



## **FY 2022 Tribal Consultation Report**

Prepared by Members of the BOEM Tribal Working Group: Michael Haller, Doug Jones, David Ball, and Liz Oliver. Edited with the assistance of Jeff Brooks and Marissa Knodel.

Date Prepared: December 28, 2022

Approving Official: Hillary Renick, BOEM Tribal Liaison Officer.



## 2022 Department of Interior Tribal Consultation Annual Report

This Annual Report summarizes the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's (BOEM) Tribal consultations and related activities during Fiscal Year (FY) 2022. BOEM consults and coordinates with federally recognized Indian Tribes, Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) corporations, and Alaska Native villages that have a historical and/or cultural connection to the proposed action locations. BOEM consults with Tribal nations through informal meetings, government-to-government consultation, or as required by statute, depending on the scope, scale, and significance of the proposed undertaking. For complex, controversial, or large-scale actions, face-to-face government-to-government Tribal consultations are most appropriate.

### 1. Summarize and list all Consultation topics.

Topics of consultation in FY 2022 included renewable energy activities in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Gulf of Mexico; conventional energy activities in the Gulf of Mexico and Alaska; carbon sequestration; marine minerals activities; and environmental studies.

#### Renewable Energy

##### *Atlantic*

BOEM invited consultation on the following offshore wind projects:

- Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind Project [Atlantic Shores | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management \(boem.gov\)](#)
- Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind (CVOW) Project [Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind Project \(CVOW\) | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management \(boem.gov\)](#)
- Kitty Hawk Offshore Wind Project <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/kitty-hawk-north-wind-project>
- Mayflower Wind Offshore Wind Project <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/mayflower-wind>
- New England Wind Offshore Wind Project (formerly Vineyard Wind South) <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/new-england-wind-formerly-vineyard-wind-south>
- Revolution Wind Offshore Wind Project [Revolution Wind | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management \(boem.gov\)](#)
- South Fork Offshore Wind Project [South Fork | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management \(boem.gov\)](#)
- Sunrise Wind Offshore Wind Project [Sunrise Wind Activities | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management \(boem.gov\)](#)
- US Wind Offshore Wind Project [US Wind | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management \(boem.gov\)](#)
- Vineyard Wind 1 Offshore Wind Project [Vineyard Wind 1 | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management \(boem.gov\)](#)

BOEM invited 11 federally recognized Tribes to be cooperating agencies for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) for the New York Bight offshore wind leases off the coasts of New York and New Jersey. The PEIS will examine six leases on a programmatic level, and will identify and analyze potential programmatic avoidance, minimization, mitigation, and monitoring measures that BOEM may require as conditions of approval for each construction and operation plan.

The Office of Renewable Energy Programs invited North Atlantic Tribes to the Gulf of Maine Intergovernmental Task Force Meeting in May 2022 to discuss the commercial planning process for wind energy leasing on the U.S. OCS in the Gulf of Maine. The meeting included discussion of the framework approach for the first step in the commercial planning process, a Request for Interest, stakeholder engagement for the commercial planning process, and the State of Maine's research lease application. The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and the Shinnecock Indian Nation attended the meeting.

BOEM continued renewable energy activities on the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) off the U.S. Central Atlantic coasts of Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina. BOEM held one Tribal information meeting in December 2021 and invited Tribes to participate in the Central Atlantic Intergovernmental Task Force Meeting in February 2022. The Chickahominy Indian Tribe - Eastern Division, Delaware Nation, Delaware Tribe of Indians, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Nansemond Indian Nation, and Shinnecock Indian Nation attended the December meeting and the Pamunkey Indian Tribe attended both meetings. These meetings predated the April 2022 publications of a call for information and nominations to assess commercial interest in, and obtain public input on, potential wind energy leasing activities on the U.S. OCS offshore the U.S. Central Atlantic coast. BOEM will continue to engage with Tribal Nations as Wind Energy Areas (WEAs) are identified on the U.S. OCS offshore the U.S. Central Atlantic coast.

### *Gulf of Mexico*

The BOEM Gulf of Mexico Regional Office invited 11 Tribes to a government-to-government consultation to discuss multiple activities related to Gulf of Mexico offshore wind leasing and planning, including the Gulf of Mexico Call Area, development of the lease auction environmental assessment, Gulf of Mexico Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force, and potential next steps in the BOEM leasing process. BOEM held a virtual consultation meeting in January 2022, and representatives from the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, and Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana attended.

In February 2022, BOEM held a second Task Force meeting with participation from the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana, Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana, and Jena Band of Choctaw Indians. Meeting agenda topics included updates on the Gulf of Mexico Call for Information and WEAs, presentations on BOEM's leasing process, environmental review process, and marine spatial analysis to inform wind energy siting in the Gulf of Mexico, and Task Force member breakout sessions.

In July 2022, BOEM initiated consultations under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) for the Gulf of Mexico offshore wind Call Area. One Tribe, the

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, requested to be a consulting party under section 106. Also in July 2022, a formal letter signed by BOEM Director Amanda Lefton was emailed to Gulf of Mexico-affiliated Tribes to announce the availability of the Proposed Program for the 2023-2028 National OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program, and to provide instructions for submitting comments or requesting government-to-government consultation. No Tribes requested to consult.

### *Pacific*

The BOEM Pacific Region regularly engages with up to 80 federally recognized Tribes in California, Oregon, and Washington, as well as with numerous non-recognized tribes in California. Consultation efforts in FY 2022 centered on the following:

- California offshore wind energy activities, including consultation under the NEPA and NHPA section 106 for the Humboldt and Morro Bay WEAs, and the Proposed Sale Notice for a wind energy lease auction to issue five leases offshore California, two in the Humboldt WEA and three in the Morro Bay WEA.
- Oregon offshore wind Call Area development, including consultation on development of a Programmatic Agreement for NHPA section 106 activities related to wind energy development offshore Oregon.
- Unsolicited lease requests for wind energy development offshore Washington.
- Draft fisheries mitigation guidance for offshore wind development

### **Carbon Sequestration**

In March 2022, an email was sent to provide initial information on the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act authority assigned to BOEM to develop regulations related to carbon capture and sequestration. Tribes were asked to provide early feedback and indicate their interest in additional information exchange or formal consultations. No Tribes requested consultation.

### **Conventional Energy**

During FY 2022, BOEM invited consultation with federally recognized Tribes and ANCSA corporations in the Gulf of Mexico, Pacific, and Alaska regional offices regarding development of the 2023-2028 National OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Proposed Program and the accompanying Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Invitations to consult were sent to Tribal Nations for Gulf of Mexico oil and gas lease sales 259 and 261, but no Tribal Nations accepted the invitation to Consult.

Cook Inlet Oil and Gas Lease Sale 258 was the primary focus of outreach and engagement for BOEM's Alaska Regional Office. BOEM reached out to the Cook Inlet and Kodiak Island Tribes, including the related village and regional ANCSA corporations, and contacted local and regional governments to ensure awareness of various activities related to the lease sale. BOEM, via emails and phone calls, regularly shared *Federal Register* notices, press releases, and website updates, and offered the opportunity to consult to each of the Tribes and ANCSA corporations to

ensure understanding of the lease sale and related permitting process. In November 2021, during a two-day Information Sharing Sessions (co-hosted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and BOEM Alaska Region) at the request of multiple Cook Inlet Tribes, BOEM discussed recent and current Cook Inlet-related activities, including Lease Sale 258.

On December 1, 2021, the BOEM Alaska Region engaged in a virtual government-to-government consultation with the Kenaitze Indian Tribe on the Kenai Peninsula regarding Lease Sale 258. The Tribe expressed their opposition to the Proposed Action and issued a resolution (Resolution No. 20212-74) stating their concern regarding impacts of potential oil spills, climate change, industrialization of offshore areas, and other factors on resources and activities important to the Tribe's cultural, social, health, and economic well-being.

The Seldovia Village Tribe, while not engaging in formal government-to-government consultation, chose to share their information through written comments expressing concerns for the Cook Inlet beluga whale and northern sea otter populations. They also identified areas in State waters and on the Federal OCS that are important to them for subsistence, commercial, and recreational fishing. In recent years, the Seldovia Tribe, the Nanwalek Tribe, the Port Graham Tribe, and the Ninilchik Tribe have been the Tribes most actively engaged in consultations and meetings with the BOEM Alaska Region.

## **Marine Minerals**

BOEM's Marine Minerals Program did not lead any NHPA section 106 or direct government-to-government consultations in the Atlantic related to marine minerals activities in FY 2022. However, BOEM participated in many facets of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)-led outreach to Tribal nations for beach nourishment and coastal restoration projects that required or could require BOEM authorization of the use of OCS sand resources. For example, BOEM entered into a new programmatic agreement with the USACE, New York District for the Atlantic Coast of New Jersey Coastal Storm Risk Management Project concerning the identification and protection of potential historic properties and other cultural resources. The USACE invited the Delaware Nation, Stockbridge Munsee, Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma, Shawnee Tribe, and Delaware Tribe of Indians to participate as concurring parties and sign the programmatic agreement. The Tribes elected to participate as consulting parties. Cultural resource investigation reports related to new project borrow areas in State and Federal waters were shared with interested Tribes for review and comment.

BOEM also participated in outreach to Tribes for beach nourishment and coastal restoration projects that could necessitate BOEM authorization. BOEM partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), who led Tribal consultations for the Texas Point National Wildlife Refuge Beach Nourishment Project. The Service reached out to six federally recognized Tribes that have expressed interests in Chambers and Jefferson Counties, and areas offshore Texas. This included the Alabama Coushatta Tribe of Texas, Alabama-Quassarte Tribal Town, Apache Tribe of Oklahoma, Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana, Tonkawa Tribe of Oklahoma, and Wichita and Affiliated Tribes.

## **Environmental Studies**

BOEM participated in the multi-year, multi-million dollar USACE-led South Atlantic Coastal Study. The final study report was published in August 2022. The USACE led, with BOEM participating, Tribal engagement, including webinars, meetings, and varied outreach, with more than 25 Tribes along the southeast Atlantic coast.

## **2. List of all the Tribes consulted.**

### **Atlantic**

BOEM invited 31 Tribal nations to consult on Atlantic activities:

- Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
- Catawba Nation
- Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma
- Chickahominy Indian Tribe
- Chickahominy Indian Tribe, Eastern Division
- Delaware Nation
- Delaware Tribe of Indians
- Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
- Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
- Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians
- Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation
- Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe
- Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida
- Mi'kmaq Nation (formerly Aroostook Band of Micmacs)
- Mohegan Tribe of Connecticut
- Monacan Indian Nation
- Nansemond Indian Nation
- Narragansett Indian Nation
- Pamunkey Indian Tribe
- Passamaquoddy Tribe of Indians, Indian Township Reservation
- Passamaquoddy Tribe of Indians, Pleasant Point Reservation
- Penobscot Indian Nation
- Rappahannock Tribe
- Seminole Nation of Oklahoma
- Seminole Tribe of Florida
- Shawnee Tribe
- Shinnecock Indian Nation of New York
- Stockbridge-Munsee Community, Band of Mohican Indians
- United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma
- Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe
- Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah)

## **Gulf of Mexico**

BOEM invited 24 Tribal nations to consult on Gulf of Mexico activities:

- Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Indians
- Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas
- Alabama-Quassarte Tribal Town
- Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
- Caddo Nation of Oklahoma
- Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma
- Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana
- Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
- Comanche Nation of Oklahoma
- Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana
- Jena Band of Choctaw Indians
- Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma
- Mescalero Apache Tribe
- Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida
- Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
- Muscogee (Creek) Nation
- Poarch Band of Creek Indians
- Seminole Nation of Oklahoma
- Seminole Tribe of Florida
- Shawnee Tribe
- Southern Ute Indian Tribe
- Thlopthlocco Tribal Town
- Tonkawa Tribe
- Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana

## **Pacific**

BOEM consulted with the following Tribes on Pacific activities in FY 2022:

- Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians
- Coquille Indian Tribe
- Quinault Indian Nation
- Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians
- Yurok Tribe

Additionally, the BOEM Pacific Region is a member of, and regularly participates in, the West Coast Ocean Alliance's (WCOA) West Coast Tribal Caucus. The WCOA brings together State, Tribal, and Federal Government partners in a collaborative non-regulatory forum to pursue consensus-driven activities carried out by members in support of the group's Regional Vision on the West Coast of the U.S. The WCOA brings together its

members through regular remote meetings and annual in-person meetings, while also supporting sub-regional working groups focused on specific coastal areas of the West Coast. The West Coast Tribal Caucus meets monthly and regularly invites the BOEM Pacific Region to provide updates at its meeting.

## **Alaska**

BOEM invited the following Tribes, ANCSA corporations, and Tribal entities to consult regarding the proposed Lease Sale 258 in Cook Inlet:

### TRIBES AND TRIBAL ENTITIES

- Cook Inlet Tribal Council
- Kenaitze Indian Tribe (IRA)
- Chickaloon Native Village
- Native Village of Port Graham
- Native Village of Nanwalek
- Seldovia Village Tribe
- Ninilchik Traditional Council
- Salamatof Tribal Council
- Native Village of Tyonek
- Eklutna Tribe
- Knik Tribal Council
- Native Village of Afognak
- Native Village of Akhiok
- Native Village of Karluk
- Sun aq Tribe (Kodiak)
- Alutiiq Tribe of Old Harbor
- Native Village of Ouzinki
- Native Village of Port Lions
- Native Village of Tyonek

### ANCSA CORPORATIONS

- Cook Inlet Region, Inc.
- Chickaloon-Moose Creek Native Assn, Inc.
- Port Graham Corporation
- English Bay Corporation
- Seldovia Native Assn, Inc.
- Koniaq Corporation
- Ninilchik Native Association
- Salamatof Native Association
- Soldotna Native Association
- Tyonek Native Corporation
- Koniaq Corporation
- ANCSA Regional Association

## OTHER TRIBAL ENTITIES

- Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission

### **3. List the location of each consultation by city and State.**

#### **Atlantic**

BOEM held most Tribal consultations virtually. The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe hosted a meeting with Tribal Council members and BOEM staff at Mashpee, MA, and the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) Tribal Council met with BOEM staff at Aquinnah, MA.

#### **Gulf of Mexico**

BOEM held all Tribal consultations and informational meetings virtually.

#### **Pacific**

BOEM held most Tribal consultations virtually. In addition to virtual consultation meetings, in May 2022, BOEM met in person with the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians and the Coquille Indian Tribe at each of their Council Chambers (Coos Bay and North Bend, Oregon, respectively). A staff-level meeting was also held in May 2022 with the Tribal Historic Preservation Office Manager for the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde in Grand Ronde, OR.

#### **Alaska**

In December 2021, BOEM engaged in a virtual government-to-government consultation with the Kenaitze Indian Tribe on the Kenai Peninsula.

It should be noted that to varying degrees, the pandemic continued to have significant impact on Alaska Tribes, with many Tribal offices closed either partially or completely for much of the past two years.

### **3. Summarize and list all the issues and recommendations.**

#### **Atlantic**

Tribal nations have expressed several concerns with respect to the development of offshore wind. Generally, concerns are related to data recovery as part of the NHPA mitigation; the importance of defining traditional cultural properties; the need for increased Tribal capacity for the large number of offshore wind-related documents to review and provide input on; impacts to marine mammals and the seafloor, as well as cumulative impacts from all offshore wind projects; the decommissioning process; chemical pollutants in the ocean; export cable corridors; visual impacts from offshore wind turbines; and impacts to traditional fishing practices.

Recommendations to help address these concerns include:

- Early and regular engagement and communication with BOEM and offshore wind project developers throughout planning and decision-making processes;
- Providing a cooperative role for Tribes during environmental reviews of offshore wind projects and development of mitigation measures;
- Funding and related capacity support to engage in meetings, reviews, and drafting of comments for offshore wind activities;
- Receipt of benefits from offshore wind development, including training and employment;
- Data and information sharing, including joint studies, particularly for protection of paleocultural landscapes and other cultural and subsistence resources; and
- Identification and designation of Traditional Cultural Properties

### **Gulf of Mexico**

Several Tribes have expressed a general concern about potential impacts from BOEM activities to submerged and terrestrial cultural resources in the Tribes' historic areas of interest, primarily within nearshore and inshore areas of Louisiana. These Tribes have requested to be consulting parties under section 106 of NHPA, and/or to be notified if submerged pre-contact archaeological sites are discovered during BOEM-permitted activities.

One Tribe, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, is a lease holder of OCS oil and gas lease areas through a tribally owned LLC that operates for the economic benefit of the Tribe. This Tribe has expressed an interest in the implications to the tribe from the proposed Financial Assurance Rulemaking for decommissioned oil and gas assets on the OCS and has requested further consultations with BOEM once a revised Rule is published.

### **Pacific**

Multiple Tribes across the west coast have expressed the issues and recommendations identified below:

- Need for a PEIS for wind activities offshore the west coast;
- Tribal consent (free, prior, and informed) for activities within BOEM's jurisdiction;
- Impacts to commercial, ceremonial, and subsistence fishing; this includes impacts to migratory fish and marine mammal species of importance to tribes and displacement of commercial fishing activities from other areas into adjudicated Treaty fishing areas;
- Impacts to sacred and important viewsheds, including potential Traditional Cultural Properties;
- Concerns over impacts to sacred sites onshore from project buildouts and port improvements;
- Lack of capacity to fully engage in the Federal process;
- Questions about how the Justice40 Initiative is being applied to offshore wind development; and

- Questions about how the agency is balancing the Administration’s goals for offshore wind energy development and meaningful Tribal engagement and consultation.

## **Alaska**

The Alaska Tribes consistently express concerns about impacts to the environment and to their subsistence resources regarding:

- Impacts of oil spills and the associated long-term effects;
- Questions about climate change effects;
- Questions about marine mammal species of importance, especially bowhead whales and Cook Inlet beluga whales;
- Questions regarding future oil and gas leasing and development activities;
- Impacts to important offshore areas for whaling and subsistence and commercial fishing; and
- Coordination with industry operators and researchers to avoid impacts to subsistence resources and activities.

## **4. Summarize successes and accomplishments and include recommendations for improvements to the consultation process.**

### **Bureau-wide**

Across the Bureau, BOEM initiated several new actions to improve transparency and communication with Tribes during all engagement activities, including consultations, increased Tribal capacity for environmental reviews, as well as improving internal cultural sensitivity and training for participation in consultations.

- To increase communication and engagement between offshore wind developers and Tribal nations, BOEM developed new lease stipulations for leases in the New York Bight, Carolina Long Bay, and California lease areas. The stipulations require lessees to draft Native American Tribal Communication Plans to develop strategies for communicating with federally recognized Tribes and outline specific methods for engaging with and disseminating information to federally recognized Tribes with cultural and/or historical ties to the lease area.
- A pilot project to increase Tribal capacity for review of offshore wind project reviews was conducted through a third party contract. BOEM paid for contracting support for four Tribes (two accepted) for four months to assist with reviewing and drafting comments for the Revolution Wind Construction and Operations Plan and the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The contractor provided summaries of the documents for the Tribes and drafted comments to reflect their concerns that were then submitted to BOEM.
- Instituted a series of Regional Quarterly Meetings for the Atlantic, Pacific, and Gulf of Mexico Regions. The meetings are an opportunity for Tribal nations to engage with the

BOEM Director, Regional Directors, and BOEM subject matter experts to discuss updates on various BOEM initiatives and projects.

- Staff consultation training through DOI University courses and the Udall Foundation
- Developed an interagency agreement with the National Center for Environmental Conflict Resolution, Udall Foundation, to develop an interagency Tribal engagement series on offshore wind for FY2023. The National Ocean Policy and regional ocean planning efforts are an example to learn from for institutionalizing interagency dialogue and tribal engagement. This series has yet to take place and does not replace government-to-government consultation; information will be provided for those interested in consultation with agencies on these topics.
- Through the Buy Indian Act, BOEM contracted with Indian-owned businesses, Kauffman and Associates (KAI) and Strongbow Strategies, to support and assist with outreach activities. BOEM initiated webinars to increase cultural competency of issues brought up during Tribal consultation with Tribal experts from all BOEM regions and the Atlantic.

In addition, there were a number of regional and programmatic successes to report for FY 2022:

### **Atlantic**

- BOEM hired a new Atlantic Coast/Office of Renewable Energy programs Tribal Liaison Coordinator. This is a new position dedicated to Tribal affairs.
- BOEM contracted with DNV to provide 35 Tribal members training on offshore wind energy projects to support the development of Tribal expertise. The DNV course covered an overview of wind energy projects, from development to decommissioning. Feedback from this training was positive and beneficial for those that participated, with requests for similar training in the Pacific Region, and for Protected Species Observer Training.
- At the request of the Aquinnah and Mashpee Wampanoag Tribes, BOEM helped facilitate a cultural and knowledge exchange with Alaska Native communities about issues related to protecting, conserving, and managing Tribally-important areas using historic preservation tools and Indigenous knowledge. In October 2022, BOEM supported the travel of Tribal Council Members from the Aquinnah Wampanoag and the Mashpee Wampanoag to Anchorage, Alaska, to attend the Alaska Federation of Natives conference, a reception, and visits to the Alaska Native Medical Center and Alaska Native Heritage Center. Similar exchanges in different locations are being considered for the future.

### **Pacific**

In order to help address concerns raised by Tribes in the BOEM Pacific Region, BOEM continued an [inter-agency agreement](#) with the Udall Foundation's National Center on Environmental Conflict Resolution to work with interested Tribes in developing cultural landscape assessments of areas of Tribal concern that could be impacted by offshore wind energy development. The cultural landscape approach recognizes that places and resources can have different or multiple meanings and levels of significance based on how people from different cultures, times, or backgrounds have interacted with the respective landscapes. BOEM is implementing this holistic approach to enhance future consultations and decision-making processes that take into consideration the importance of these areas to Tribes. On June 8, 2022, the National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (NATHPO) hosted a Tribal

Cultural Landscapes Workshop that took a deep dive into the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde's cultural landscapes assessment completed in 2017 ([BOEM 2017-001](#)).

BOEM also entered into a cooperative agreement with Oregon State University (OSU) to further refine the Pacific Region's model for understanding and identifying submerged pre-contact landforms offshore the west coast. Submerged pre-contact landforms are areas that may have once been inhabited but now lie buried offshore due to sea-level inundation over the last 20,000 years. This effort was submitted as a study idea to BOEM's Environmental Studies Program by OSU and the Quinault Indian Nation's Tribal Historic Preservation Office (QIN THPO) and awarded in September 2022. QIN THPO is a sub-contractor and serves as part of the key research team. The goal of this effort is to fill an existing data gap in the Region's model of submerged paleolandforms off the U.S. West Coast by integrating industry-standard geophysical survey data with traditional Tribal knowledge through consultation with coastal Washington Tribes.

## **Alaska**

To help address concerns raised by Alaska Tribes regarding Lease Sale 258, BOEM eliminated areas offered for oil and gas development, as well as included lease stipulations and mitigations measures that help protect and avoid, reduce, or minimize impacts to the marine ecosystem and subsistence resources. Building strong relationships between tribes, ANCSA Corporations, and BOEM is a priority of the Alaska Region and critical to successful consultations. Maintaining consistent interactions, collaborative activities, and increasing the frequency of meeting and speaking together will serve to build trust and provide new opportunities to engage. Effective communication goes both ways, as does earning and maintaining trust. Several of the valuable tools (or assets) BOEM has, including other agencies and contractors, can be brought into the mix to assure inclusion of Tribes, ANCSA corporations, and related entities. To improve communication and build on the use of Indigenous Knowledge going forward, BOEM's Alaska Region will focus on the following:

- Conduct interagency information sessions, as BOEM and EPA did in November of 2021, to discuss a range of topics, including renewable energy, emerging energy-related technologies, climate changes, future offshore industry activities, value and uses of Indigenous Knowledge, BOEM studies, oil spill mitigation, and other topics offered by the Tribes.
- Host 'BOEM Night of Science' events in interested Tribal communities.
- Initiate a BOEM – Tribal Collaboration Conference to explore, through discussions, how to increase and improve the uses of Indigenous Knowledge.
- Explore the possibility of establishing BOEM Science Camps with additional schools
- Increase collaboration with the Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program – through the University of Alaska and various village schools and with the Alaska Science Teachers Association.

## **Marine Minerals**

BOEM's Marine Minerals Program reviewed internal practices and recent experiences related to Tribal engagement on decisions, actions, and sponsored research, including those engagements

that may occur with Tribal Historic Preservation Officers under NHPA section 106 regarding historic properties. This review identified where and when BOEM could improve or further leverage practices and policies employed by the USACE and other Federal partners already engaged in beach nourishment and coastal restoration projects. BOEM found that, in almost all situations, the USACE, as lead Federal agency, and BOEM work well together despite having complementary but different approaches to Tribal engagement. BOEM continues to support the USACE and other agencies, such as the Fish and Wildlife Service, to ensure all Tribes with ancestral connections to a project area have reasonable and meaningful opportunity to participate in the review and decision-making process for these coastal resilience projects. This includes providing notice, letter sharing, and hosting meetings with Tribes that are clear in purpose and, whenever possible, communicate BOEM's involvement in the proposal.

BOEM determined that improved procedural guidance would be useful to envision how BOEM should most efficiently and effectively interact with Tribes when another agency, with different Tribal policy or guidance, is lead on an activity. Team members enrolled in Tribal engagement training to improve understanding and awareness of best practices. Marine Minerals expanded the discussion of Tribal engagement outcomes in findings and decision documents prepared under the National Environmental Policy Act. The review also identified that the program and key Federal partners could benefit from a shared system, reflecting geographic and updated information, that could be used to consistently identify relevant recipients/parties of interest for notice of activities with Tribal implications in the marine environment.