BOEM
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

OCS Scientific Committee Meeting
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Trawl Surveys in the Mid-Atlantic

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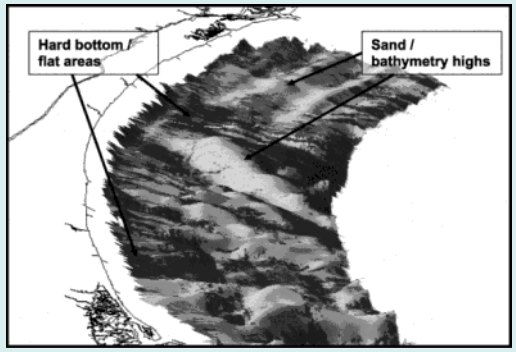
BOEM's Obligations: Fishery impacts

- BOEM has statutory obligations to "protect the environment." – Energy Policy Act of 2005, and consult with NMFS regarding impacts to essential fish habitat.

- BOEM thus requires geophysical and biological data in order to approve a lessee's plan. Including:

  Identification of sensitive bottom habitats

  Fish and shellfish populations



Trawl Surveys in the Mid-Atlantic

Background:

- BOEM has already invested in multi-year regional protected species surveys:
    - (AMAPPS)
    - Benthic habitat surveys (Pending from 2012 NSL) in the Atlantic.

- BOEM has also invested in a socio-economic impact assessment of fishermen from offshore wind (2011 NSL with NMFS) and in 'Best Management Practice workshops' with fishermen in the Atlantic.

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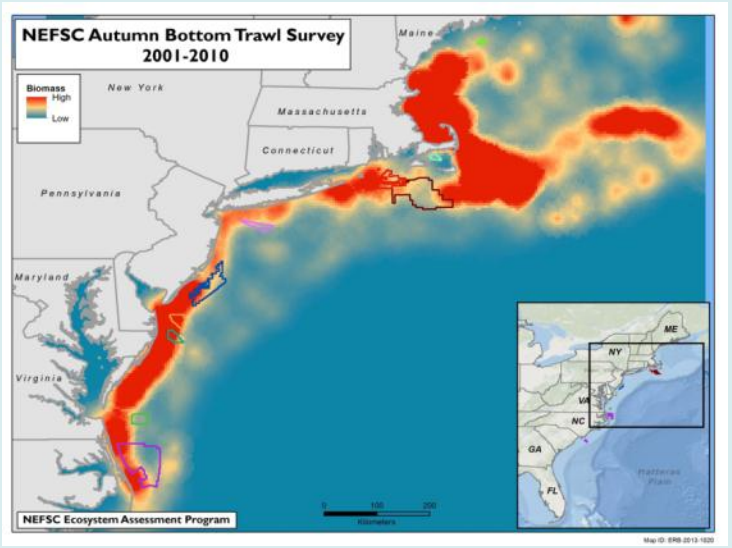
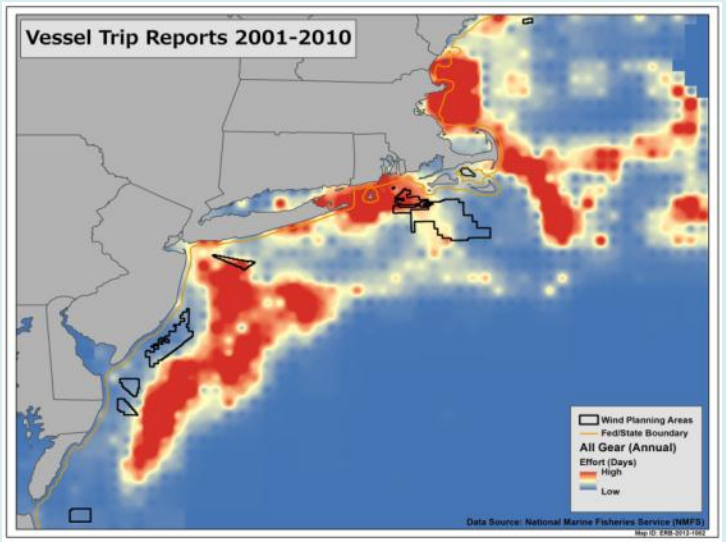
BOEM Information Need:

- Regional scale baseline fish abundance data at the depth strata to be potentially impacted by offshore wind operations.
  - The need for this data (for wind energy areas) was also requested through public comment from potentially affected fisheries.
  - Current NMFS bottom-trawl surveys sample several different depth strata that results in under sampling of the depth strata that BOEM is most interested in (between 20-45 m).





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Study's Objective:

- The objective of this study is to establish baseline fishery resource characteristics at regional/WEA scales, while involving the fishing industry in the data collection process.

Images courtesy of VIMS/NEFSC

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Study Methods:

- The study would perform a semi-annual bottom trawl survey in the mid- Atlantic WEAs using standard protocols (NEAMAP) including:
  - the use of a survey platform provided by the fishing industry,
  - subsampling the priority commercial species for total length, sex and maturity, and stomach content.

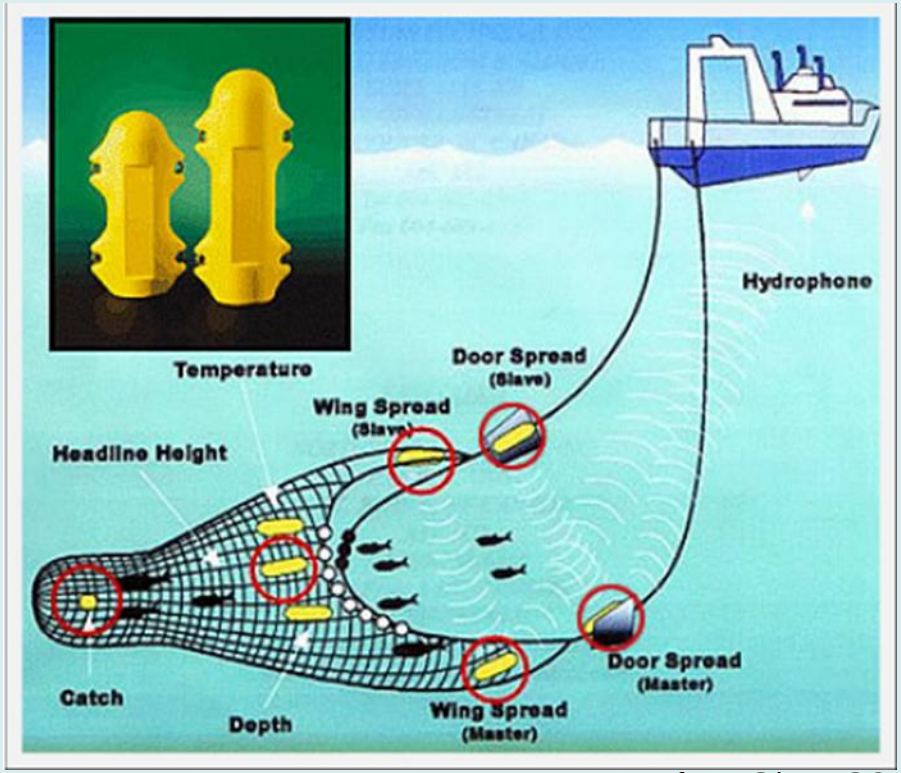

Image courtesy of VIMS/NEFSC

NEAMAP

(NE Area Monitoring and Assessment Program)

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Questions?

Comments?

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