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BOEM

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Developing renewable energy as part of the nation's energy portfolio



BOEM Renewable Energy Program Manager
Maureen A. Bornholdt

Managing all sources of offshore energy responsibly is what brought our bureau into focus as a leading federal agency on renewable energy. The Energy Policy Act of 2005 gave BOEM the authority to regulate renewable energy development on the OCS. In 2010, President Obama and Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar announced the Smart from the Start initiative and the final regulatory framework to govern the OCS renewable energy program.

Three main sources of renewable energy development are anticipated on the OCS: offshore wind, ocean wave, and ocean current energy. BOEM issued the first commercial lease approving the Cape Wind Energy project in 2010. In April 2011, BOEM published an Environmental Assessment (EA) and approved Cape Wind's Construction and Operation Plan, leading to eventual construction and development of the project. The project will be built in federal waters offshore Massachusetts, where the winds could potentially provide 75 percent of the electricity needed to power Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket Island.

This past February, we announced several significant milestones for renewable energy: the availability of an EA and a finding of no significant impact for issuing renewable energy leases in Wind Energy Areas on the OCS offshore New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia.

BOEM collaborates with coastal states using intergovernmental task forces to coordinate offshore renewable energy development. The task forces include federal and state agencies, local governments and Tribes to ensure that stakeholder concerns are addressed during initial planning stages, promoting responsible development with minimal impacts.

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As BOEM continues to plan for Atlantic wind leasing and development, we will ensure that interested and affected parties have the opportunity to provide meaningful input to the process. Recently, more than 150 experts gathered at the Department of the Interior for a two-day workshop set up to exchange information and build relationships in support of offshore renewable energy. BOEM is working with all stakeholders and our intergovernmental task forces to identify appropriate areas for leasing and to get the best ideas for using this technology. Public input is sought throughout the leasing process, and the information and comments received help BOEM consider all potential impacts when making leasing decisions. As planning for domestic offshore renewable energy continues, we are pleased to hear your insights.



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-- Maureen A. Bornholdt

Ms. Bornholdt has more than 32 years of experience with the Department of the Interior.

Ocean Research

Updates on BOEM national and international activities



No fish story

Scientists from across the world gather to discuss impacts of noise

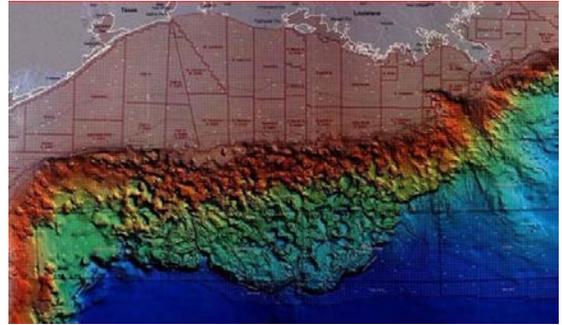
on fish

In late March, more than 150 scientists from nine countries including the United States, Australia, Canada, Spain and the United Kingdom met in San Diego, CA, to discuss our current understanding of the effects of noise in the marine environment on fish and invertebrates. BOEM recognizes that exploration and development of the nation's offshore environment may cause an increase in underwater noise. The purpose of this workshop was to prioritize species of particular concern, determine reasonable research goals, and to ascertain the means to reduce and mitigate anthropogenic noise.

Presentations by the leading experts led to productive interdisciplinary discussions in both small and large breakout group sessions. Recommendations were made about priority species and habitats, focusing on the Atlantic Ocean and the Arctic. In addition, participants learned about the latest methods for monitoring and mitigation such as noise abatement technology. Some of the identified knowledge gaps of noise impacts included the behavioral response of fish in the marine environment, and the hearing range of invertebrates. A report will be available later this year which will provide details on the results of the workshop. Currently, additional information about the workshop and a synthesis of existing knowledge may be found at: <http://www.boemsoundworkshop.com>.

Symposium Offers an In-Depth Look at Deep Corals in the Gulf

Greg Boland, a biological oceanographer with the Division of Environmental Sciences, presented a keynote address at the 5th International Symposium on Deep-Sea Corals in Amsterdam, Netherlands, April 4, 2012. His talk, *Deep-Sea Corals and the Oil and Gas Industry in the Gulf of Mexico: an Adaptive Approach to Applied Studies and*



Gulf of Mexico shelf

Management, led the day's session on Policy, Management and Conservation. This is the 5th international symposium on deep-sea corals that is held every three to four years and highlights recent achievements in the field of unique deepwater coral ecosystems. It was attended by leading scientists, resource managers, educators and students, and included presentations of work derived from studies funded by BOEM.

BOEM co-sponsored the deep-sea coral symposium. BOEM's Environmental Studies Program has been involved in deepwater coral research for more than 10 years, leading to a history of successful adaptive management of these sensitive habitats using applied science derived from the bureau's funding. The research has led to coordination of a series of large interagency studies, and the application of study results to regulatory policy. The symposium provided a unique opportunity to obtain results of the most recent research in this habitat area of concern, and also demonstrated BOEM's dedication to maintaining its prominent position in the science and research of deep-sea corals. Additional information on the symposium is available at: <http://www.deepseacoral.nl>

About BOEM

As part of the Department of the Interior, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) manages the exploration and development of the nation's offshore energy and mineral resources. The bureau seeks to balance economic development, energy independence, and environmental protection through responsible management of offshore conventional and renewable energy development based on the best available science.

For more information, please visit: www.BOEM.gov

