details of the fisheries in the project area. Our team is compiling a database of commercial fishery stakeholders using data from other sources such as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS or NOAA Fisheries) permit database and ship identification from Automatic Identification System (AIS).

- **Recreational fishing industry stakeholders** - Information on recreational fisheries operating in and transiting through the Lease Area is somewhat limited. Available data suggest that there is some charter and party boat activity within the Lease Area, though higher levels are observed inshore of and beyond the Lease Area. Seasonally important recreational fisheries for both private anglers and for-hire fleets have included summer flounder, black sea bass, scup, and bluefish, as well as pelagic species such as dolphinfish (mahi mahi) and Highly Migratory Species (HMS) such as bluefin and yellowfin tunas. It is likely that important ports for the for-hire and private boat fleets that may be transiting and/or operating within the area include Barnegat Light, Point Pleasant, Cape May, Little Egg Inlet, Ocean City, New Jersey, and potentially a few ports on the south shore of Long Island, New York.

  We have been in contact with large recreational fishing organizations [redacted] to help us identify recreational fishing stakeholders and we plan to have an active presence at regional fishing

tournaments and boat shows to connect with individuals that may be fishing offshore near our Lease Area. We have interviewed head boat captains, charter captains, and tackle shops familiar with the recreational fisheries in and near the Lease Area and will continue to create opportunities for direct engagements with fishermen to refine our understanding of the details of the recreational fisheries that occur on a seasonal basis in the broader project area.

- **Other marine users** - In addition to fishery stakeholders, our Project may impact whale and dolphin-watching businesses, shore-based wildlife viewing, diving, recreational boating, sailing, surfing, and kayaking stakeholders that currently use our Lease Area or potential export cable routes for their activities. In addition, our Project may also impact fishing organizations, fish dealers and processors, bait and tackle shops, fishing tournaments, marinas and boat ramps, marine tourism businesses, environmental organizations, as well as state and federal agencies and management entities. As our Project evolves and cable routes are developed, other marine and coastal stakeholders will be identified.

[redacted]

2.4. Participation in stakeholder and technical working groups

2.4.1. Communication with F-TWG

This should describe the communication and collaboration approach with members of the F-TWG and consultations.

- Community Offshore Wind will dedicate Project specific technical resources to the F-TWG.
- To the extent practicable, Community Offshore Wind will work with and attend future F-TWG meetings and sponsored conferences.
- Community Offshore Wind will identify specific individuals to serve at least one-year terms. Our representatives have participated in the F-TWG meetings since winning lease OCS-A0539 in the New York Bight, and our team plans to engage the F-TWG at key intervals throughout the Project planning process to solicit input and promote co-development of the Project's approach to achieving successful, complementary approaches to fisheries considerations. The Project team is committed to meaningful engagement in its approach to avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating impacts to marine fisheries, and is committed to working closely with the fishing industry and fisheries experts, including consultation with the F-TWG, in the development of our research and monitoring plan.
- Our fisheries team has regularly scheduled monthly calls with the NYSERDA F-TWG fisheries lead to discuss topics associated with offshore wind development and marine fisheries.
- In addition to F-TWG, our team actively participates in other regional industry groups such as ROSA, RWSC, and the ACP Fisheries Subcommittee, and proactively engages with commercial and recreational fishermen that are not represented by these groups.

2.4.2. Communication with other New York State agencies

This should describe communication with New York State agencies during each phase of the project.

- In the period immediately following the lease auction, our fisheries team reached out to the fisheries staff at NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and NYSERDA to discuss our planned outreach to the fishing industry in New York, and to identify stakeholders and review the results of our initial review of available fisheries data characterizing the commercial fisheries in the area.
- After publication of the draft RFP for NY's third offshore wind solicitation, communication with NY state was limited to preserve integrity of that solicitation, and we expect similar considerations during the current RFP process. Community Offshore Wind intends to communicate more regularly with fisheries staff in NYSDEC and NY State Coastal Program in the Department of State after the RFP process is complete. Consultation will include updates about site assessment survey activity, development of monitoring programs, fisheries outreach, developer coordination, mitigation programs, and other relevant topics. Other NY State Offices may include the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Department of Public Service, and Office of General Services.

- Our team has interacted with state fisheries staff at regional fishery management meetings such as Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council meetings and the annual Mid-Atlantic Chapter American Fisheries Society meetings.

2.4.3. Communication with other stakeholder and working groups

This should describe any relevant participation with other stakeholder groups, such as international fisheries groups, that would help inform the FMP.

- Community Offshore Wind will collaborate with other regulatory agencies and stakeholder groupsand is already a member of collaborative efforts such as E-TWG, F-TWG, ROSA and RWSC. See Section 2.4.1 above for more details about our engagement with F-TWG.
- [redacted]
- Our Director of Marine Affairs has met with several West Coast fisheries associations, liaisons, fishermen, and stakeholders in an effort to learn about their experiences with co-located infrastructure, including sub-sea telecom cables and oil and gas. In an effort to understand the lessons learned, including successful examples of structured relationships that led to successful coexistence between other industries and fisheries, the Marine Affairs Manager met with [redacted] to understand the scope and methods they have employed to develop a structured relationship, agreements, and outreach with the fishing industry to successfully manage interactions with sub-sea telecom cable siting and coexistence. Our Project team has already applied some of the best practices learned from that engagement, such as retaining the assistance of a clam boat captain to identify benthic features and characteristics to inform our potential export cable surveying plans. [redacted]
- Community Offshore Wind's fisheries team has also reached out to the North Atlantic Submarine Cable Association (NASCA), and to individual subsea cable owners and managers to establish relationships to facilitate coordination with existing and planned subsea cable infrastructure operators.
- RWE has successfully developed 19 offshore wind energy projects globally. The Community

Offshore Wind fisheries team is engaged in knowledge-sharing workstreams across RWE's global enterprise and has regular communications with experts within the company across other projects to discuss best practices and innovations. We propose to leverage this extensive experience to support our innovative efforts throughout the life cycle of the Project to achieve net-positive ecological and social outcomes.

- [redacted]

- Community Offshore Wind is pursuing a comprehensive interaction with regional scientific, research, and fisheries management entities to lay the groundwork for a collaborative approach to developing and implementing our monitoring and research plan. This includes membership and participation in E-TWG, F-TWG, ROSA, and RWSC. In 2023 we became the first offshore wind developer to join the membership of the Science Center for Marine Fisheries (SCEMFIS), an NSF-grant consortium for marine science. We also recently executed a first-in-class Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) with NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) to consult on 3 objectives: 1) consultation on the development of our monitoring and research plan, 2) engagement on development of our data sharing and data integration plan to support regional fisheries stock assessments, and 3) opportunities and strategies to advance coordinated monitoring in the New York Bight region. We have introduced the Project to leading academic research institutions in the region, including Cornell University, Stony Brook University, Rutgers University, Monmouth University, Coonamessett Farm Foundation (CFF), University of Massachusetts School for Marine Science & Technology (SMAST), and Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS).
- To promote communication with regional fisheries management entities our fisheries team has introduced our Project to the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, the New England Fishery Management Council's Scallop Advisory Panel, and the annual meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the American Fisheries Society.
- Community Offshore Wind has had multiple meetings with mayors and other elected officials in primary fishing ports to introduce our Project and help our team identify all relevant stakeholders in those ports and municipalities.
- We have regular calls with BOEM and NOAA Fisheries to review our survey plans, monitoring

plans, and considerations for the Project's design and layout. We will also provide Project updates to other federal entities such as U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, National Park Service, U.S. Coast Guard, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

2.4.4. Communication and collaboration with other developers

This should describe any relevant participation and collaboration with other developers in the offshore space, with a focus on communication and collaboration with adjacent leaseholders. This may include but is not limited to shared research efforts, coordination of survey methods, or standardization of navigational and safety protocols.

- Community Offshore Wind will seek to maximize the impact of research efforts such as data collection, methodology, analysis and dissemination by collaborating with other developers, particularlythose in adjacent lease areas, taking on similar initiatives.
- Our fisheries team coordinated with one of our trade associations to establish a working group of New York Bight leaseholders in January 2023 to create a forum to facilitate coordination on fisheries issues, including monitoring, outreach, and other matters that will benefit from coordination between leaseholders. Working group activities include development of a topic-based outreach publication ("Developers Digest") and coordinated presentations to the MAFMC and the NJ Marine Fisheries Council's Offshore Wind Committee and Advisory Panel. This initiative by our team is responsive to the overwhelming interest in promoting coordination between developers from fisheries stakeholders, the states, BOEM, and NMFS.
- In addition, one of our trade associations has also formed a Recreational Fisheries Working Group to improve communication and collaboration across developers with recreational anglers, charter vessels, head boats, and land-based businesses that support recreational fishing interests in the Northeast. This group convened a series of focus groups with the recreational sector in 2023 to develop industry-to-industry engagement approaches and our team is actively participating in this initiative.
- Our team has had the opportunity to discuss communication and collaboration with other developers on numerous occasions since we secured the Lease. We have had informal conversations with other developers at relevant conferences and meetings, as well as several more formal video calls to discuss opportunities for collaboration. We have requested and held meetings with all of our neighboring leaseholders in advance of the first meeting of our New York Bight fisheries working group to discuss coordination on fisheries issues.
- One of our Fisheries Representatives serves as a Fisheries Representative for another developer. We view this as a direct way our Project is collaborating with other developers and addressing stakeholder burden when fisheries participants only need to communicate with one individual and that input is shared with more than one developer. Furthermore, there are opportunities to share lessons learned directly across projects.
- Our fisheries team also has regular and periodic calls with neighboring leaseholders in the

New York Bight to discuss fisheries issues and fisheries coordination.

2.5. Communication methods and tools

2.5.1. Methods by phase

This section should describe the communication and outreach methods and tools that will be employed for each stakeholder group during each phase of the project.

The communication methods and tools our team is using with fisheries participants and stakeholders are intended to be specific and adaptable to the needs of each stakeholder group and promote effective, two-way engagement that contributes to the safe, successful, and sustainable shared use of the Lease Area. We plan to use a combination of engagement methods to identify key concerns and provide avenues for stakeholders to voice their concerns and contribute their observations and recommendations. We recognize that stakeholder groups have different communication preferences and we will work with our FRs and state partners to identify specific approaches that meet unique stakeholder needs. The table below summarizes the initial communication methods and tools Community Offshore Wind intends to use for each phase of this Project. We will adjust these strategies accordingly to promote effective and efficient communication with various stakeholders.

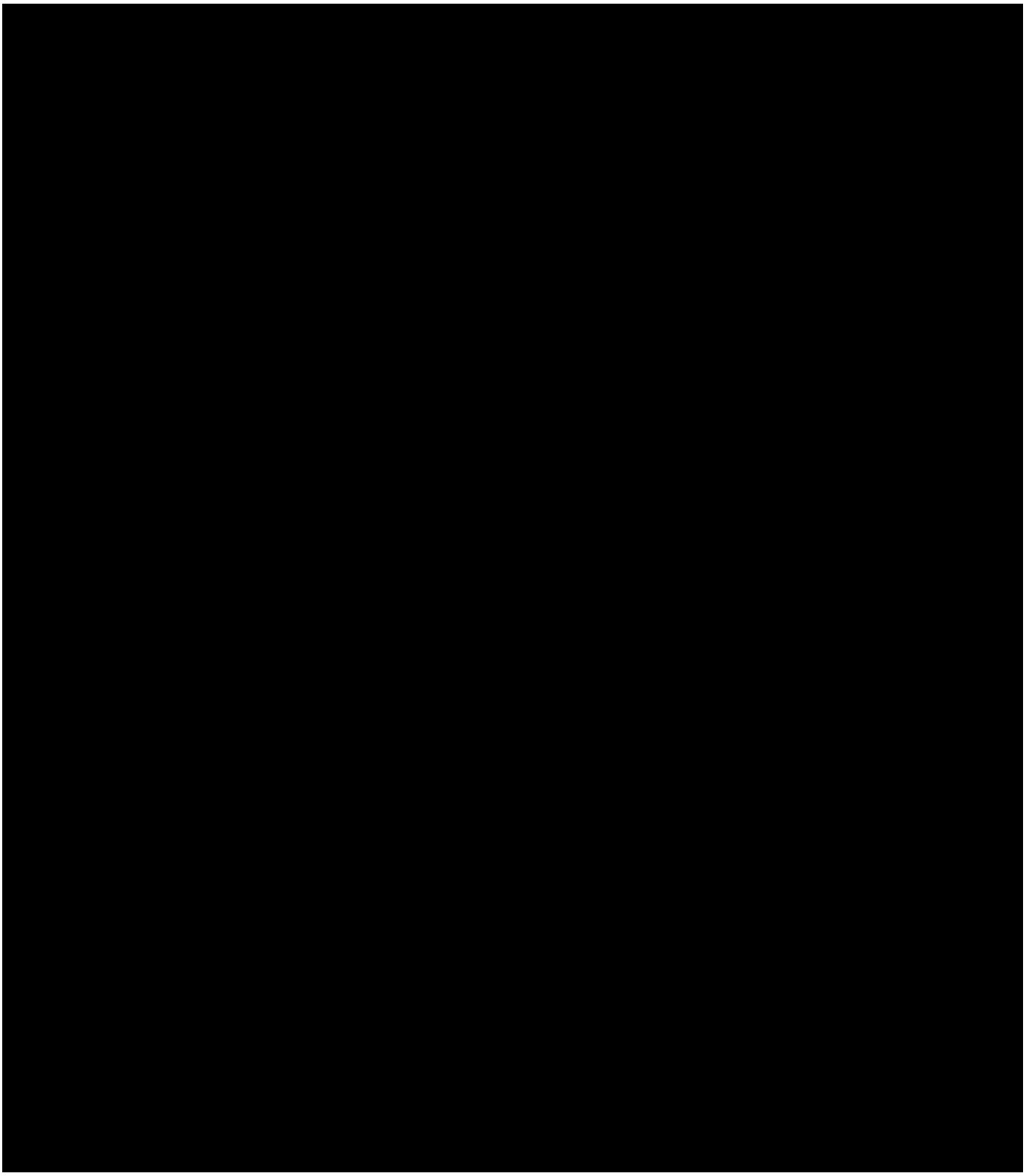
[redacted]

2.5.2. Communication with vessels

This section should describe communication methods/tools with vessels actively fishing in areasin or adjacent to the Project area during site assessment and construction activities and facilitate proper notification to vessels and resource managers.

- To avoid fisheries conflicts, to the greatest extent practicable Community Offshore Wind shall seek to employ a fishing captain or other experienced fishing industry representative in the role of onboard fisheries liaison, to be onboardvessels during key time/activities where potential conflicts could be greatest.
- Based on its experience with offshore wind and fisheries interactions, the Community Offshore Wind fisheries team has developed a highly proactive and comprehensive strategy to avoid impacts to fisheries and promote successful coordination with fisheries during site assessment activities. These strategies will also extend to future phases of the Project, including construction and decommissioning, and will be enhanced for those phases as appropriate and based on state-of-the art practice.
- Community Offshore Wind's proactive communications strategy includes the elements summarized in the table below, which have been employed since the launch of the Project's offshore survey campaign in January 2023.

[redacted]



3. Monitoring and research pre-, during, and post-construction

3.1. Identification of scope of monitoring activities/studies

This section should provide an overview of the anticipated monitoring activities, including how the specific scope of monitoring activities will be identified and what types of scientific questions will be addressed.

- Monitoring methods and scientific designs shall meet the highest scientific standards and should follow guidance mentioned in the Offshore Wind Project Monitoring Framework and Guidelines developed by ROSA.
- To the greatest extent practicable, fisheries and related research will be performed on board commercial and recreational fishing vessels. These vessels shall meet all appropriate regulatory safety and scientific standards prior to the beginning of any monitoring activity. Our fisheries team has close working relationships with researchers in the region that already use commercial fishing vessels and crew to conduct research and we intend to utilize those existing arrangements, to the extent possible.
- Community Offshore Wind has recently executed a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) with NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) to collaborate on:
    - the development of our monitoring and research plan;
    - the development of a data sharing and data integration plan to support regional fisheries stock assessments; and
    - advancement of coordinated monitoring approaches across lease areas in the Northeast.
- Community Offshore Wind will use survey methods that consider spatial and temporal scales and facilitate integration with NOAA Fisheries surveys. We will consult with state and federal resource agencies and regional entities, including F-TWG, ROSA, and RWSC, for preliminary review of our monitoring plan, progress reports, and pre-survey meetings.

3.2. Baseline data and characterization approach

This section should describe how baseline data will be established on the spatial and temporal presence of fish and invertebrates in the proposed area of the Project at multiple life history stages included egg, larval, juvenile, adult, and spawning stages, as well as associated fish and invertebrate habitats.

3.2.1. Existing literature and data of benthic and fisheries resources

Describe key existing literature and datasets that are available for baseline characterization.

- NOAA Fisheries has extensive data sets on benthic and fisheries resources in the region. The agency conducts over a dozen surveys in the New York Bight, some dating back to the 1960s. Many of these datasets are available through public data portals such as the Northeast and

Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portals.[22] Community Offshore Wind intends to use these resources to support baseline characterization of our Lease Area. Furthermore, the team plans to request other NOAA Fisheries data sets such as observer data collected by at-sea human observers that are placed on fishing vessels through the Northeast Fisheries Observer Program (NEFOP) to collect valuable information such as catch, discards, observations of protected species, and economic information about vessel operations and crew. There is also valuable fisheries dependent data available through the Northeast Fisheries Cooperative Research Program (e.g., Study Fleet) that collects tow-by-tow data for some fisheries that operate in and around our Lease Area. We plan to review all relevant NOAA Fisheries data to characterize the baseline fisheries resources in our Lease Area.

- Annually, NOAA prepares a State of the Ecosystem report for the Mid-Atlantic region that provides a status update of the marine resources in the area.[23] The report monitors ecosystem change including physical, chemical, biological, and human factors that influence the complex ecosystem of the Mid-Atlantic. Community Offshore Wind will use these reports to help characterize the benthic and fisheries resources in the area and understand how they are interrelated to the larger ecosystem.
- NOAA Fisheries also prepares reports summarizing fishing activity within offshore wind lease areas to help describe potential socioeconomic impacts of offshore wind development.[24] Community Offshore Wind will use these reports to help characterize baseline fishing revenue in our Lease Area.
- NYSERDA's Offshore Wind program partners with experts to conduct research related to the marine environment and fisheries. [25] For example, NYSERDA conducted 20 studies in order to determine the most responsible and cost-effective pathways for developing offshore wind energy.[26] Community Offshore Wind will use the results of these research projects to better characterize the resources in the Lease Area such as prey species, fishing activity, etc.
- BOEM has supported dozens of environmental studies to improve the understanding of the Atlantic ecosystem and potential impacts of offshore wind development. Community Offshore Wind will use these reports and others to help characterize the benthic and fisheries resources in the area.[27]
- Stock assessments include the most comprehensive information on the spatial and temporal presence of fish and invertebrates that may be found in our Lease Area. For the Northeast region, these reports are updated on a regular basis by either the Northeast Fisheries Science Center or the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and many state, federal, and independent research institutions provide support. Community Offshore Wind will use these reports to characterize the fish and invertebrates found in our Lease Area for multiple

[22] https://www.northeastoceandata.org/ and https://portal.midatlanticocean.org/
[23] https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/ecosystems/state-ecosystem-reports-northeast-us-shelf
[24] https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/data/socioeconomic-impacts-atlantic-offshore-wind-development
[25] https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/Offshore-Wind/Focus-Areas/Ocean-Environment/Ongoing-Environmental-Research
[26] https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/Offshore-Wind/About-Offshore-Wind/Master-Plan
[27] https://www.boem.gov/environment/environmental-studies/ongoing-environmental-studies/current-environmental-studies

life history stages included egg, larval, juvenile, adult, and spawning stages, as well as associated fish and invertebrate habitats. These stock assessments are publicly available through several different websites.[28]

- Community Offshore Wind will use information from state, federal, and international fisheries management entities in the region to characterize the fishing industries and relevant management programs in place for species found in our Lease Area. Many management plans are adjusted annually, and our fisheries team is intimately familiar with the relevant fishery management plans for species with commercial and recreational significance in our Lease Area.[29]
- [redacted]
- There are numerous other public data sources available that we will utilize; for example, NOAA National Center for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS) and BOEM Comprehensive Seafloor Substrate Mapping and Model studies and NOAA's Estuarine Living Marine Resource database.[30]

3.2.2. Data collected of benthic and fisheries resources

This section should describe survey activities undertaken or that will be undertaken by thedeveloper that will inform the baseline characterization of benthic and fisheries resources.

- In early January 2023, Community Offshore Wind commenced the first phase of our site assessment survey, which includes a geophysical survey of the Lease Area. We will continue to survey the Lease Area and potential cable routes for several years to inform the baseline characterization of the benthic environment.
- Our goal is to support and promote techniques that will enhance and can be integrated with existing, long-term federal resource surveys. Community Offshore Wind will share all non-proprietary data with BOEM and other federal partners, including NOAA Fisheries and US Fish and Wildlife Service.
- [redacted]

[28] https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/population-assessments/fishery-stock-assessments-new-england-and-mid-atlantic , https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/publication-database/northeast-stock-assessment-documents-search-tool , https://apps-nefsc.fisheries.noaa.gov/saw/sari.php , http://www.asmfc.org/fisheries-science/stock-assessments

[29] https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/resources-fishing/resources-fishing-greater-atlantic-region , https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/recreational-fishing/recreational-saltwater-fishing-greater-atlantic , http://www.asmfc.org/fisheries-management/program-overview , https://www.nefmc.org/ , https://www.mafmc.org/ , https://safmc.net/ , https://www.iccat.int/en/#

[30] https://repository.library.noaa.gov/view/noaa/21989 , https://coastalscience.noaa.gov/project/estuarine-species-database-noaa-estuarine-living-marine-resources-program/

[redacted]As described earlier, we recently executed a CRADA with the NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) to consult with us on the development of our monitoring and research plan, including the best methods for baseline characterization.

- Community Offshore Wind will consult with fisheries participants and stakeholders, E-TWG, F-TWG, ROS, RWSC, and regulators and researchers in the region to develop and implement our surveys. We have already in discussions with several leading researchers and academic institutions in the region about baseline characterization surveys.

3.3. Monitor for potential impacts during each phase

This section should describe how potential impacts will be monitored on these types of life history stages during each phase of physical work for the Project (site assessment, construction, operation, and decommissioning) to inform mitigation planning for later phases of the Project as well as for future Projects.

- Community Offshore Wind will seek to collaborate with other regulatory agencies and stakeholder groups (e.g., E-TWG, F-TWG, and ROSA) to identify research needs and opportunities.
- The Responsible Offshore Development Alliance (RODA) published a Research Priorities report that highlights research priorities identified by the fishing industry. We will develop our monitoring and research plan in a way that directly supports a number of these research priorities and is informed by the ROSA Offshore Wind Project Monitoring Framework and Guidelines. We have also closely reviewed potential stressors, risks, and sensitivities to fish and fisheries in the New York State Wind Master Plan Fish and Fisheries Study.[31]
- As described above, we have recently established a CRADA with NEFSC to collaborate on the development of our environmental monitoring program so that it is scientifically robust and compatible with other monitoring programs in the region. The results from this research will inform mitigation planning for later phases of the Project as well as other projects.
- [redacted] We are confident that collaborating with multiple researchers and utilizing different survey tools will greatly increase our understanding of the effects of offshore wind development on fisheries and marine ecosystems in this region. COSW has been a member of SCEMFIS since 2023 and plans to support applied research projects that help improve our understanding of offshore wind and fisheries and address data gaps.
- Community Offshore Wind intends to be a leader in monitoring plan development and working with other developers to implement consistent programs that can be integrated with existing monitoring surveys to support fisheries assessments and management in the region.

[31] Research Priorities Report, https://rodafisheries.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/RODA-Research-Priorities_vDec1-1.pdf ROSA Offshore Wind Project Monitoring Framework and Guidelines, https://static1.squarespace.com/static/511cdc7fe4b00307a2628ac6/t/612c52e560ffc477bf43d2eb/1630295041287/e_ROSA+Offshore+Wind+Project+Monitoring+Framework+and+Guidance_2021.pdf , New York State Offshore Wind Master Plan: Fish and Fisheries Study, NYSERDA 2017.

3.4. Assess and quantify changes to fishery resources

This section should describe how changes to fisheries resources will be quantified using statistically sound methods.

- Ideally, specific questions and focal taxa shall be chosen for the Project either based on site-specific fisheries risk assessment, or in relation to broader regional efforts to assess variation between sites and understand cumulative impacts for sensitive species.
- Monitoring will, to the extent practicable, use appropriate study designs and methodologies to effectively analyze risk prior to construction and evaluate impacts during construction and operation by testing hypotheses and helping to assure statistical power for meaningful data analysis.
- As described above, outside expertise will, if practicable, be consulted during study design and data analysis processes. For example, Community Offshore Wind plans to collaborate with NEFSC and other researchers in the region to develop our comprehensive environmental monitoring plan.
- Community Offshore Wind will also collaborate with F-TWG, E-TWG, ROSA, RWSC, other regional entities, and fisheries participants and stakeholders to seek input on our monitoring plan as it develops.

3.5. Assess potential changes to commercial and recreational fishing activities

3.5.1. Current and historical usage

This section should describe how the proposed Project area is used by commercial and recreational fisheries in the region, including current and historic usage as well as how associated transit routes will be determined.

- According to federal vessel trip report (VTR) data, the primary species harvested from commercial fisheries in the Lease Area are Atlantic sea scallop and Atlantic surf clam. Fishing intensity in the Lease Area varies annually. [redacted]

[redacted] Seasonally important recreational fisheries for both private anglers and for-hire fleets within our lease area can include summer flounder, black sea bass, scup, and bluefish, as well as pelagic species such as dolphinfish and highly migratory species such as bluefin and yellowfin tunas. [redacted]

- In addition to fishery stakeholders, our Project may impact whale and dolphin-watching businesses, shore-based wildlife viewing, diving, recreational boating, sailing, surfing, and kayaking that currently use our Lease Area or potential export cable routes for their activities.
- There are additional stakeholders that do not use our Lease Area directly but are support industries for commercial and recreational fisheries in this region. For example, there are many fishing organizations, fish dealers and processors, bait and tackle shops, fishing tournaments, marinas and boat ramps, marine tourism businesses, and numerous environmental organizations, all of which are considered stakeholders for this Project.
- Community Offshore Wind will evaluate vessel transit routes using available data on public data portals like the Northeast Data Portal, as well as direct engagement with commercial and recreational fisheries to better understand current and historic transit routes. Community Offshore Wind will explore conducting a transit study in coordination with adjacent leaseholders.

3.5.2. Changes in usage

This section should describe how changes in commercial and recreational fishing patterns will be calculated postconstruction using statistically sound methods.

- Changes in commercial and recreational fishing patterns are important metrics this Project will monitor pre-, during, and post-construction. Community Offshore Wind plans to evaluate changes in usage with public databases administered by NOAA Fisheries such as commercial fishery revenue, commercial landings, and number of commercial and recreational vessel trips. [redacted]
- Many variables influence fishing patterns, and we will work with NEFSC and other regional research entities like F-TWG and ROSA to identify ways to identify and account for covariables like, changes in fishing regulations, fuel prices, climate change, and markets. Community Offshore Wind supports more research to better define ways to detect changes in usage.

3.6. Addressing data gaps

This section should describe how data gaps will be addressed.

- Community Offshore Wind will seek to work with stakeholders, including regulatory agencies, to identify data gaps to be addressed through surveys or permitting applications.
- There are multiple research priority lists in the region, and Community Offshore Wind is committed to supporting work to help prioritize research needs with regional entities like NYSERDA's Regional Synthesis Workgroup of the E-TWG[32], ROSA and RWSC to identify the most pressing data gaps.
- RWE has an extensive knowledge sharing program and database of research conducted at other offshore wind projects globally. Our team is committed to investigating this resource more carefully to identify if there are relevant lessons learned for our region.

3.7. Data availability

This section should describe how fisheries data will be made available in accordance with Section 2.2.8 of the RFP.

- Community Offshore Wind will develop a Data Management and Availability Plan and make non-proprietary environmental and fisheries data publicly available in a format and manner best suited for efficient distribution.
- Community Offshore Wind has established a CRADA with NEFSC to define a data sharing and integration plan for research collected by our Project. We want to maximize the use of data collected so that it can be integrated into existing databases to support regional stock assessments and fisheries management.
- Community Offshore Wind intends to partner with many research institutions in the region and these collaborative studies will be publicly available, to the fullest extent possible.
- Benthic survey data collected in the Lease Area and cable route corridors will be publicly available as soon as it is determined not to be commercially sensitive.
- Requests for data should be made to the Fisheries Liaisons or Marine Affairs Manager.

[32] https://www.nyetwg.com/regional-synthesis-workgroup?utm_campaign=7fffe8b6-7b4c-4215-a979-8bc352c9774b&utm_source=so&utm_medium=mail&cid=5b6b6070-bd5c-469b-8306-28c41e8f071f

4. Supporting other research

4.1. Support of collaborative research

This section should describe how opportunities for developing or investing in collaborative research with the fishing industry to collect ecological and/or fishing data will be identified and undertaken. The description must account for the need to coordinate with members of the F- TWG during data gathering and assessment.

- The developer shall align their research within a regional context by reviewing the ROSA FishFORWRD database to assess if the proposed work is non-duplicative; and the ROSA Offshore Wind Project Monitoring Framework and Guidelines to promote standardized protocols and integration with other research.
- The developer shall provide annual progress updates on regional collaborative research to the ROSA Advisory Council or relevant Topic Area Committees.
- The developer shall submit collaborative research project information to the ROSA FishFORWRD Database, review its accuracy and provide updates every 6 months.
- The developer shall submit, at collaborative project kickoff or as soon as information is known, coordinates of any sensors, sampling stations, or other research activities to ROSA for inclusion in the Research Planning Map under development by the Regional Wildlife Science Collaborative.
- Community Offshore Wind is committed to being actively engaged with regional science organizations and participates at meetings of the Regional Wildlife Science Collaborative and is a member of the Responsible Offshore Science Alliance Advisory Council. COSW became a member of SCEMFIS in 2023, which supports applied research in fisheries and wind through collaborative partnerships with researchers, universities, and industry members in the region.
- Our fisheries team also actively participates on F-TWG and acknowledges the importance of coordinating with this working group and others on data collection and evaluation of research results.
- Community Offshore Wind is discussing potential collaborative research partnerships with leading institutions in the region to support research on the potential impacts of offshore wind development on fisheries, wildlife, habitat, and other issues. Many of these research entities already collaborate with commercial fishing vessels and crew and we are very supportive of investing in collaborative research with the fishing industry. [redacted].
- Community Offshore Wind is supportive of identifying ways other entities can leverage research opportunities by collaborating with our Project. Specifically, Community Offshore Wind will consider proposals from researchers to include environmental observation systems on offshore wind infrastructures, as well as other opportunities to expand research capabilities within our Lease Area.

- Our Lease Area is centrally located in the New York Bight region and could serve as an important area to link research on migratory species and oceanographic patterns throughout the region. Our team is committed to leveraging additional research within the Lease Area and supporting research partnerships that will enhance our understanding of this important large marine ecosystem.

4.2. Handling/processing requests

This section should describe how requests for coordination with third-party supported scientists will be processed - including providing reasonably requested Project data and accessto the Project area for independent scientists examining environmental sensitivities and/or theimpacts of offshore wind energy development on fish, invertebrates, and fisheries for the purpose of publication in peer-reviewed journals or other scientifically vigorous products.

- Community Offshore Wind is very supportive of collaborative research, and we recognize the great potential offshore wind project areas have for larger ocean ecosystem research. Our fisheries team has extensive experience participating in cooperative research programs throughout the Northeast and we are very familiar with reviewing and evaluating research proposals.
- Community Offshore Wind is willing to meet with interested parties when contacted, and recommends researchers contact our Fisheries Liaisons or Marine Affairs Manager to initiate this process.
- Community Offshore Wind will consider requests to access this project area, as well as other wind energy projects RWE is operating around the globe.

4.3. Proposed restrictions

This section should describe any restrictions on data provision or access that may be required to protect trade secrets or maintain site security.

- Overall, the philosophy of Community Offshore Wind is to share non-proprietary data collected during this Project to help inform our collective understanding of offshore wind development and potential impacts on wildlife, fisheries, habitats, and other components of the ecosystem. We are developing a data sharing and integration agreement with NOAA Fisheries for this Project.
- For data that is proprietary, Community Offshore Wind will explain why identified data types are considered commercially sensitive and may restrict access to certain data sets.

4.4. Financial commitment for third party research

This section should provide a level of financial commitment, if elected, that will be appropriated to leverage third-party environmental research funding related to fish, invertebrates, and fisheries, including federal or State-supported research. These financial commitments are outside those identified in Section 2.2.7 of the RFP and beyond those identified to fulfill state and federal regulatory permitting requirements.

- [redacted]
- Additionally, Community Offshore Wind commits to [redacted] These research efforts will also likely leverage existing third-party environmental research in the region on topics such as habitat enhancement and monitoring of relevant highly migratory species.
- [redacted]
- Community Offshore Wind will continue to be engaged on the research prioritization criteria being developed collaboratively across ROSA, RWSC, and NYSERDA and with the ROSA and RWSC science plans for application to funding priorities [redacted]

[33] https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/feature-story/efforts-mitigate-impacts-offshore-wind-energy-development-noaa-fisheries-surveys

4.5. Proposed or existing commitments/collaborations

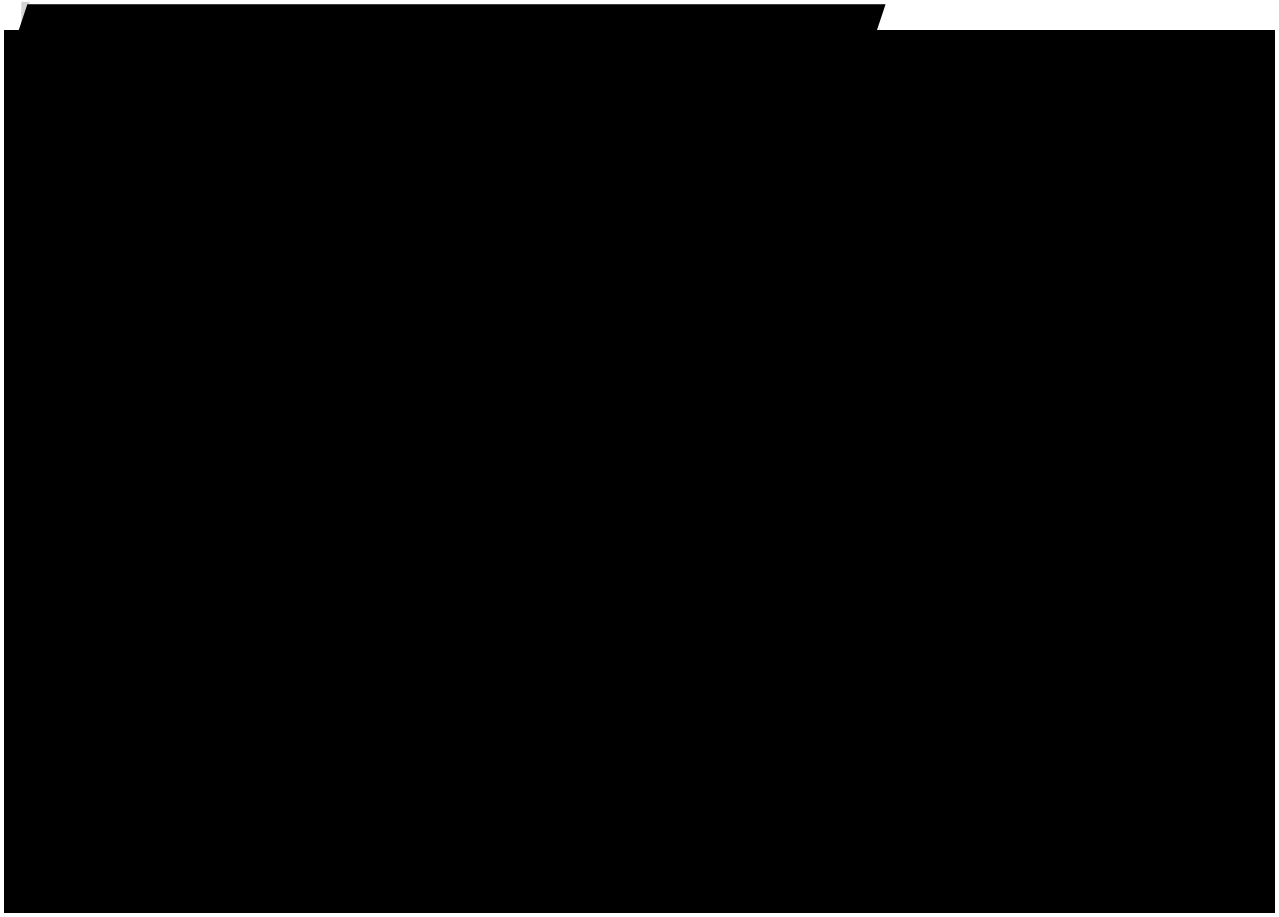
This section should describe proposed or existing commitments and collaborations with third-party researchers in support of monitoring activities and assessing impacts.

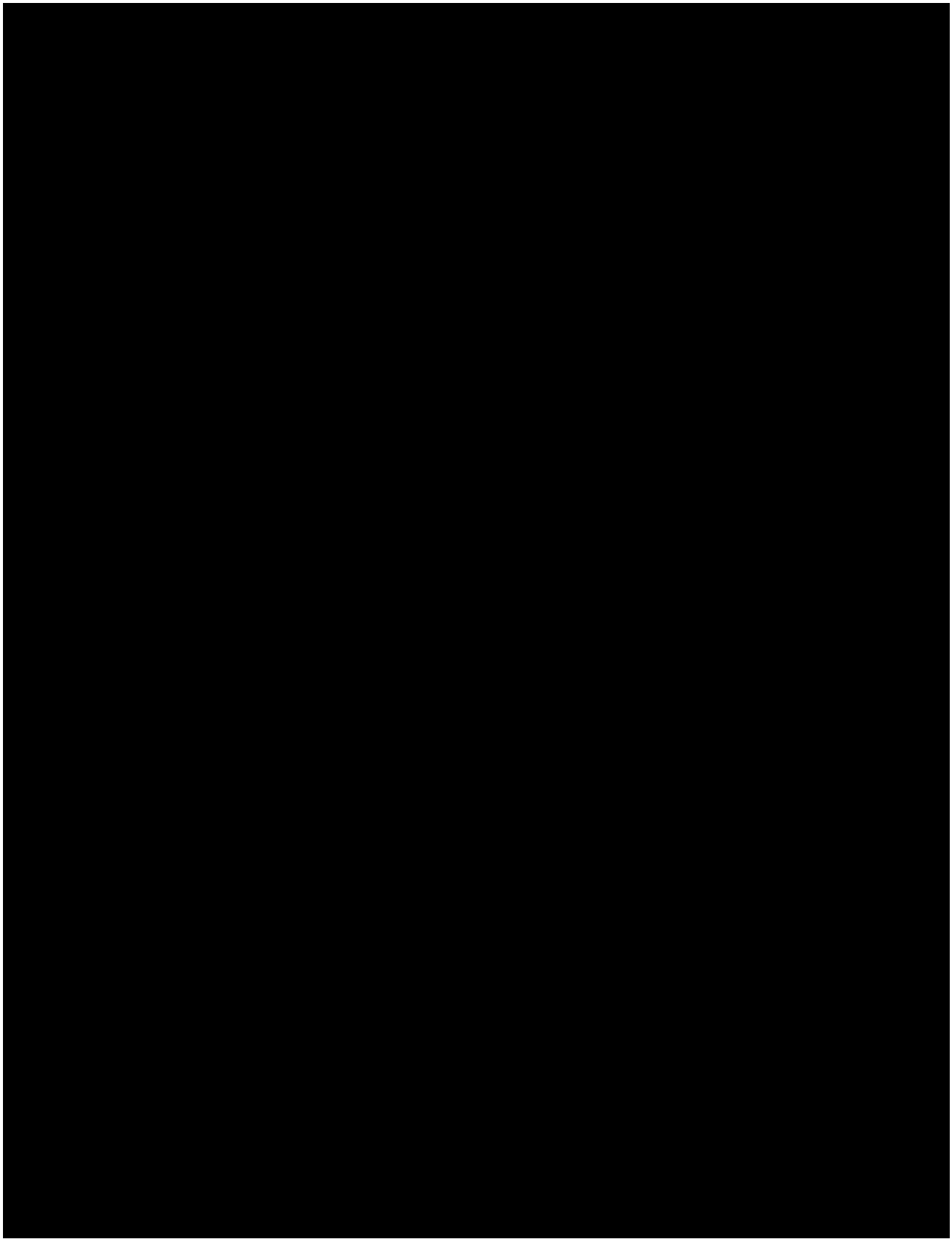
- Community Offshore Wind has and will continue to contribute to ROSA.
- Community Offshore Wind has become a member of SCEMFIS, Science Center for Marine Fisheries. SCEMFIS is a National Science Foundation Industry/University Cooperative Research Center (I/UCRC) that provides academic research products essential for the sustainable management of shellfish and finfish resources. The three main research topics this group focuses on are shellfish, forage fish and predators, and wind farms and fisheries.
- Community Offshore Wind plans to collaborate with other third-party researchers to support monitoring activities and assessing impacts of our Project once we collaborate with NEFSC on our monitoring plan through our cooperative research and development agreement that is under development.

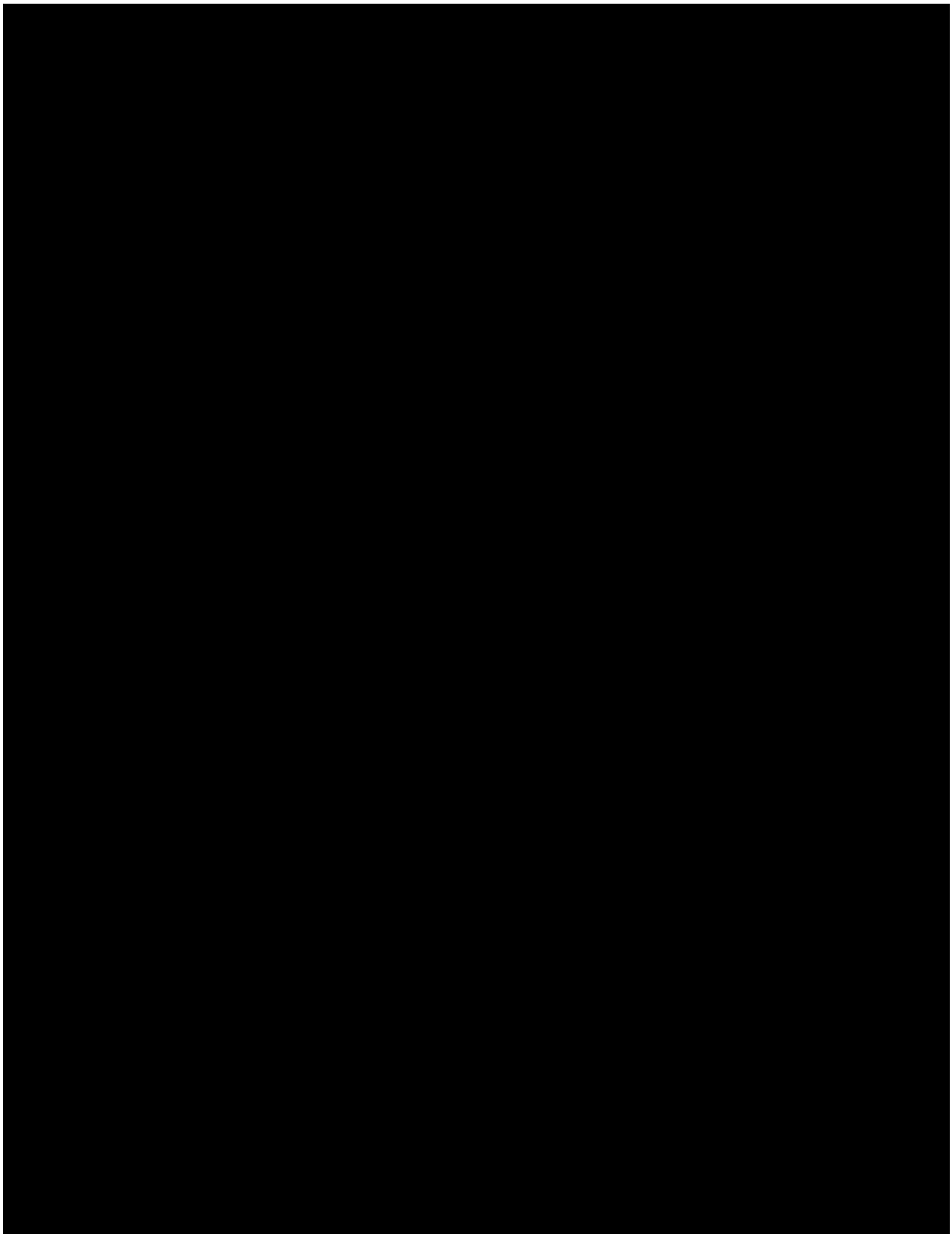
5. Proposed mitigation of impacts to benthic/fisheries resources

5.1. Potential impacts/risks and mitigation measures by project stage

The table below should list the potential impacts and risks to benthic/fisheries resources and proposed mitigation measures. To this end, a description of how the potential adverse impacts of infrastructure design elements (e.g., turbine spacing and layout, turbine foundation type, cable burial and protection methods, and cable crossing designs) on fishing in the proposed Project area will be considered in mitigating impacts should be included. The mitigation measures should also demonstrate that the Project area and proposed site design allows for reasonable flexibility in the site layout (e.g., orientation of turbine lines, distance between turbines, and navigation areas) to accommodate changes that may be needed in the future. Thesection should also describe the planned operational protocol to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts to fish, invertebrates and fisheries during Project construction and operation phases, such as vessel transit routes, designation and monitoring of safety zones, gear monitoring and retrieval, and communication with fishing vessels and resource managers.







5.2. Coordination with F-TWG and other stakeholders

This section should describe how the developer will engage with stakeholder groups such as the F-TWG and other regional fishermen that address stakeholder concerns related to benthic and fisheries resources. Specifically, describe the key types of information and design decisions where feedback will be solicited from stakeholders.

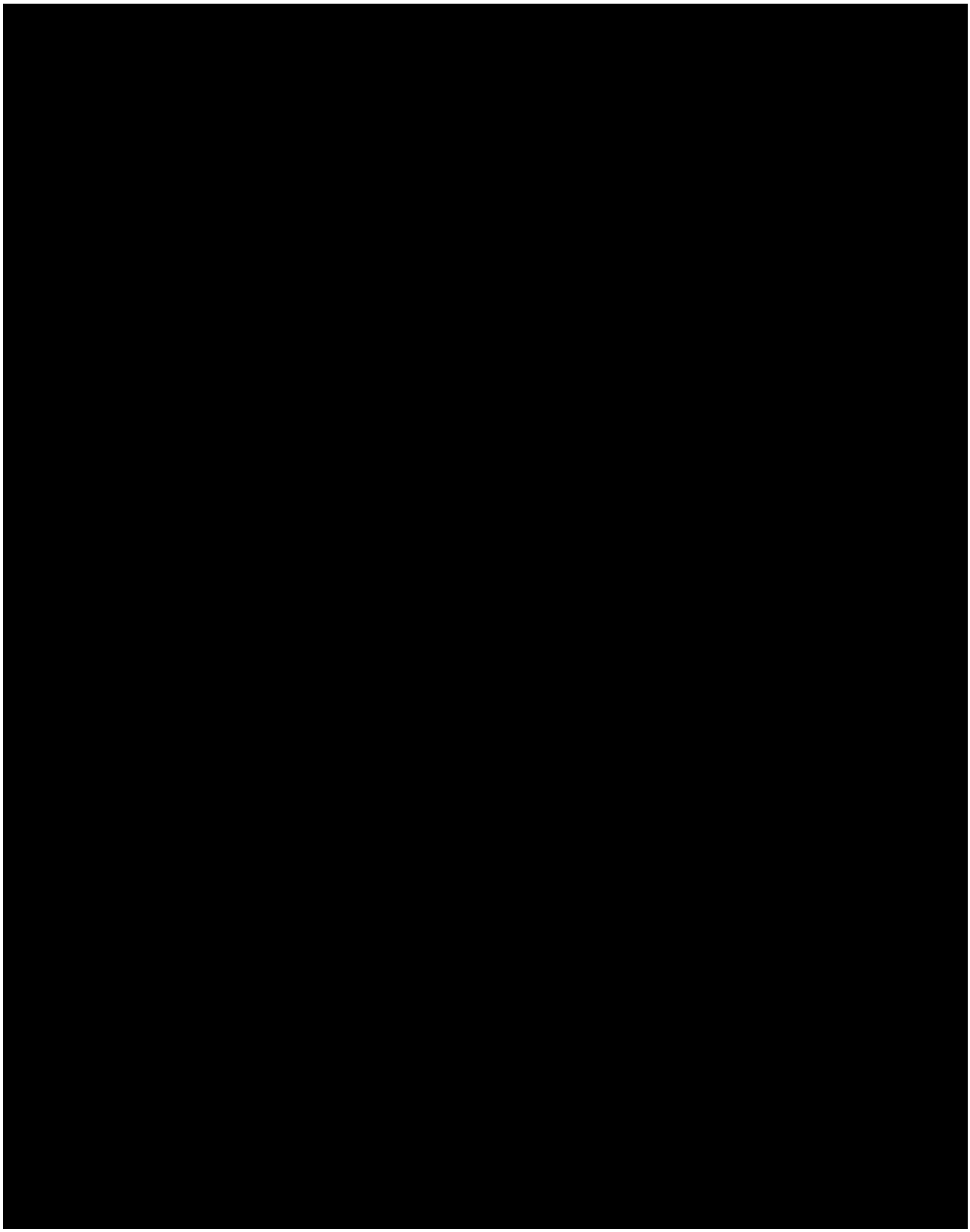
- Community Offshore Wind will coordinate with the F-TWG and regional fishermen and stakeholders to address concerns and mitigate impacts to benthic/fisheries resources and to solicit specific feedback on design decisions.
- Community Offshore Wind plans to collect design decision feedback in a variety of ways including one-on-one interviews, small group meetings, workshops with other developers, and through other means. Our fisheries team has begun this important work already, collecting feedback on design elements such as turbine orientation and spacing, cable burial and layout, [redacted], and other important design considerations.
- When appropriate, Community Offshore Wind will include a summary of stakeholder input on Project design as part of our semi-annual progress report submitted to BOEM.

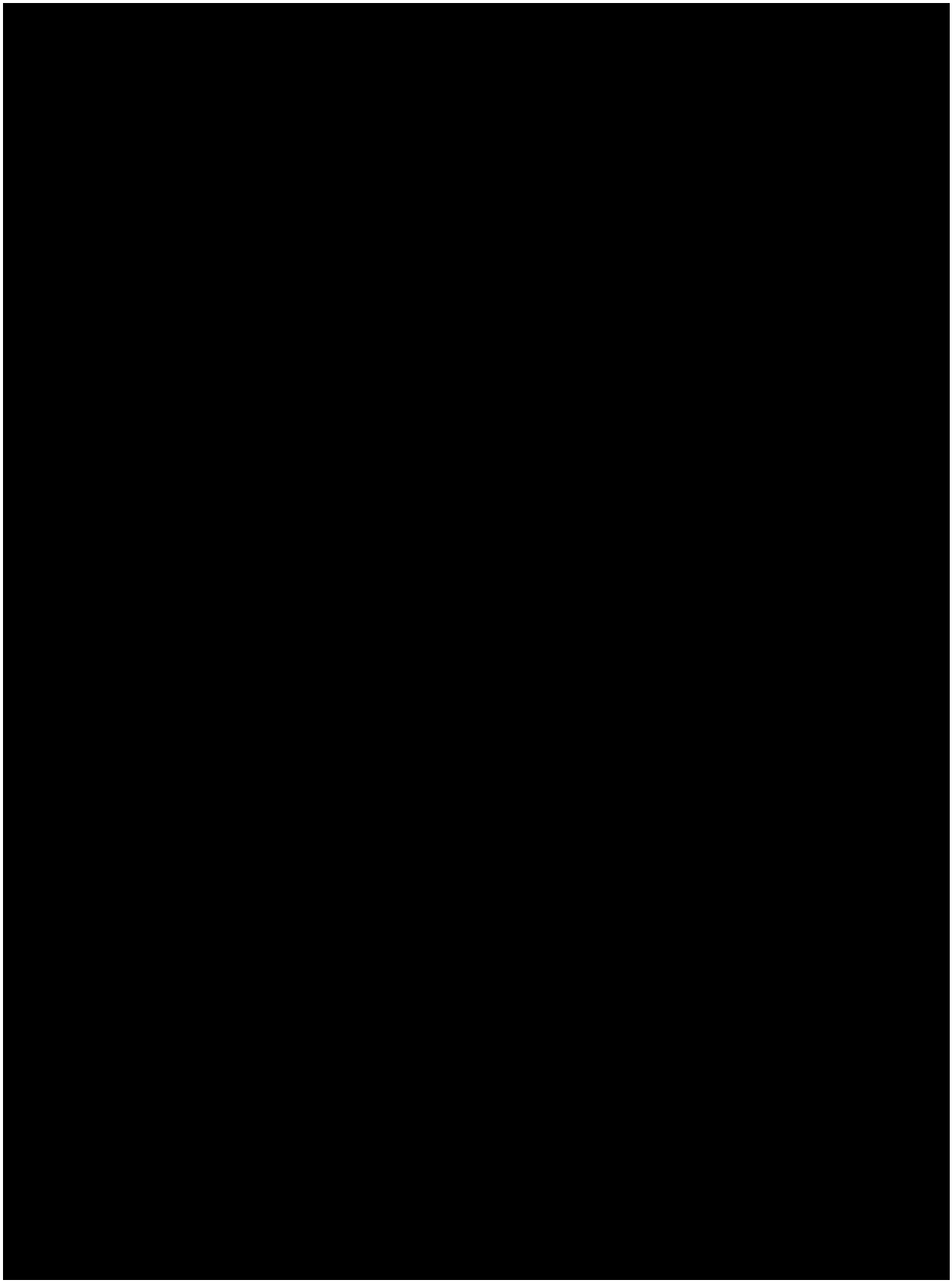
6. Proposed mitigation of impacts to the commercial and recreational fishing industry

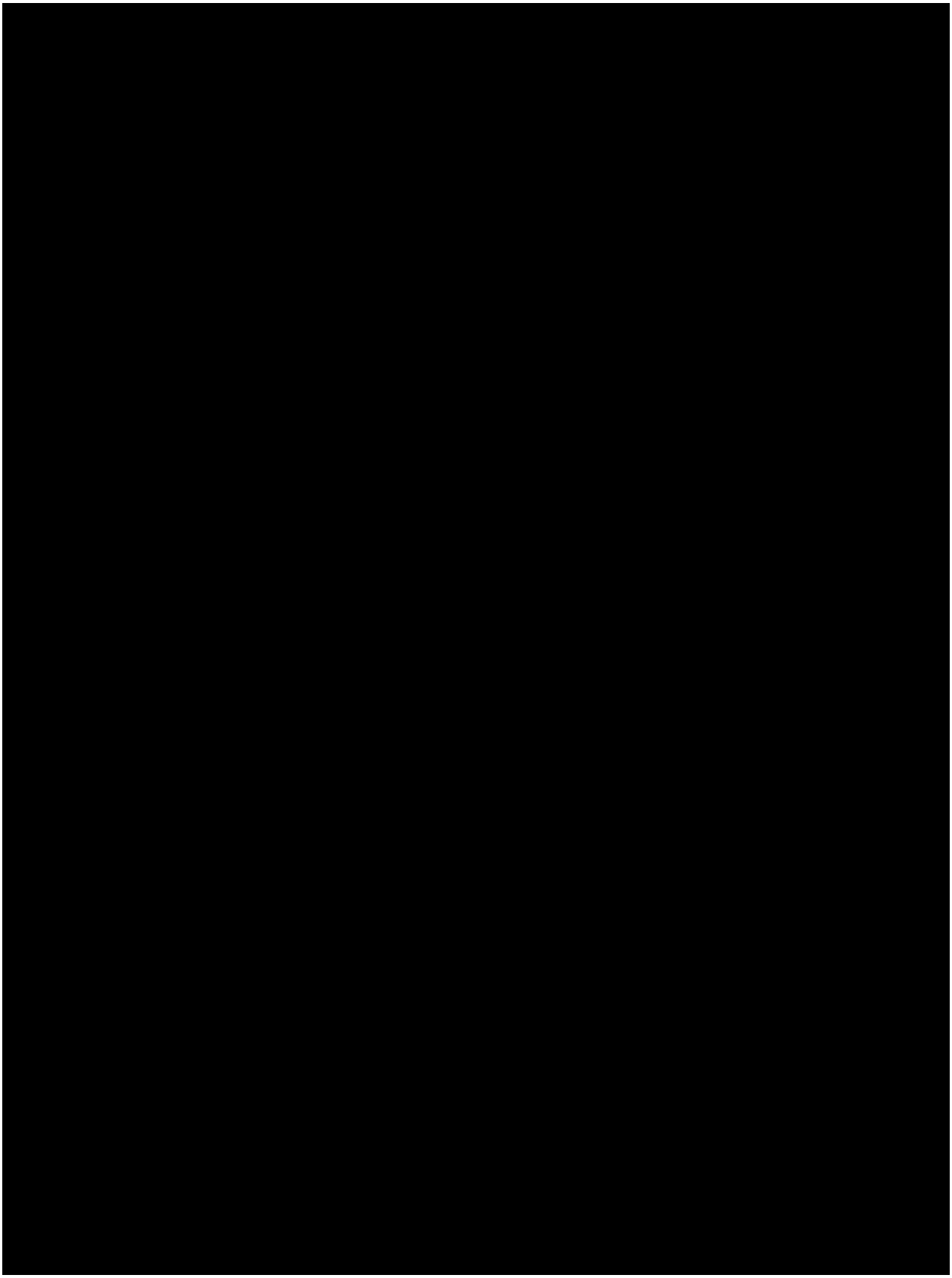
6.1. Potential impacts/risks and mitigation measures by project stage

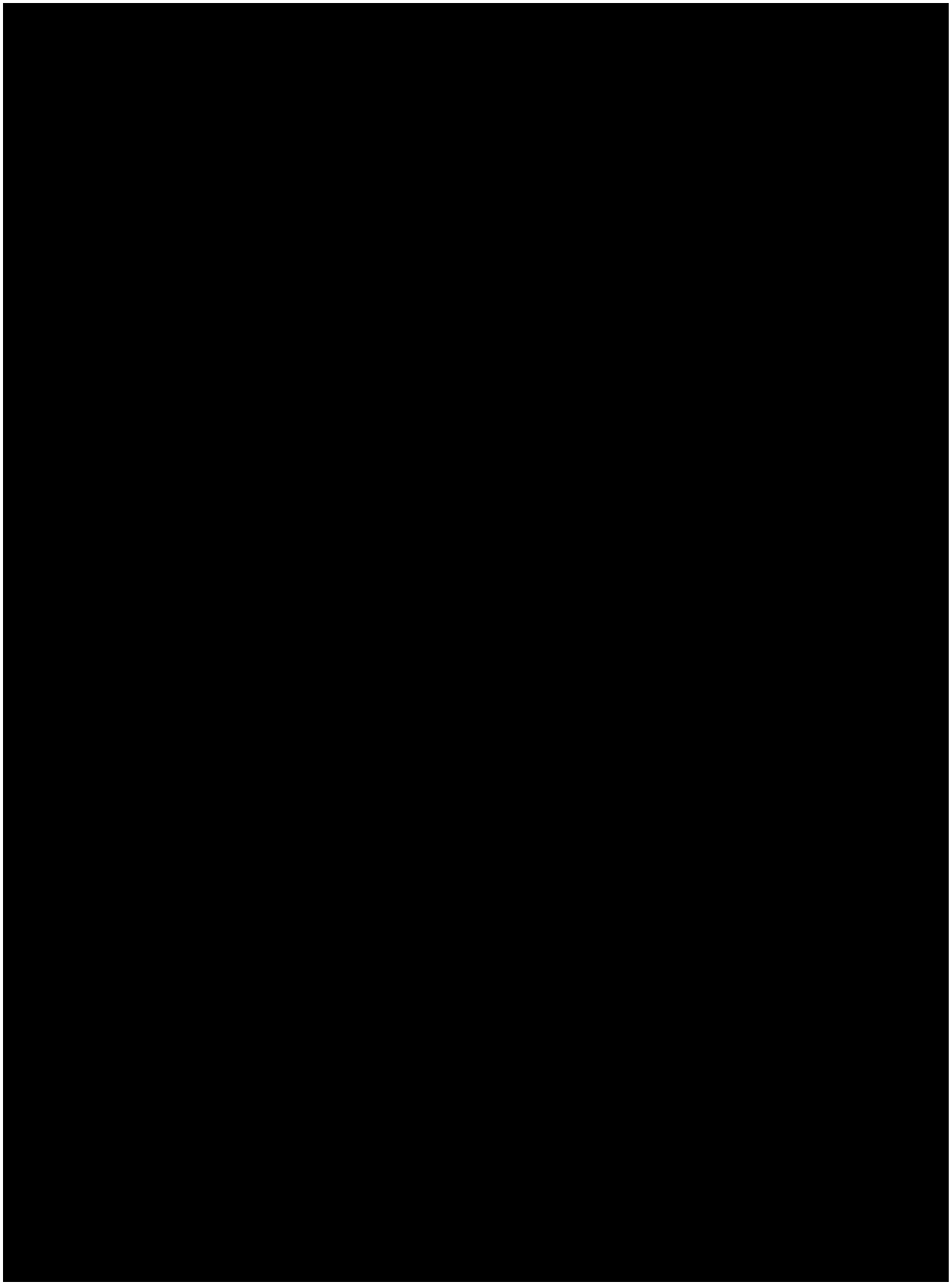
The table below should list the potential impacts and risks to recreational and commercial fisheries and proposed mitigation measures. To this end, this section should describe of how the potential adverse impacts of infrastructure design elements (e.g., turbine spacing and layout, turbine foundation type, cable burial and protection methods, and cable crossing designs) on fishing in the proposed Project area will be considered in mitigating impacts. The mitigation measures should also demonstrate that the Project area and proposed site design allows for reasonable flexibility in the site layout (e.g., orientation of turbine lines, distance between turbines, and navigation areas) to accommodate changes that may be needed in the future. The section should also describe the planned operational protocol to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts to fisheries during Project construction and operation phases, such as vessel transit routes, designation and monitoring of safety zones, gear monitoring and retrieval, and communication with fishing vessels and resource managers.

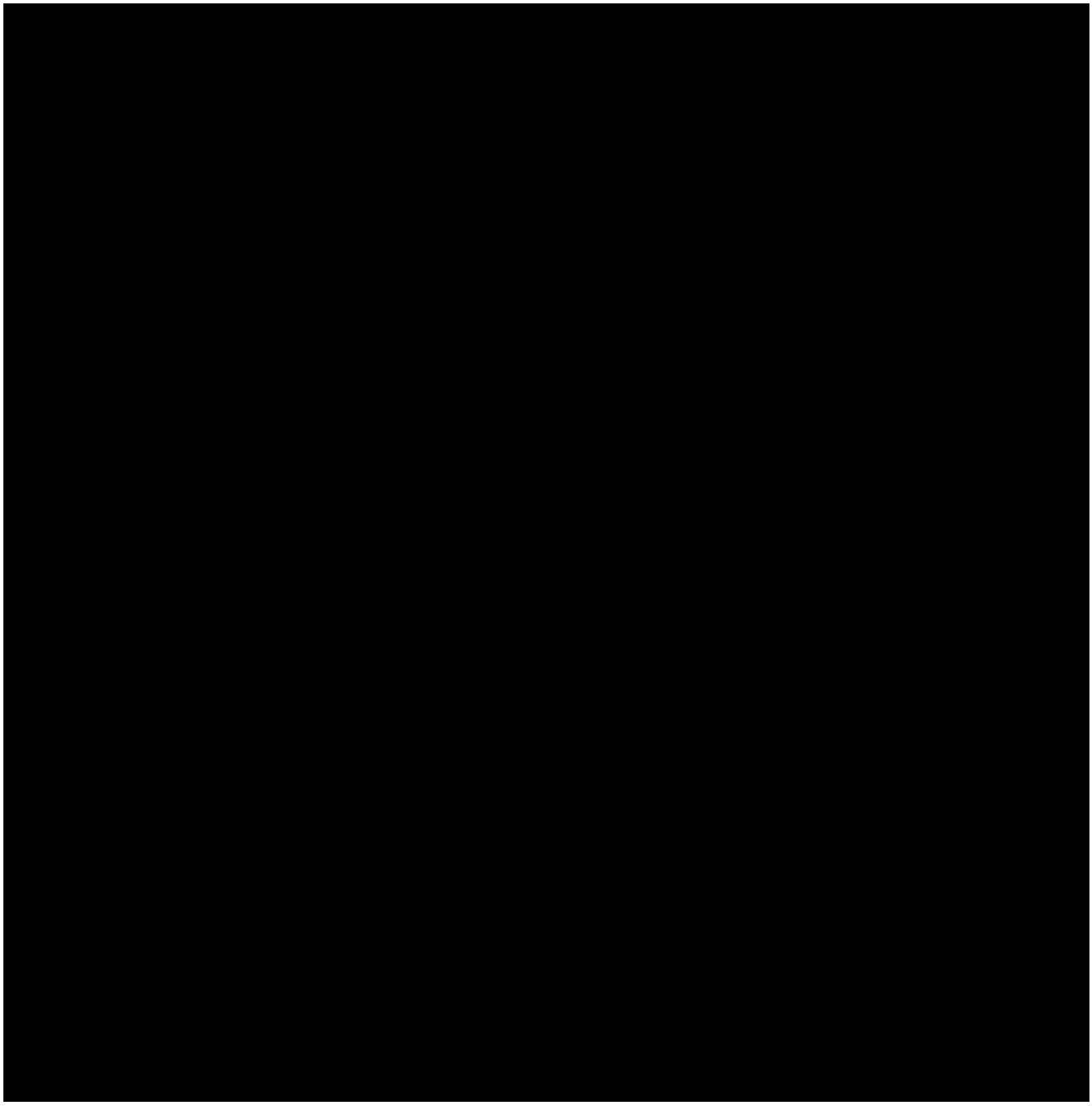
[redacted]







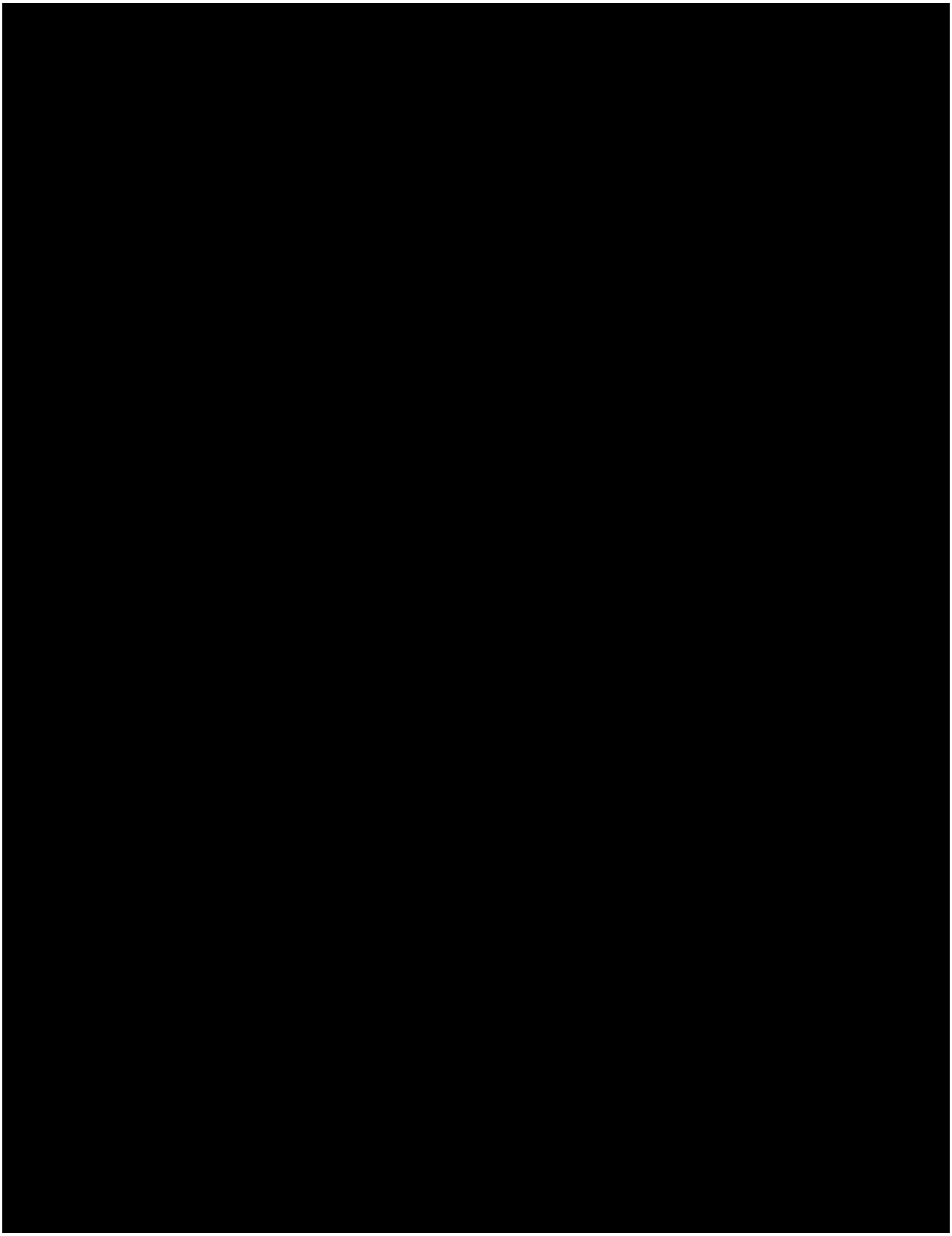


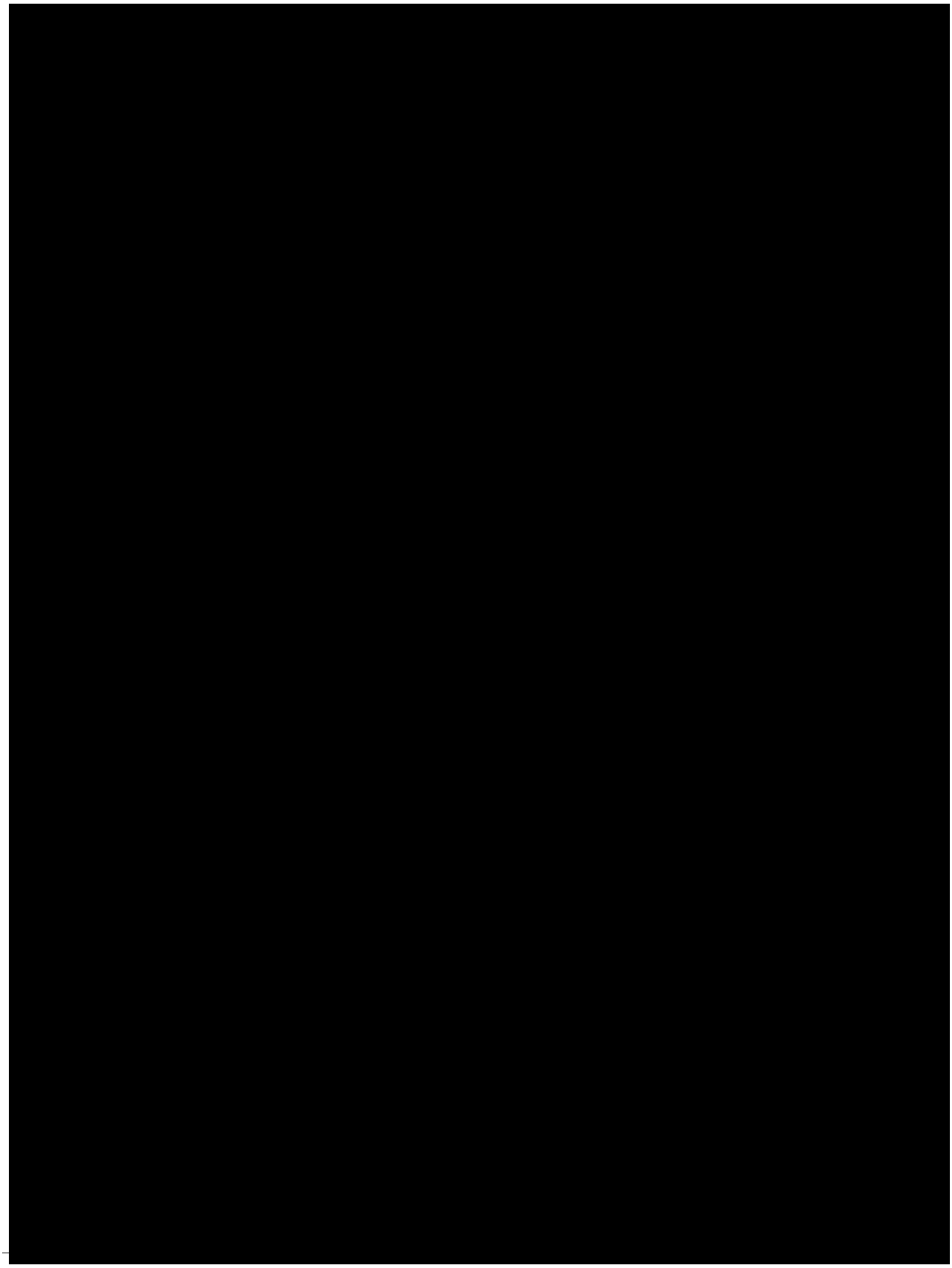


6.1.1. General approach to avoiding and mitigating fishing gear loss

This section should describe how potential loss of fishing gear due to snags on turbine structures, associated cables or cable mattresses, or related structures installed or deployed as a result of offshore wind energy development, will be minimized.

- Community Offshore Wind will endeavor to bury export cables to sufficient depth to minimize exposure risk. If the "appropriate depth" cannot be reached, we will add protective materials over the cable which, to the extent practicable, also allows for fishing to occur.





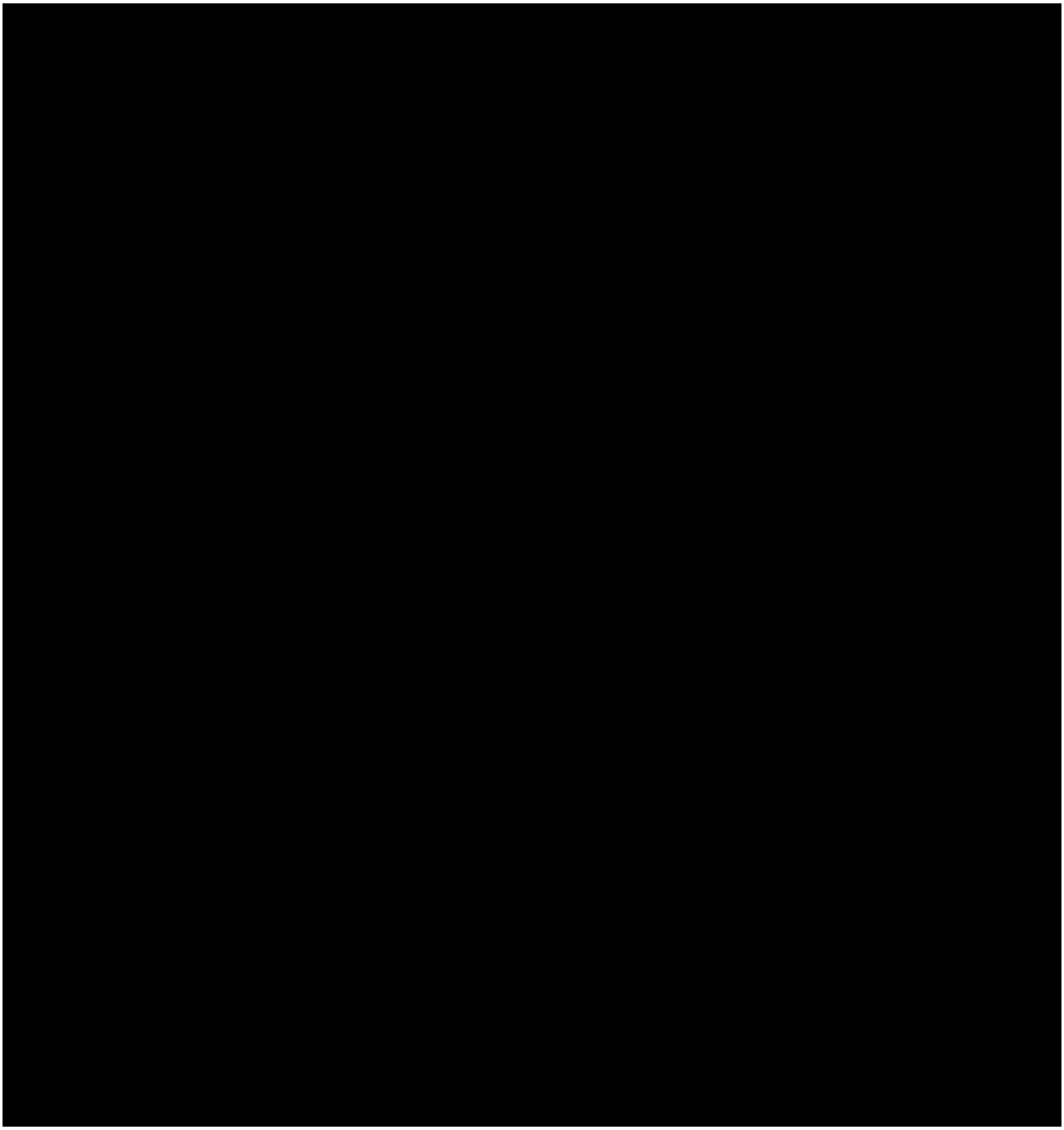
[redacted]

6.1.2. Processing claims for lost fishing gear

This section should describe how the developer will approach claims of lost gear in the event of a snag that provides for a fair and timely review and appeals of the claim and appropriate compensation of impacted parties.

- Community Offshore Wind shall work with F-TWG and the fishing community to establish the appropriate procedures in advance of the start of construction activities. When practical, the procedures shall be standardized across projects, fisheries, gear types, and geographic regions.
- Community Offshore Wind shall use a third-party reviewer to assess claims and appeals when practicable.
- Community Offshore Wind's approach to avoiding interactions with fixed fishing gear includes a comprehensive suite of proactive measures designed to avoid impacts to fishing gear and fishermen.
- In the event of a gear interaction, Community Offshore Wind has a clear process for gear loss claims. Our gear loss claim form is available to fishermen on our website, and our standard procedures include our fisheries liaisons being available to help affected fishermen with the completion of their gear loss claim applications. The gear loss claims process is summarized in the table below. The claims loss process is clearly defined and is well resourced to provide timely and fair resolutions of gear loss claims.

[redacted]



6.2. Coordination with F-TWG and other stakeholders

This section should describe how the developer will engage with stakeholder groups such as theF-TWG and other regional fishermen and shipping and navigation to determine Project layouts that address stakeholder concerns. Specifically, describe the key types of information and design decisions where feedback will be solicited from stakeholders.

Describe how changes to environmental resources will be quantified using statistically sound

methods.

- Upon request, Community Offshore Wind will provide a detailed, step-by-step breakdown of the process used to create the Project layout. Community Offshore Wind will engage with the F-TWG, regional fishermen and other maritime stakeholders such as maritime experts, consultants, and marine safety committees to refine Project layouts that aim to minimize impacts on existing fishing practices and facilitate access to traditional fishing grounds.
- Community Offshore Wind shall work with fishermen and other stakeholders through the developer's dedicated fisheries staff to help address key concerns such as navigation, vessel access, and safety.
- [redacted]
- Community Offshore Wind has also discussed the need to understand recreational transits through the Lease Area (and adjacent leases) with local leaders in the recreational fishing

industry. The Project plans to reach out to the adjacent developers to explore conducting a recreational fishing transit study. [redacted]

- Coordinated or individual studies of commercial and recreational fishing vessel movements associated with transits and fishing activity will be incorporated into the Project's planning process and will be vetted with commercial and recreational fisheries participants through the iterative development of the Project layout. Community Offshore Wind begins with a layout informed by input on commercial fisheries towing practices in the area [redacted] and will continue to evaluate additional fisheries vessel data and input as the Project layout is matured throughout the planning and regulatory review process.
- Community Offshore Wind will seek input from the fishing industry, including F-TWG, on the development of its marking, lighting, and AIS plans to promote safe fishing and transiting of the Lease Area.
- [redacted]

7. Considerations for subsea cables

7.1. Mitigation strategies for subsea and overland cables

This section should describe any additional fish and fisheries mitigation strategies for proposed subsea cable routes that support the offshore wind project.

- Community Offshore Wind's approach to cable design, planning, and burial are important elements of our overall approach to fisheries impact avoidance and mitigation. [redacted]
- [redacted]
- Community Offshore Wind will also consider the relative spatial intensity of commercial fishing effort in its evaluation of potential export cable corridor routes to reduce risks of interactions with bottom-tending dredge fisheries.
- Community Offshore Wind will take cable crossings into consideration in the cable planning process and will avoid crossings in areas of high fishing intensity to the extent practicable.
- [redacted]
- Community Offshore Wind's fisheries team has proactively engaged subsea cable operators in the area and the North Atlantic Submarine Cable Association (NASCA) to establish points of contact and dialogue with cable owners and operators. [redacted]

[redacted]

8. Project decommissioning

8.1. Potential impacts based on available information and experience

This section should describe potential impacts to benthic/fisheries and the fishing industry from decommissioning the project, based on available information and relevant experience (if any).

- Community Offshore Wind's waste handling processes during decommissioning shall focus on reuse orrecycling, with disposal as the last option.
- Community Offshore Wind shall collaborate with regulatory authorities and key fisheries stakeholder groups to better understand the effects and potential impacts associated with decommissioning.
- [redacted]

8.2. Approach for developing plan and coordination with stakeholders

This section should describe how a decommissioning plan will be developed to identify and mitigate potential impacts, including coordination with fisheries stakeholders, and any elementsof its contemplated decommissioning plan that can be identified at this stage.

- Community Offshore Wind shall decommission the Project in accordance with all necessary laws andregulations and generate a detailed Project-specific decommissioning plan.
- Community Offshore Wind shall seek input on the detailed Project-specific decommissioning planfrom regulatory agencies, fisheries and marine stakeholders, and local communities.
- Community Offshore Wind shall use "lessons learned" from the construction and operation activities andapply them when appropriate to the decommissioning plan.
- Community Offshore Wind [redacted]
- Community Offshore Wind will conduct extensive stakeholder engagement with the fisheries that operate in the project area and fisheries groups, including F-TWG, recreational fisheries, environmental NGOs, and regional science entities, including ROSA and the Northeast Fisheries Science Center as it develops and evolves its decommissioning plan.
- Community Offshore Wind's decommissioning plan will draw upon extensive stakeholder outreach and RWE's extensive experience with decommissioning to develop a plan that will achieve a socially and environmentally responsible decommissioning at the end of the Project. High level decommissioning plan considerations are summarized in the table below.

[redacted]

9. Fisheries compensation plan

9.1. Consideration of compensation plan

This section should describe how it will determine instances where all reasonable attempts to avoid and minimize Project impacts, or restoration to predevelopment conditions are not feasible and some type offisheries compensation plan is warranted.

- At a minimum, Community Offshore Wind will follow any and all guidance being developed as part of BOEMS's 2022 Fisheries Mitigation Guidance Process: https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/ reducing-or-avoiding-impacts-offshore-wind-energy-fisheries,provided that to the extent aspects of such guidance are memorialized in Community Offshore Wind's selected project COP Approval.
- Community Offshore Wind's approach to avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating impacts to fisheries is both proactive and comprehensive. Through fisheries-informed adjustments and purposeful engineering, the Project is working proactively to accommodate the commercial fisheries that have historically operated in the Lease Area. [redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]
- Community Offshore Wind and RWE have been closely involved throughout the development of BOEM's fisheries mitigation/compensation guidelines, both directly and indirectly through our active participation in the ACP Fisheries Subcommittee. The Project is also an active participant in the Atlantic States' initiative, in coordination with SIOW, to develop a regional fisheries claims fund administrator to handle fisheries claims. We support a regional approach to fisheries compensation and believe it will bring needed consistency, certainty, and transparency to the compensation process on the Atlantic Coast.
- The overall approach to fisheries compensation expressed in the Atlantic States' RFI is a claims-based process. [redacted]

[redacted]

9.2. Approach to developing compensation plan

9.2.1. Coordination with stakeholders

This section should describe how a fisheries compensation plan was or will be developed; how the developer will coordinate with the F-TWG and other entities in the design or review of the fisheries compensation plan.

- Community Offshore Wind will work as needed to evolve the guidance being developed as part of BOEM's 2022 Draft Fisheries Mitigation Guidance: https://reducing-or-avoiding-impacts-offshore-wind-energy-fisheries, provided that to the extent aspects of such guidance are memorialized in Community Offshore Wind's selected project COP Approval.
- Community Offshore Wind will engage and communicate feedback, as appropriate, in the design and development phase of the regional fisheries compensation fund effort currently led by 11 East Coast States. https://offshorewindpower.org/fisheries-mitigation-project
- Our flagship fisheries mitigation strategies were informed by early stakeholder engagement with commercial and recreational fishermen as well as other relevant stakeholders including environmental NGOs, researchers, and regulators.
- [redacted]
- Community Offshore Wind's fishery compensation plan will comply with BOEM's final guidance on Fisheries Mitigation and Compensation, which is expected in 2024.
- Community Offshore Wind is committed to funds availability consistent with BOEM's guidelines for fisheries compensation.

- Community Offshore Wind has developed a Fisheries Mitigation Plan that is the result of extensive proactive engagement with the fishing industry. [redacted]
- Community Offshore Wind plans to develop its fisheries compensation plan in consultation with the fishing industry, including the F-TWG, and the states in a manner consistent with the BOEM guidelines and the resulting process identified through the Atlantic coastal states' initiative to create a third-party claims administrator. The Project is committed to playing an active and constructive role in the process as the states work to establish the claims administrator and associated governance mechanisms.

9.2.2. Third-party administration

This section should describe how the compensation plan will be administered by an nongovernmental third-party to provide reasonable and fair compensation for impacts thatcannot be sufficiently addressed through other means.

- Community Offshore Wind shall work with the state, federal, and fishing industry members to assess the most appropriate entity for administration and disbursement of fisheries mitigation funds; this will include evaluating the potential to utilize the identified administrator from the 11 State led effort to design and develop a regional fisheries compensation fund.
- [redacted]
- Our team is actively consulting with the primary commercial fisheries in our Lease Area to discuss fisheries mitigation and compensation. [redacted]

[redacted]

- Our team has many decades of experience with fisheries governance, through the state and federal fisheries management process, and we have been studying other examples of industry-to-industry models, [redacted]

10. Additional considerations

10.1. Additional mitigation strategies and FMP refinement

This section should describe any additional mitigation strategies not otherwise described herein that would improve the Plan and reduce impacts on the fishing community. In addition, describe how the FMP will be updated and refined based on additional information and stakeholder feedback.

- Community Offshore Wind will support collaborative research on potential mitigation strategies, with other developers, agencies, and stakeholders.
- Community Offshore Wind will implement a Navigational Enhancement Plan that is designed with the engagement from the F-TWG, fisheries organizations, and regulatory authorities.
- To further promote long-term adaptation and fishing within the Lease Area, Community Offshore Wind is committed to work with the fishing industry to develop best practices and protocols for safe fishing practices and navigation within the array. The Project will develop these protocols through direct engagement with commercial and recreational fishermen and divers who fish in or transit the lease. [redacted]
- Community Offshore Wind is also aware that the impacts of the offshore wind industry cannot be assessed as standalone projects, which is why we are collaborating with other offshore wind developers, researchers, fisheries participants, and agencies to promote research, standardization, and to assess the cumulative impact of offshore wind development.

10.2. Process for updating the FMP

This section should describe how feedback from environmental stakeholders, F-TWG, and other agencies and working groups will be incorporated and updated in the FMP.

- Community Offshore Wind will update the FMP to reflect the results of iterative exchanges withmembers of the F-TWG, E-TWG, and other relevant stakeholders.
- Community Offshore Wind will engage with the F-TWG and fisheries organizations and use feedback in these discussions to evolve the FMP.
- Community Offshore Wind will update the FMP in a timely manner that reflects changes made based on key regulatory Project deliverable dates.
- Community Offshore Wind's FMP begins as a plan informed by a combination of intensive stakeholder engagement, established best practices, and emerging initiatives within the fisheries and fisheries management community. As the Project moves forward through the regulatory approval process and into construction, operations, and decommissioning phases, the FMP will continue to be responsive to stakeholder input, fisheries engagement, best practices, and best available science. The FMP, and how mitigation measures are applied, will be adaptive, and will be informed by established feedback mechanisms.
- The Project will establish feedback mechanisms for the FMP, including engagements with F-TWG, E-TWG, direct engagement with fisheries, engagement with the regional third-party fund administrator when established, state and federal fisheries management entities, and regional science organizations such as ROSA.
- Prioritization of allocation to specific elements of the FMP will also be directly informed through engagement with the fisheries. [redacted]
- As offshore wind development accelerates in the U.S. and globally, we anticipate a significant expansion in fisheries research and continued improvements to fisheries and environmental mitigation strategies. On an annual basis, the Project will also review the FMP relative to emerging best practices, stakeholder feedback, and the results of our environmental monitoring plan to determine if adjustments to the FMP are indicated.

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Attachment 8.1-1

Fisheries Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Public Version

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8.1-1 Fisheries Stakeholder Engagement Summary

This document contains confidential information and is therefore excluded from this public version.

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Attachment 8.1-2

Fisheries MOUs and Letters of Support

Public Version

COMMUNITY offshore wind
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8.1-2 Fisheries MOUs and Letters of Support

This document contains confidential information and is therefore excluded from this public version.

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Attachment 8.1-3

Maps of commercial and recreational fishing areas in the Mid-Atlantic region

Public Version

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Attachment 8.1-3

Introduction

These maps were prepared using the Northeast Ocea Data Portal (https://www.northeastoceandata.org/) and the Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal (https://portal.midatlanticocean.org/).

The fishing activity datasets broadly characterize the density of commercial and for-hire recreational fishing activity for major fisheries in the northeastern U.S. Commercial activity is based on fishing vessels with Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) from 2015-2016. These are the most recent years available on the data portal website that are filtered for vessel speed. For-hire recreational activity is based on fishing vessels required to submit federal Vessel Trip Reports (VTRs). Fishing activity changes annually and these figures only represent a snapshot of fishing location and intensity. These figures are only one source of information used to help identify the primary fisheries that operate within and near the project area, lease area 0539. In the following maps, lease area 0539, Community Offshore Wind, is shown in purple.

Commercial fishing activity

Description of the commercial fishing datasets: the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS or NOAA Fisheries) describes VMS as a satellite surveillance system primarily used to monitor the location and movement of commercial fishing vessels in the U.S. These datasets were created using VMS position records for vessels travelling below a certain speed, usually 4-5 knots, which was the speed threshold used to identify vessels engaged in fishing rather than transit activity. This includes vessels in ports despite little to no fishing activity at those locations. Raw VMS data from NMFS were processed into geospatial point products and analyzed to create density grids for select fisheries. The point data were then filtered to remove individual vessel positions which did not meet the "Rule of Three" criteria, required by NMFS due to data confidentiality. More information on this confidentiality requirement, as well as the data sources and methods is available on the Northeast Data Portal website. Data values are standardized and are best interpreted qualitatively. An absence of data does not always indicate an absence of fishing activity.

These maps were created using the Northeast Data Portal on December 22, 2022.

Recreational fishing activity

Description of the recreational fishing dataset: these maps represent visitation frequency locations of federally-permitted party/charter vessels. They were developed by linking Federal Vessel Trip Report (VTR) data to vessel permit data. VTR data include trip date, number of crew on board, and trip locations, while the vessel permit data includes a vessel's "principal port" as well as other variables describing the vessel itself (e.g. length, horsepower, and age). Maps were created by using trip location point data as input to create density polygons representing visitation frequency ("fisherdays"). The results can be interpreted as maps of "community presence." All data were aggregated to the "community" level, and none of the resultant maps represent a "hot spot" of any individual party/charter vessel. For additional information that cannot be displayed in the static maps shown here, the Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal allows users to query the online interactive map display at

any single location to identify the various port communities that have recorded a significant level of activity at that location.

Users may also click on a port to learn how many total trips, trips as percentage of the regional total, total fisherdays, and fisherdays as percentage of regional total were recorded for that location. This map was created using the Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal on May 26, 2023.

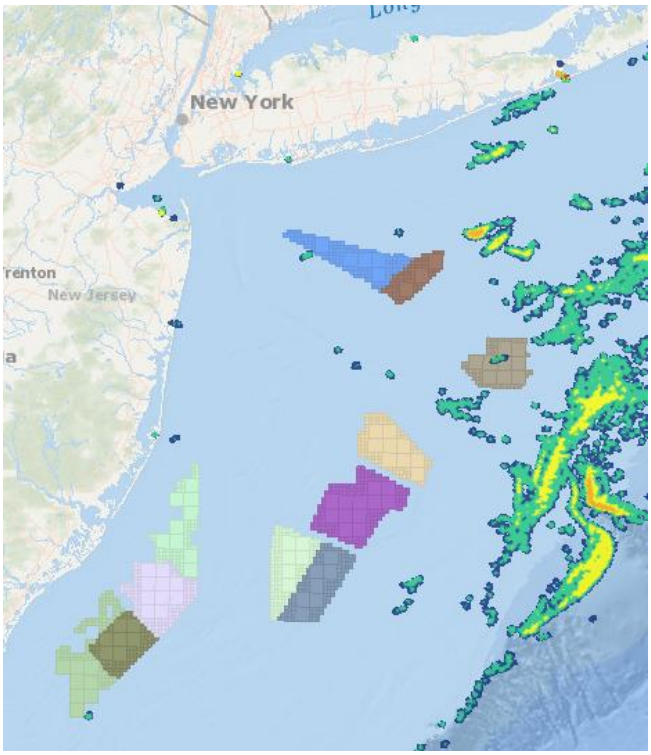

Figure 1 –2015-2016 ***commercial multispecies*** *fishing activity (VMS data <4knots) in New York Bight region. Community Offshore Wind, lease area 0539 is shown in purple.*

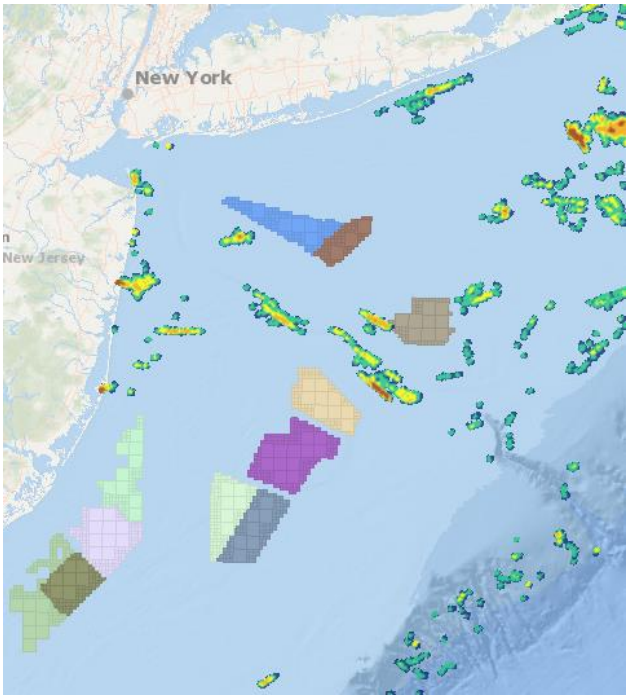

Figure 2 –2015-2016 ***commercial monkfish*** *fishing activity (VMS data <4knots) in New York Bight region. Community Offshore Wind, lease area 0539 is shown in purple.*

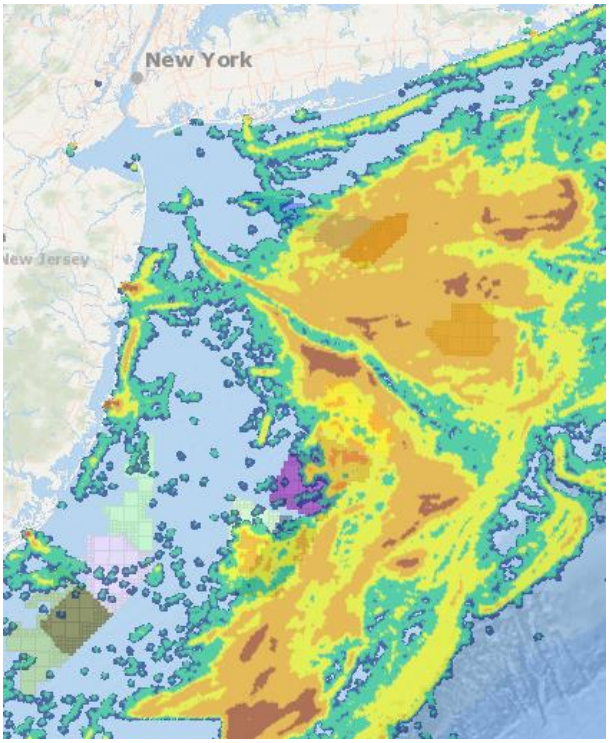

Figure 3 –2015-2016 ***commercial sea scallop*** *fishing activity (VMS data <4knots) in New York Bight region. Community Offshore Wind, lease area 0539 is shown in purple.*

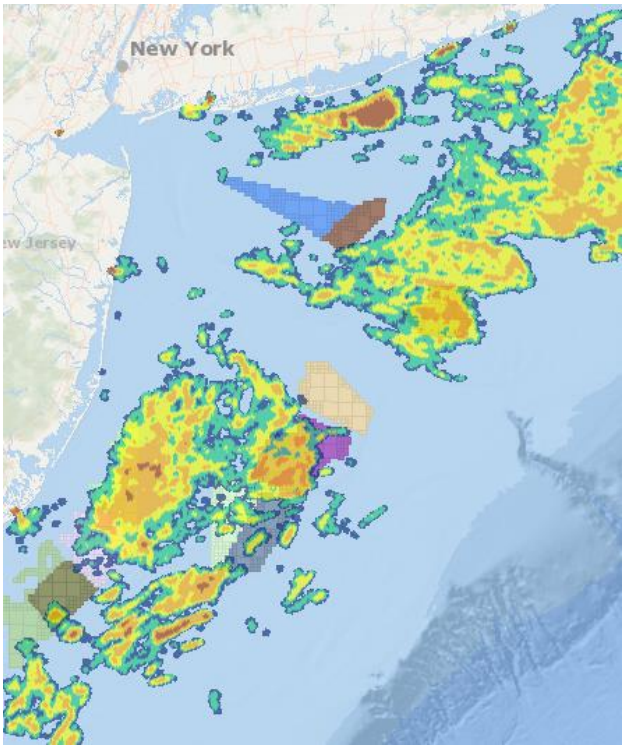

Figure 4 –2015-2016 ***commercial surf clam/ocean quahog*** *fishing activity (VMS data <4knots) in New York Bight region. Community Offshore Wind, lease area 0539 is shown in purple.*

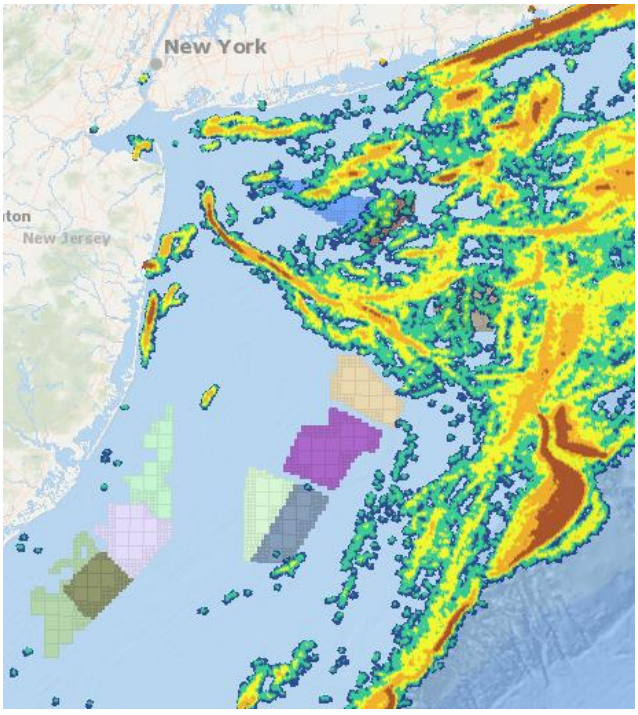

Figure 5 –2015-2016 ***commercial pelagics (herring, mackerel, and squid)*** *fishing activity (VMS data <4knots) in New York Bight region. Community Offshore Wind, lease area 0539 is shown in purple.*

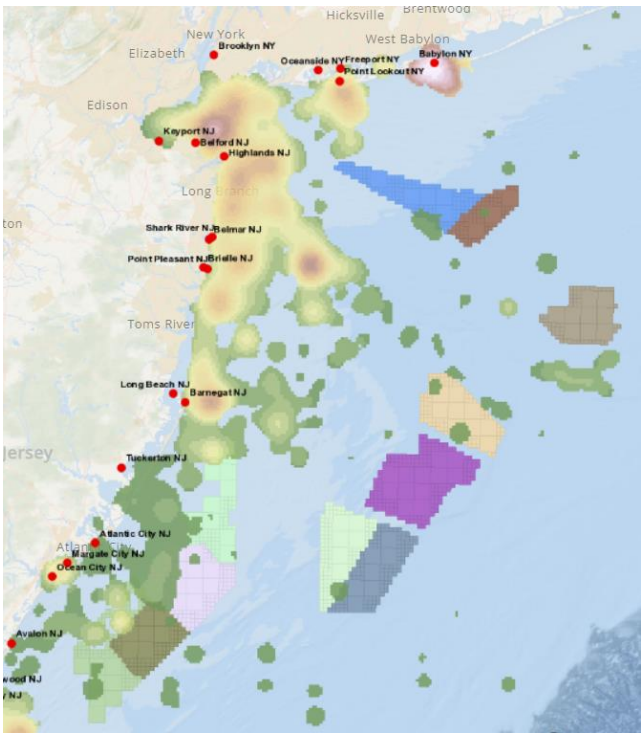

Figure 6 – 2015-2016 ***recreational party/charter*** *vessel fishing activity in the New York Bight region. Community Offshore Wind, lease area 0539 is shown in purple.*