

MERIDIAN INSTITUTE

**Moderator: Laura Cantral
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Operator: This is conference #: 87687804.

Good day and welcome to today's webcast. My name is (Caroline) and I will be your event specialist today.

All lines have been placed on mute to prevent any background noise. Please note that today's webcast is being recorded.

During today's presentation, we will have a question-and-answer session. You can submit your text questions at any time. To do so, click the green Q&A icon on the lower left-hand corner of your screen. Type your question in the open area and click Ask to submit.

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And finally, should you need technical assistance, as a best practice, we suggest that you first refresh your browser. If that does not resolve the issue, please click on the support option in the upper right-hand corner of your screen for online troubleshooting.

And it is now my pleasure to turn today's program over to your first speaker, Laura Cantral with Meridian Institute. Laura, the floor is yours.

Laura Cantral: Thank you and good morning everyone. On behalf of the Mid-Atlantic regional planning body, I'd like to welcome you to this public webinar. We're very glad that you've taken the time to tune in and learn about activity that the Mid-Atlantic RPB, it's last public meeting that took place in Norfolk, Virginia in September.

I'm going to quickly run through the objectives and the agenda for this webinar and then I'm going to turn it to our federal RPB colleague, LaBelle with Department of the Interior's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management who's going to provide some additional context about the RPB's activities and set the stage for our presentation today.

This webinar is a rather lengthy one, it's scheduled to go until two o'clock and the RPB has a lot of information to share with you and is looking forward to your input in your question. The objective for this webinar are to provide Mid-Atlantic stakeholders with an update on the development of draft, inter-jurisdictional coordination action, original ocean planning in the Mid-Atlantic region.

As I said, these are update, the September in person RPB meeting. The RPB also want to receive input on this draft IJC action and answer any questions that you all have about those draft IJC action. We will be turning to several figures, RPB members who will go over IJC action related to various topics.

We will take some break along the way to see what questions have been posed by those of you who are with us today and then, we'll have a dedicated time for Q&A at the end of all of the presentation. So let me just say, a few more things about the agenda before I turn it over to Bob, I'd already mentioned that, in a moment, he's going to set the stage and provide a brief summary of how the RPB has been working to develop the draft IJC action.

After Bob, Sarah Cooksey, RPB member representing Delaware Coastal program will present on the topic of implementation of the Mid-Atlantic Ocean Action Plan, focusing on information developed by a small group of RPB members on sustaining and enhancing inter-governmental coordination.

After that, we're going to hear from what the RPB is referring to as champion. These are folks who are helping to coordinate small group set of RPB members who are working on inter-jurisdictional coordination action in various topic areas.

The topics and speakers that you will be hearing from today are in the following order.

First, we'll hear from Laura McKay, of Virginia who will present on Healthy Ocean Ecosystem.

Then we'll hear from Doug Simpson of the Coast Guard who will talk about Marine Commerce and Navigation.

We'll turn back to Bob LaBelle, who will present on both offshore wind energy and also offshore sand management.

Kevin Chu of NOAA will present on Fishery Science and Management.

Kelsey Leonard, of the Shinnecock Indian Nation and our RPB tribal colleague will present on tribal uses.

Joe Atangan, of the DOD Joint Chief of Staff will present on national security.

(Les Simple) with New Jersey will talk about non-consumptive recreation. Will hand it back to Laura McKay to talk about the Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal. We'll then turn to David Kaiser with NOAA to talk about RPB discussions related to the coastal zone management act.

And then finally, our state colleague, RPB colleague, Gwynne Schultz of Maryland will give us an overview of upcoming Stakeholder engagement opportunity.

And as I said, after all of that, we'll have whatever remaining time available to use before wrapping up at two, to entertain your questions. So in addition to the folks that I've mentioned who are going to be presenting on the various topics, we have a few other RPB members in alternates who are on the line today and are also available to assist or offer input during any of the Q&A.

And let me just tell you who those folks are. We – with ETA, we have Buddy LoBue with Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. We have Leann Bullin, State of Delaware. John Park, State of New York. Karen Castelo, Mike Snyder, Peter Claus, Pennsylvania and Andy Zemba.

All right. So, I'm almost done with the preliminaries but I want to make sure that you know that there are several opportunities for members of the public to offer your feedback to the Mid-Atlantic RPB. And I wanted just walk through this.

First of all, during this webinar, you can submit the question through the Q&A function of this webinar. Some of you have no doubt you know, participated in other Mid-Atlantic RPB webinars. So this should sound familiar to you. We will be tracking and organizing the questions that may come in.

And in addition to trying to pause along the way, periodically to take a few questions, we'll have the Q&A session at the end, we're going to do our best to get to as many other questions as we can depending on how much inventory we have of your question. If your question does not get answered during this webinar, it will be captured for the record. And you can submit your questions through the chat feature any time during the webinar starting now all the way through to the very end.

And then, as a reminder, your questions and comments are always welcome on – to – you're welcome to submit them through the – to the BOEM email address that you see here on the slide.

A final process detail, several materials will be made available on RPB's website in dates following this webinar. And these materials include an audio and video recording of the webinar, couple of transcript of the webinar, the full slide presentation, a record of all of the chat questions and comments that we received through the chat function and also webinar participants.

So with that, I would like to turn it to RPB federal colleague, Bob LaBelle to share some context in an overview of the RPB's activity today. Bob?

Bob LaBelle: Thank you, Laura and good morning everyone. Thank you for joining us this morning. It's an important meeting, I'm glad to see a good turnout.

First, I want to acknowledge my colleague, the state colleague on the RPB, it's Gwynne Schultz from Maryland. And she is also on the Mid-Atlantic region council of the Ocean Management Board. And our Tribal Co-Lead, Kelsey Leonard, of the Shinnecock Indian Nation in Long Island, New York.

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So I want to share brief overview of the RPB and its purpose. The Mid-Atlantic RPB was established in 2013 pursuant to the National Ocean Policy signed by the president in 2010. The mission of the RPB is to carry out coordinated efforts to address current challenges and emerging opportunity to a collaborative process some on Federal State, Tribal and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council representatives.

And of course, this is all to improve our understanding of how the Mid-Atlantic Ocean and Resources are being used, managed and conserved. Mid-Atlantic Ocean Planning focuses on State, Tribal and Federal Ocean and Coastal water up in the state of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia to help guide resource conservation and economic development by facilitating information sharing, fostering collaboration and improving decision making about a growing number of ocean uses buying for ocean resources in space.

And we always stripped the RPB as not a regulatory body and it have no independent legal authority instead of saying it's to improve the effectiveness of federal, state and tribal implementation of responsibilities in the Mid-Atlantic ocean.

As you can see on the slide, the RPB consist of six Mid-Atlantic state, three federally recognized tribes. The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Council, a federal agency and Connecticut serving as an ex officio member.

Federal agencies in the RPB include the Department of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Energy, Homeland Security, Interior and Transportation

and the environmental protection agency. The RPB encourages stakeholders to stay informed and provide comments to us at any time via email and you note on the bottom of the slide website and email address is showing there.

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I want to briefly note some completed RPB activities with (health) in person meetings to date in September 2013 in New Jersey, May 14, in Maryland, January 15 in New York and September 15 in Norfolk. The meeting summaries and presentations are available on our website and we've been pursuing via three work groups to develop different aspects of the ocean action plan which include inter-jurisdictional coordination effort, data synthesis and the regional ocean assessment.

Now, stakeholder engagement is an integral part of all of these efforts and we've also – we are implementing a work plan that is served as our planning tool and to guide RPB activities leading to the ocean action plan development by the end of next year. Our ROA, Regional Ocean Assessment work group prepared the white paper entitled brief overview of the Mid-Atlantic ocean characteristics, trends and challenges.

This was to the RPB to establish a basic common understanding of topic and help focus and guide our discussions in the region. In August, markets – MARCO hosted tribal listening sessions in New York and Virginia and we are pleased to have the United Indian Nation and the Pamunkey Indian Tribe as part of the RPB along with the Shinnecock Indian Nation.

Next slide, please.

This slide provides an overview of IJC action development both before and after the September 2015 meeting in Norfolk, Virginia. As a reminder the individual proposed actions that are presented today should be considered as part of a broader approach to identifying and addressing ocean planning issues across federal agency states and tribes.

The RPB is deliberating on the draft, IJC action ideas that we will discuss today. And this is also possible inclusion of these ideas in the draft ocean plan or OAP for short.

As I just mentioned, the RPB forms internal work groups to develop different aspects of the draft OAP. Updates regarding their process on healthy ocean ecosystems, offshore wind, sand management, navigation and commerce, national security, fisheries, travel uses, recreation and coastal zone management will be presented today.

I want to point out that we have a detailed gain chart posted on our websites, entitled, Updated Mid-Atlantic RPB timeline. It runs through December 2016 and it lays out the timing for OAP development going forward. It includes the steps, the RPB intends to take as we work towards the milestone of submitting our OAP to the National Ocean Council in late 2016.

During the September RPB meeting of this year, we discussed inter-jurisdictional coordination action and the outline for the ocean action plan. Since that meeting, a lot more discussion has occurred among RPB members and with stakeholders to further define the actions. Additional refinement will happen through the end of 2015.

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So, this slide provides a brief overview of the next steps for OAP development. Was starting to compile the information for the draft OAP in the coming months to be able to present draft OAP components at the next RPB meeting in March 2016.

Data synthesis products in the regional ocean assessment are being completed and update will be shared by MARCO in late January. The RPB will continue to engage they called as throughout all of these next steps. And I want to make a special note that RPB state colleague, Gwynne Schultz will share more about opportunities to stakeholder engagement later in today's presentation.

Now, our goals to 2016 is to release the draft OAP to review. Receive public input and then release the final OAP later that year for certification by the National Ocean Council.

In 2017, and beyond the RPB will work on implementation of the plan. Will also continue to work to formalize into jurisdictional coordination commitment and will monitor our plan implementation efforts and make periodic update to the ocean action plan.

So thank you, this is a great start I think to get going and let's get to the good stuff.

Laura Cantral: Great. So, thank you Bob. And just to your last point about implementation efforts, let's hear next from, Sarah Cooksey to talk a little bit more about that.

Sarah Cooksey: Thank you, Laura and thank you to all the folks that are taking the time today to listen to use and exchange information.

Next slide, please.

In Norfolk in September at the MARCO Stakeholder event as well as the RPB event that followed the next few days, there was discussions and ideas and thoughts about how should we implement the ocean action plan and what happens in the future after 2016.

Address summary of our current takings is outlined in the slide entitled, "Objectives". Most of the people at the – both of the event that's of course submitted comments, thought that the RPB should continue in some manner, that there should be some type of forum or an entity to continue beyond the completion of the plan that would advance the action, monitor, evaluate and then if warranted, modify the plan.

It was also important to those that spoke to continue to engage stakeholders and foster inter-governmental communication and coordination. We also thought, we should address the resources required to support the Mid-Atlantic Ocean action plan implementation.

And the process, however we decide to do this process to the future it was important that we reduced any administrative burdens and continue to further enhance stakeholder engagement opportunities.

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So right now, our thinking is that we would be successful if we effectively found a way to do these following things. Fulfill the responsibilities that are assigned to the regional planning body to implement, monitor, evaluate and modify the OAP. Reduce the administrative burden, provide more flexibility stakeholders and experts on specific actions and to further enhance communications that ongoing governmental activities that are related to the plan.

So those are the only slides I have just these two slides because we're just really – we've been so focused on completing the OAP that we're just now thinking to think about what's going to happen at the end of 2016.

So I would be happy to hear some comments about that and otherwise, Laura, I'm done.

Laura Cantral: All right. Great. Thank you, Sarah. We're going to keep going for a few more presenters and then, we'll pause to see what questions we don't have – so if you have any questions, submit a yes. But I'm sure, we'll be getting some – on you shortly.

So, we're now going to hear from several of the champions of the small groups that are working on inter-jurisdictional coordination action related to various topic areas. And we're going to start with Laura McKay who's going to talk about some of the proposed actions related to healthy ocean ecosystems which is one of the goals of the regional planning body. And as noted in the framework that it produced earlier on in its work.

So Laura, I'm going to turn it over to you.

Laura McKay: Thanks Laura and good morning everyone. Next slide, please.

So as you may recall, the framework for the Mid-Atlantic Ocean Planning Process had two goals and one of them is to promote ocean ecosystem health, functionality and integrity through conservation, protection, enhancement and restoration.

And two of the objectives were, as you see on the slide, discover, understand, protect and restore the ecosystem and account for changes and increased risk.

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So to do that, we have five basic actions that we're working on. And for those of you who are with us at the September RP meeting, there are – I want to point out some slight changes to the five that we present to them. We've heard merged – two of them so that we are handling the in depth reviews of ecologically rich areas and region wide ecological feature as one action, and I'll talk more about those in a minute.

And the new one that we've added, number five now at the bottom is to collaborate on regional approaches to marine degree reduction. The other three in the middle have stated pretty much the same but I'll go into them in the next slide. But basically, we would like to establish ocean health indicators and metrics and develop an ocean research forum that's geared toward research needs for improved management. And address some specific climate change issues.

So we've really listened to the stakeholders, these changes are result of what we heard in September. And the other important thing to note is again, in response to stakeholders, we have taken out mention of developing management recommendations.

So, next slide, please.

So the first action will just run through the steps here but basically, the first step is to coordinate on the definitions of ecologically reach areas and region wide ecological features with the Northeast RPB and also our Marine Life Data Analysis Team, also known as MDAT so that we have consistency in the methodology of what we're calling these areas.

So once we've settled on the definition of ERA's and there's work to be done to configure that out but will likely involve concept such as high abundance, high biodiversity, species at risk, those kinds of considerations would go into how we define an ERA and REF.

Once we've done that, we would take the following steps with stakeholder input and expert input and based on the availability of high quality data, we would identify these areas for an in-depth review. And the in-depth review would be involved overlaying the human uses within each of those areas and reaching out to stakeholders to understand their interest in those areas, documenting the ecological functions and values where we do have sufficient data. And also, documenting the current management practices within that area and local and traditional knowledge for those areas.

Next slide.

We would also then try to identify trends in the health of those specific areas and how they may be changing and then we would discuss all of these draft finding with stakeholder's scientific experts and research managers and pull together a final finding that would be made available to all the interested parties.

So we fall short of making management recommendations. We recognized the concern stakeholders had that doing so, and putting recommendations in the plan and then requiring that once the plan is approved, the federal agencies be consistent with it, may cross that line of regulatory authority which the RBP does not have.

So this would be basically, looking to develop and coordinate more in depth information on these ecologically rich areas. We would have to update and rerun that marine life data analysis model as new data becomes available and so this would be an iterative process. And the desired outcome is – opportunities from proved management of these important places.

Next slide.

To establish the Mid-Atlantic Ocean indicators and metrics, we would convene an inter-agency workgroup and review and evaluate parameters of ocean health that are already being measured by a variety of federal agencies and other partners. We would held a workshop to consider the suited indicators and get public input in stakeholder scientific input on those and then finalize a set of indicators to be used.

We would then establish procedures for review and updating of data to their website and create a dashboard so that, that would be easily seen by the public and hopefully have a system where updating would be fairly automatic by agencies that collects the data.

Next slide, please.

The research forum and you may hear this cut across several of the IJC actions but basically we would like to establish a forum to share current and plan to Mid-Atlantic Ocean research and have an inter-agency workshop to identify research that's needed to better understand ocean attributes in their region and develop mechanisms to use these new research findings to improve managements.

The outcome here again, would be a targeted list of research, we'd really like to try to prioritize research for the area that would really help inform management issues and needs.

Next slide.

For climate change we've – there's a lot of work as you know, by a lot of different entities on climate issues and so, we try to focus on some very specific ones for our region where we think there may be some gaps and some opportunities to do some additional work on a regional basis.

And the first is to foster the establish of an ocean acidification monitoring network and that is part of the larger national ocean policy to do so but we'd like to have a more comprehensive in depth look at this in the Mid-Atlantic Ocean region. So we would review the existing efforts and identify gaps.

We would also work together to try to pull resources and identify funding streams to have a more robust ocean acidification monitoring network in the Mid-Atlantic Ocean. And the second topic and – would be to do some additional work on mapping projected shift in species distribution.

And in these actions, we would focus on the non-fish species because as you'll hear Kevin Chu mentioned in the fisheries IJC action, they would be addressing fish more specifically in that action. So here, we would be looking at things like the marine mammals to sea turtles, the marine bird.

And again, we down pull parties together to look at existing efforts and try to map the projected shifts in this habitat and then post those maps on the Mid-Atlantic Ocean data portal.

Next slide, please.

And finally, and this is the new one that we recently added, so we have a little more work to do but there are currently efforts underway that this action could really help bolster and solidify. So the idea here is to collaborate on regional approaches to marine debris reduction. We all know plastics in the ocean is becoming more and more important problem to focus on the fishing gear entanglement, those kinds of things that are occurring in the ocean would be the focus here.

And the states are actually already working with those marine debris program in the Mid-Atlantic but this would help kind of formalize that effort and have us work together and get some economies at scale in marine debris reduction approaches.

So that's all I have for now and I'll turn it back to Laura Cantral.

Laura Cantral: Thank you, Laura McKay. So, we're starting to get a few questions and I think it would be now would be a good time to pause and take one or two and then, we'll keep going. So Laura, I'm just going to pose a couple of questions here, the first one is from (Ali Chase).

(Ali) is saying, it's important for the federal agency to commit to the extent of their existing authority to conserve the areas identified as ERA and REF. This is envisioned by the national issue policy and it's a key step to make sure we improve the health of our oceans.

Question is, to any work be done before the plan event to the NAC, to the National Association Council to develop guidance to help prevent these areas from in intact payer phasing.

Laura McKay: Well, that's a tough question and as a state person, that's particularly tough for me to answer if any of the federal folks on the line would like to chime in, please do.

But as we know we're just about to release and see together in January the map that we are getting from our team to the marine life data analysis. So it's very difficult for folks to understand you know, what might be appropriate in terms of management in those areas to see where they are and what's going on in them and get a better understanding of what is anything maybe causing changes in those areas.

So, I think it will be difficult to do that but I don't want to pre-judge that. So I would ask if Bob LaBelle or Kevin Chu if you would like to add anything to that.

Bob LaBelle: Sure. Thanks Laura, this is Bob LaBelle, you know, that's exactly the way I would have phrase the answer. First, we have to sort of identify these areas and the goal there cause us to bring such areas into further discussion among all of the entities not just the federal agencies but the states in the tribes as well.

So getting there is you know, a good effort that's already underway with regard to developing guidance to somehow categorize all these areas and fact to that end, in a general way, regionally, that's something that would – if it came at all would come down the road after we've identified these things.

Laura Cantral: OK. So we're going to take one more question and then move on. This question is from (Gerard Vuska). And I think this – Laura, I think this is one

for you to field. In terms of high quality data, where are those data sets coming from what kind of data sets are they, how does the – and how does the ocean and council observation monitoring and prediction figuring to this approach of developing and maintaining and understanding of the changing – of changing ocean and coastal ecosystems overtime. And that maybe a complicated and lengthy question or something that you can field pretty quickly with more follow up to come.

Laura McKay: Yes. I'm just not sure whether (Earhart) was referring to the marine life data or something else. Assuming it's the marine life data, that data is coming from a lot of different sources, there are over 3,000 different data layers that have been collected for marine mammals, sea turtles, birds and fish to fish data comes troll surveys.

We know that's not perfect but it's the best we have available. Sea turtle data comes from a variety of sources, A Map is one of them that we're looking at. Marine mammals as well, a lot of different data layers, 80 different scientist has been reviewing those data layers. So I hope that answers the question.

If not, send in another question for (Cedric Earhart).

Laura Cantral: OK. Great. So, we've got a couple of other questions and we're going to hold on to them for now and hope that we can get back to them during our Q&A session at the end. And just as a reminder, operators are standing by. So if you have questions, go ahead and chat them in and we're collecting them.

But for now, we're going to turn to our next several presenters who are going to talk about proposed IJC action related to the RPB's goal of sustainable ocean uses. And the first person we're going to hear from in this batch will be Doug Simpson. Go ahead, Doug.

Doug Simpson: Hi, good morning. Next slide, please.

So, from the framework, we set up two overarching goals regarding commerce and marine navigation. The first is to make sure that marine commerce and navigation data is available from marine planning use. And the second is to raise awareness of the important impact that marine

commerce has on national and Mid-Atlantic economies. So with that in mind, we set up inter-jurisdictional coordination action.

Next slide, please.

So first action is to kind of characterize traffic – navigation traffic overtime and we depend a lot on automatic identification system which I'll EIS when describing the slide. As the primary data source for what we're using right now to understand marine traffic. Right now, we've got a lot of good data that's been synthesized in a usable way up on the MARCO portal and we'd like to continue putting that data up on the portal.

We like to make that data more functional to be able to look at the data seasonally and from – and to be able to see changes from year to year. We'd like to establish means to ensure that. Within the AIS data that the type of vessel that's available in the AIS data is appropriately representing the marine transportation system use in the Mid-Atlantic region.

If you go on to the portal right now, you'll see that there are four or five different types of vessels but there are more that are available within the AIS data layers. And if we can routinely go and check to make sure that, yes, what we're representing on the portal is an accurate – a reasonable representation of Mid-Atlantic data, then we're doing a good job characterizing what's going up and down the coast.

Doing those things should provide two outcomes. One is to ensure that our primary maritime traffic patterns are available to people who have to make decisions for other uses. The other is to ensure that shifts in seasonal or long term navigation pattern are available to decision makers for improving a maritime transportation system.

Next slide, please.

So when you go to MARCO portal, you'll see that there are great data sets that are up there. We would like to just make sure that there's a process to review the portal data making sure that new activities that come up, for instance, aquaculture, are represented in data layers, that way, we can see how do those

layers – how do those new uses impact navigation traffic and to make sure that existing layers are turned.

Those goals – that goal would be to make sure that marine commerce decisions makers and stakeholders have the best data. What we need for that is a continued data portal and people who can synthesize data, synthesize the raw data in a way to make it useful.

Next slide please.

So, this next inter-jurisdictional action is to catalog the intersection between federal agency and between other RPB entities. So when a new wind farm or a new CN management area is set up their permits and processes that make sure that, if this coastal area is going to be put together.

And there are processes right now that discussed the coordination from the state, state or between, feds and state or between federal entities. And so what we'd like to do is make sure that when it comes to navigation, we understand what all the others sustainable users are on the ocean and make sure that those permitting processes account for navigation can marine commerce.

So we think that we got pretty good memorandums of agreement and policies in place right now. But to be able to catalog this will give us a better feel for where are we. And then, once we've got a good handle on what exist right now, we can identify if there are any gaps in processes that we might be able to make available to entities to improve their work.

Next slide, please.

So, the panel can now recently concluded its expansion and that has driven ships to become wider and deeper for the United States to be able to keep up, we have to deepen and widen our port areas. So there are – there's activity up and down the Mid-Atlantic coast to make our ports more accessible to international shipping.

So if you – important to stakeholder's all around the coast to make sure we understand what are the implications of these new bigger vessels. With that, although, the ports themselves maybe getting deeper and wider, their offshore approaches in the coastal zone that may impact the ability for these larger vessels to get into the newly deeper and wider ports.

So to – what we'd like to do is catalog where does the activity happening within the ports and then where would be foresee traffic maybe having to be rerouted based on their offshore approaches. Our goal with this is to make sure the decision makers update and needed to optimize some the marine transportation system post (CATAMAX).

Next slide, please.

So, the coast guard has recently conducted a study for marine traffic routing along the Mid-Atlantic coast and actually on the entire Atlantic Coast. We anticipate that, that will be published sometime by or before February of 2016 and there'll be a comment period involved.

Now, this particular access route study considers the intersection between marine commerce and offshore winds. So we've specifically look at that scenario, in addition to looking at to intersections between wind and marine commerce. We also have planning guidelines that might be applicable to more than just the intersection of shipping in wind.

So, we look forward to having folks comment on our Atlantic Coast port access route study once its published. Look for that coming out in the next few months.

Next slide, please.

And then finally up and down the Mid-Atlantic we have harbor safety committees that look at regional or sub-regional areas and how we can improve navigation and marine commerce. Additionally, at the national level we have federal advisory committee that we may be able to reach out to.

We just like to make sure that the plan has coordinating functions in place that allows the regions to work together as they address offshore things that stand their regions into the ability to reach out to the national level sector committees. And that's all I have for marine commerce and navigation.

Laura Cantral: Thank you, Doug. So we're going to keep going here and Bob LaBelle. I'm going to turn it over to you and you will take up two topics, first, offshore winds and then offshore sand management. So, off to you, Bob.

Bob LaBelle: OK. Thank you Laura. So let's see, let's go to the next slide. I want to acknowledge the co-lead on this with New York Department State.

So the framework, goal and objective there is that, it's to provide for – facilitate greater collaboration around ocean energy issues in the Mid-Atlantic with state, tribes and federal partners. And the RPB intends to provide the means of decision makers to implement their program and authorities in an integrated way such as through enhanced interagency coordination.

While the framework outline, ocean energy and a large system, our PBA members of children to focus on offshore wind energy in the ocean action place.

Next slide.

So this slide subscribes the RPB's desired outcomes and outputs which include a more efficient, predictable and informed process that supports effective coordination. More meaningful participation for effective state in a shorter time frame and enhanced agency management and environmental and regulatory review processes while advancing state, tribal and federal wind energy development objective.

Next slide.

The slide shows our updated proposed IJC action and there are basically, three categories which I will address in the three slides following this one. Responsible entities will actively work to increase coordination and develop a more informed process including intersections of federal programs and statute.

There will be specific action such as developing agency guidance on best practices for using the Mid-Atlantic Ocean data portal in management, environmental and regulatory reviews. And we will partner an ongoing and planned studies to identify knowledge gaps and increased access to research planning cycle.

Next slide.

Now, the first category is, coordination in management. So this shows some steps that we will take such as to develop a more informed process so that will increase collaboration and participation and wind energy processes by developing clearly designed coordination mechanism for leverage existing network, such as BOEM's intergovernmental renewable energy state tap forces.

To recommend ways citing issues and other conflicts and we'll develop clearly defined coordination mechanisms to inform side assessments and project construction plan and ensure activities that mutually reinforcing and provide the necessary information to decision making where the statute intersect.

We're going to create a chart of leasing environmental review and regulatory processes to identify intersections and how programs intersect, who's involved and win in the process and outline where and when relevant authorities play a role in decision. And BOEM will be posting that up on its own website and will link to it to the portal hopefully.

Next slide.

The second category is the use of data and will use data to identify knowledge gaps, develop agency guidance and best practices that addressed how the data will be used in management, environmental and regulatory reviews will be seeking agency commitments to using Mid-Atlantic data portals to support NEPA analysis and consultations.

We'll look into putting links into agency announcements on the data portal of proposed for development activities. And we'll continue to dialog with the

state to look for opportunities and mechanisms to share information early into the process.

We got to form small teams to refer to discuss options and will agree on what data is sufficient for responsible entities to use for their reviews. Collaborate on share data sets for example, the Mid-Atlantic data portal potentially linking with BOEM's new reference study system called, GO Access and that's to access environmental reports.

Data sharing for GO Access will provide the ability to readily discover relevant scientific information and data analysis to make informed decision. And we'll coordinated data collection for environmental assessment to inform development of new offshore renewable energy project. And we'll also going to make efforts to better engage the fishing industry through specific mechanisms and improve data sharing.

Next slide.

Third category is studies and research and we intend to partner in ongoing and plan studies and increase access to research planning cycle. For example, BOEM will engage state and tribes earlier in the process of developing our research system agenda every year. BOEM will solicit and consider state, tribal and public input to the annual and national studies coupled with the mechanism to make this happen.

Will identify opportunities of collaboration with the National Ocean Traffic partnership program to create an integrated regional ocean research agenda and we're doing this in concert with other federal agency. And that will then facilitate discussions to assess interest among federal agencies in common topic. If the partners find common interest, the program can also provide support for the finding announcements and the proposal review process.

Next slide, please.

So word on implementation. The White House is establishing and integrated the offshore wind working group that will ensure effective offshore wind, energy coordination among federal agencies. In addition to consultation with

tribes during Section 106 reviews. BOEM has developed four Atlantic Section 106 programmatic agreement with tribal partners for each stage of BOEM's renewable energy process.

Involving tribal partners helps better understand renewable energy leasing impacts to economics in the environment, marine mammals, sacred ceremonial sites and cultural resources. So almost also inviting tribal partners to be cooperating agencies and comparing BOEM-NEPA documents where a tribe can prepare sections, provide data and input before public comment periods, helps develop alternatives and estimate the effects of alternatives.

Next slide, please.

On a stakeholder input, brought us stakeholder input opportunities includes requesting feedback from stakeholders through December 9th, this is a federal note – registered notice that we published on September 30th. And this is asking for information about how BOEM is doing with regard to its offshore wind energy program.

We're seeking input from industry and other stakeholders including state and local agencies of potential challenges to continue development. The feedback will inform BOEM's strategic planning efforts and the information received will be used in determining whether or how BOEM can change its existing renewable energy processes including regulation.

And just on this Thursday, December 10th, the Department of Energy and Department of the Interior are holding a workshop to obtain stakeholder insight into the technical and market challenges associated with and potential pathways to facilitate the development of the offshore wind industry in the United States.

The workshop seeks input across the range of offshore wind stakeholders to better inform effort to update and refine the 2011 DOE report titled national offshore wind strategy.

I think that's my last slide on wind. And Laura, should I go right into sand?

Laura Cantral: Yes, please do.

Bob LaBelle: OK. I'll take a sit here. So the framework – well, I want to point out that BOEM is the federal co-champion for these actions along with New York Department of State and Virginia Department of Environmental quality.

So the framework goal there is the object – the sand management objective falls under the framework sustainable ocean uses goal to plan and provide for existing and emerging ocean uses in a sustainable amount that minimizes conflicts, improves effectiveness and regulatory predictability and supports economic growth.

So what we're talking about here is the offshore sand resources and federal waters three miles an hour that could be used for coastal project such as beach nourishment, et cetera.

Next slide.

So responsible RPB member entities along with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will work to facilitate, enhanced participation among coastal jurisdictions, federal and state regulatory agency and tribal entity to identify and prioritize the use of sand and gravel resources. The coastal adaptation, resilience plan and implementation.

The RPB intends to provide the means for decision makers to implement their programs and authorities in an integrated way such as to enhance interagency coordination.

Next slide.

Regarding outcomes output, the desire, the outcomes listed which you're enhanced intergovernmental coordination to share data and help identify sand resources projects and facilitate coordination amongst stakeholders with offshore wind, sand and fisheries in trips.

Next slide.

So, the slide describes the updated proposed offshore sand management action. Responsible RPB member entities will actively work to support plan, restoration and resilience project, supports sustainable management of offshore sand, resources by identifying best practices and informed decision making by sharing data and will consider using existing sand projects such as re-nourishment efforts in Virginia as pilot demonstrations on how RPB effort might be of existence and needs contentious activities.

Next slide.

This slide shows the coordination and management steps which include coordination for sand re-nourishment projects during the planning and analysis space to meet the consultation and consultations by BOEM and the corps of engineers. And also identifying locations and characterizations of potential sand burrow areas offshore the Mid-Atlantic space.

Sharing. We also were going to be sharing a BOEM geospatial database which will contain data from cooperative agreements, leases and agreements and new data being collected from the Hurricane Sandy funded Atlantic Sand Assessment project.

And identifying data gaps to be addressed with future resource evaluation studies. For example, BOEM has five marine mineral studies proposed for FY 2016 and we are setting up bimonthly calls starting in January with the Corps engineers, New York and New Jersey about the sand project development process for immediate sand need in the next three to five year timeframe as well as needs in a more distant future.

Next slide please.

On use of data, I mentioned BOEM's geospatial database that contained data from over 20 years of cooperative agreements, nearly 13 leases and agreements and new data being collected from the Hurricane Sandy funded – ASEP project.

And this database will be linked to the portal and will inform decision making. Will share the data model with state, when it is available in FY 2017 as we

gather the data, we just set a yearlong cruise to observe the data and we're pulling that together. In addition, we're going to work to better engage the fishing industry through specific mechanisms and improve data sharing.

Next slide.

And we hear that loud and clear in many of the public meetings and input opportunities. Now regarding studies and research, we intend to partner on an ongoing and plant studies. And will engage state earlier in the process that developing BOEM's research agendas as well as tribes. We'll consider state and tribal input as well as public input for the annual and national studies list as I mentioned with Gwynne.

And will be enhancing the mechanisms to make this happen such as outreach, webinar, as announced for some data portals and website. BOEM will identify opportunities for collaboration again through the national partnership program as much as I discussed in wind and the goal would be to create an integrated regional ocean research agenda and perhaps have some substantive research in the region.

Next slide.

On implementation, we are now working to establish the Mid-Atlantic regional stand and management and working group that will meet for the first time early next year. This group will discuss needs for offshore, federal sand, data and future environmental study needs. We'll discuss regional environmental issues related to offshore (gradient) and address local government and the offshore issues. And again, we have the those five mineral studies that I can plan for fiscal 2016 over the environmental studies program.

Next slide.

We wanted to comment on stakeholder input that we've received over the past months on this area. In proposing these draft actions we considered public input from the MARCO stakeholder workshop which included suggestions to

develop best management practices to coastal sand mining with respect to fisheries and monitor the success.

Increase participation of the corps engineers and the RPB process improve the use of the Central Fish Habitat consultation processes. And better coordinate among stakeholders wind, sand and fishing interest. So not to exclude other interest out there but there's a clear message that more collaboration and cooperation is needed between the fishing community and the agencies that are working on beach nourishment and the offshore scene.

I think that it's on the sand slides. Thank you.

Laura Cantral: Great. Thank you, Bob. So I suggest that we take pause here. A few question – few more questions have come in that are related to the topics that you just heard about marine, maritime commerce and navigation and offshore wind and offshore sand.

So Doug, first question I think is for you to fill is from (Sarah Chases). Would it be an opportunity for the Atlantic coast port access, route study to take account on the ERAs that are identified through the RPB process.

Doug Simpson: So when it comes to – from what I've seen from initial drafts of the study is that, it has not taken that into account. But what we're hoping for is feedback from stakeholders joining us say, how can we improve the study where areas that we missed. So I would encourage the person submitted the question to get that comment – to get that question on the docket.

Laura Cantral: All right. Great. So (Sarah), maybe you can do that kind of follow up. All right. So next is a question from (Ann Murwin), Bob, this is on wind energy.

Are there items addressing intergovernmental coordination in data use but nothing focus on stakeholder engagement beyond fisherman engagement. Separately, you discussed getting input on stakeholder engagement through the current offshore wind comment period in this week's workshop.

Is it the intent to add more IJC actions focusing on stakeholder engagement based on the feedback received during these two events.

Bob LaBelle: Sure. So on the last one, I think yes, our intent is certainly to get more input. And as we go forward, you know, after this discussion today, was going to be reaching out to sectors that worked in this area and the public as well.

We've got to the first item about other than fishing interest that's probably my fault. They did try to indicate that. While we wanted to emphasize fishing and offshore sand and wind interactions by no means that we turning our back or reducing efforts for other industries and interested parties out there. So that was you know, my problem on presenting that.

Laura Cantral: OK. So I'm just going to offer what – we got several and then we don't have time to take them all right now, so we'll table them for our Q&A session.

But Bob, we have a comment from (Matt Gobb) that you may want to respond to. So here is the comment.

I'm hearing a lot of language that sounds likely or back to quote, plans for the plan. I think in some circumstances, that approach is warranted but if all we get in the OAP is talk a future planning. We have wasted a huge opportunity to make ocean management work better for all use sectors. We need some specific actions in the OAP that all RPB members can start working towards immediately after the final plan is approved.

Bob LaBelle: Well, I know that's the common sentiment in some quarters I tend to look at the other way that I think this ocean action plan is a huge step for – with regard to how the RPB entities are going to be working together in the future. And I think it opens the door for much better collaboration that are project reviews, better ocean protection in the future.

Laying the groundwork, this thing hasn't been easy. I know that some of the language in the slide sounds like planning for planning state but we did a lot about maybe a year ago. But in BOEM right now, we're talking to the folks that right the environmental documents that have to go to the Secretary of the interior and recommend where to go and what to do and what not to do.

And those are the folks that are buying into the concept of the data portal. BOEM has spent millions and millions of dollars on ocean research and was going to make sure if that's the data is accessible through the portal and that everyone should be using that data that wants to weigh on these topics.

Likewise, our environmental analyst will be better served with you know, more information easily accessible to the portal. The personal relationships that have been gained in the Mid-Atlantic region among federal state and tribal partners and something that shouldn't be ignored if we have a controversial project coming down the road, they'll be the first people that we call and things will proceed in a much better way.

So I don't share that negative aspect I think that you'll see specifics coming out of that but the ground work has to be laid first and that's what we're doing.

Laura Cantral: OK. Thank you very much. We're going to move on. The next topic you're going to hear about is Fishery Science and Management and Kevin Chu, you're up.

Kevin Chu: Thank you, Laura and good afternoon to everybody, I really appreciate people giving us your time and your perspective on what we're trying to accomplish.

I'm going to talk a little bit about fishing collaboration. I want to start by acknowledging my co-partner, Mike Luisi. Mike works for the State of Maryland but he's the regional – the Mid-Atlantic fishery management council's representative to the RPB, he can't be on this call because the council is meeting as we speak and he will be raising the RPB and its activities to the council on Thursday morning.

And expects to ask the council's specifically to endorse working more closely with the regional planning buddy both to ensure that a broader perspective is both into fisheries management but also to ensure the fisheries perspective is brought into other activities as well.

Can I have the next slide please.

The objectives and the goals are taken straight from the regional planning documents so I won't really go into the – you've seen other slides mentioning these activities as well. I will say that, what we are trying to do is to take specific discreet and practical steps to improve inter-jurisdictional collaboration.

These are things that we are going to implement. Now, we are not going to really wait for the national ocean council to approve the plan before we start moving forward. But at least some of these things. So what we're trying to do is find very specific activities that we can accomplish now to do broaden the collaboration.

Can I have the next slide?

We're proposing seven different actions that we hope will improve into jurisdiction collaboration. Five of these – those were at the September meeting will be familiar with. They haven't significantly changed. But two of them are as a result of the advice we heard from stakeholders both in September and then also in MARCO stakeholder liaison meeting in November.

Numbers one, two, three, four and seven are the ones that you've seen before. Five and six are the new ones, I don't know why the order ended up that way. Don't ask me about that stuff it's solved. It's all in the bureaucracy.

Next slide, please.

So I want to remind people that there is a lot of collaboration already going on. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the Mid-Atlantic Fisheries management council. Both have state and federal representatives on board, a various of – one moment, I just lost my screen.

Well, we have a number of organizations that already by law collaborate to bring people together. And so again, what we're trying to do is not reinvent the wheel not duplicate efforts but rather to enhance the efforts that are already going on. And if need be define new activities and new ways to collaborate but again not to reinvent the wheel.

Can I have the next slide please.

So I'm just going to step quickly through some of these proposed actions because people have seen them already. One to ensure that we collaborate better with the states. We are proposing to meet at least once a year for a daylong meeting with the state fisheries directors and NOAA leadership.

That's going to improve relationships make sure that we know of each other's concerns and start planning further in advance for actions that we know are coming down the pipe that are concerned to our partners.

Next slide, please.

We are proposing to collaborate better on the science of climate change and how it affects fisheries. The northeast fishery science center is developing as we speak a regional action plan on climate science. And it is at least contemplating hosting a workshop to – with the states and other scientific organizations to identify key areas of scientific research to help us all prepare better for climate change.

This is not a new concept, the Mid-Atlantic council hosted the workshop not too long ago and other groups have done the same. But the science is changing constantly, it's always being updated and we can all work better if we meet more often to discuss what we know about climate change and to use that knowledge to prepare for the future.

Next slide, please.

The specific request that Mike Luisi intends to make to – on Thursday to the council is that the council – the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management council insight to the RPB to participate on its advisory panel. The council has a committee on ecosystem and ocean planning and that committee has been very effective, it got a wide array of dopant already on it.

Just yesterday, it adopted a series of positions statements about best practices for non-fishing impacts or managing non-fishing impacts on the ocean and it

will start to take up discussion of a fishing impacts on the environment in the near future and it's an ideal forum for the RPB to engage in.

Next slide, please.

We wanted to have a specific action to improve collaboration with the tribes. There – they really have not been as engaged as we would have preferred to have them engage in the fishery management process. And so, NOAA is proposing to meet to – at least to offer to meet with the tribes. So we don't want to put force the tribe to engage if they are too busy or have higher priorities. But we will offer to meet with each of the tribes, the federally recognized tribes to just discuss perspectives and get to know each other better.

Next slide, please.

So this action is one of the ones that we heard from constituents in September. They wanted a way in which we would get the fishing community more engaged in ocean management. And so we are proposing that the RPB make a specific commitment to discuss and this is perhaps a plan to plan.

We don't know exactly how the RPB will resolve this question but our first step is to get the RPB to commit to talking about and discussing ways to two things. One, is to reflect the fisheries knowledge in ocean planning and data products. And there's some of that already going on with the data portal that it can be improved. And also ways to alert fisherman to upcoming ocean management projects.

Next slide, please.

And then apparently, we heard in September that there was effort – that there was an interest in improving in collaboration on central fish habitat. That one went right over my head, I confess. But we heard it again in November at the MARCO liaison committee. And so, we are proposing a couple of different ways in which we can strengthen collaboration on the central fish habitat.

And we intend to work with the Mid-Atlantic council staff to improve our collaboration on their preparations for essential fish habitat documents and that was approved yesterday at the council meeting. And we also intend to host training sessions for other agencies such as the Army Corps of Engineers and as you heard Bob say, for the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management on how to use essential fish habitat criteria.

Next slide, please.

So the last to the proposed actions is that we proposed to get to know the interest and perspectives of recreational fisherman better. This is an area where I think the National and Fishery Service has failed in the past, we're really trying to rectify that. We intend for our first – our concrete action that we will take is we will host workshop or we will participate in the workshop, we are not actually hosting it although were funding it.

With recreational leaders, to understand their perspective and also to explain the fisheries management process and how that works. And that – in addition, we'll be developing a unilateral recreational fishing action plan but that's not an RPB process.

All right. Next slide.

Yes, so I don't really need to go into this. This is a project of NOAA plus all if – or at least many of the federal agencies and states and tribes and we welcome stakeholder comments. I'm done. Thank you.

Laura Cantral: Thank you, Kevin. We're going to go our next topic which is Tribal Uses and Kelsey Leonard at the Shinnecock Indian Nation. And our RPB trial Co-Lead is going to cover this topic.

Go ahead, Kelsey.

Kelsey Leonard: Thank you, Laura. So everyone for Tribal Uses, I just want to acknowledge the other co-champions for this action item, Kevin Chu with NOAA and Catherine McCormick from the Funky Indian Tribe.

Next slide.

So from the framework, the goal pertaining to inter jurisdictional coordination for tribal usage is to recognize and respect the right of tribal nations to free prior and informed consent for taking into account important tribal uses and submerged cultural resources in the planning process. Within that, we have increased coordination amongst tribe, state and federal entities for integrated management effort and to document foster shared understanding of ocean and culture sites and beliefs and values related to the Mid-Atlantic.

Next slide, please.

So within those objectives we have an overview of some of our proposed action. One to identify best practices for increased coordination amongst tribe, states and federal entities. Our second action is to improve the ability of RPB entities to use traditional knowledge for planning management and decision making purposes. And our third action item is to identify data gap pertaining to tribal uses and develop a research agenda to address those needs.

Next slide.

So within our first action item, we want to look at best practices for consultation. This is also forthwith the northeast regional planning buddy and their tribal colleague as well to identify, review and if appropriate to just update to tribal consultation policies as they pertained to ocean planning. So these are consultation policies within the federal entities as well as state entities and even the fishery management council.

So a review of those policies as they currently stand. The desired outcome, the desired outcome is that, there would be a more comprehensive consultation policies that can contribute to coordination amongst tribes and states and federal entities in the RPB.

Next slide, please.

So, with our – then we also are looking to develop a tribal and agency marine planning contact directories. The outcome for this is, we recognize that

communication between tribes are difficult and so we're having a contact directory will enable increase coordination and alleviate some of those and obstacles that tribes in other state and federal entities are currently facing in terms of communication.

We're also looking to work with tribes within the northeast and Mid-Atlantic. I'm getting some comments that I might be breaking up a bit. Can you hear me now?

Laura Cantral: That's all right.

Kelsey Leonard: Can you hear me now?

Laura Cantral: Just in you were stronger but you've been breaking up.

Kelsey Leonard: OK. I guess it's at a point in time it becomes unrecognizable, please let me know and I apologize, there doesn't seem to be much I can do. So the...

(Crosstalk)

Laura Cantral: So keep going.

Kelsey Leonard: OK. The next action item being to assist tribes with the development of a tribal ocean planning network, we've realized that coordination and engagement of tribes in the regional planning body has been difficult so that tribal ocean planning network is a way to assist in that development of continued and sustained engagement.

We – and next are looking for federal and state RPB entities to commit to seeking in formal meeting with tribal government officials. The purpose is to share perspective, discuss best practices for consultation and to increase the engagement of traditional knowledge holders in the planning process. Really this is about reconciliation and developing trust.

Next slide, please.

We also are then hoping to develop best practices for identifying and incorporating traditional knowledge into the planning process. We recognized

that traditional knowledge of tribes and other holders is necessary and needed in planning but we often don't know how to operationalize that. So this action item is looking to develop best practices to do so.

Next slide.

We then have data in research and we're hoping to identify data gap pertaining to tribal uses by conducting, continuing to conduct we've already done a few but making that as a part of the ocean action plan to continue to conduct participatory GIS workshops that will enable us to develop a tribal use research agenda, a tribal needs research agenda and a submerged cultural resources research agenda.

The desired outcome is to place tribal data on the MARCO portal and other regional state or federal planning portal as approved by tribes with the caveat that this data is solely for the purposes of the ocean planning and not to be used in other instances.

Next slide, please. And ideally, all of these action items are to support an understanding on a culture for regional ocean planning that honors the inherent sovereignty – sovereign status and reserved rights of tribes that recognizes state and federal trust responsibilities that supports tribes in pursuing the vitality of their culture and economy as these relate to the ocean that promotes collaborative ocean and cultural resource management that supports and looks toward the integration offers – operationalization of traditional knowledge.

And that respect tribal connections to the water and you know, ultimately seeks to enhance and maintain important relationships amongst tribes the fisheries management council state and federal agencies participating within the RPB.

So I think you and I look forward to any of your questions.

Laura Cantral: Thank you, Kelsey. So we have a question that's related to the last couple of topics that we took off this is a question, Kevin for you from (Sarah Chases). It's actually a comment. We're glad to see attention to central fish habitat

consultation process. However rather than just investigating that process. We recommend that the workgroup developed specific recommended IJC measure to strengthen that process.

Kevin Chu: Yes, so thank you to (Sarah) for that comment. And I think that's really what ultimately the RPB will be aiming to do is look for specific ways to strengthen it, although those two activities that I proposed are aimed at strengthening the process. We intend to work more closely to strengthen the Mid-Atlantic council's – EFH process and trained the practitioners in other agencies that are required to consult with us.

So that's the purpose of those kinds of actions and there maybe others and I would love to hear other thoughts of specific things that we can do within the context of the law of course to strengthen EFH and the alternative is strengthening the law which we can't really do. Thank you.

Laura Cantral: OK. Thanks to all. We're going to move on to – we still have a few topics that we want to get through and I'm going to turn now to Joe Atangan with Joint Staff for the U.S. lead forces to talk about National Security.

Joe Atangan: Good afternoon everybody. Our objectives in a National Security in a jurisdictional coordination actions are relatively simple. We want to ensure that national security interest in the Mid-Atlantic were accounted for through the enhanced coordination increased transparency in sharing of information across agencies.

These interest that we're talking about, our proposed actions and activities above on and below the ocean surface that may impact military training and testing ranges as well as the approaches to these ranges and bases. Our desired outcome is to establish an efficient to an efficient informed process to support effective coordination. We want to leverage existing processes, practices, programs, and facilitate addressing of national security impasse a concerns throughout agency managements and environmental and regulatory review processes.

Next slide, please.

To do so, we're looking at focusing in a number of areas, the first of which is in the coordination and management aspect. As I mention we want to leverage existing processes, practices, programs and groups to assess the professional and national security impacts for proposed actions. We want to identify potential mitigations and facilitate decision making processes.

As you imagine, the DOD is rather a sizeable organization and there are many branches of the services that may participating in these military ranges. So we want to leverage the existing programs that are out there already. Included in these with the Navy seen in (Bram) compliance program which includes the Atlantic fleet training and testing environmental impact statements the phase three which is to be completed in the summer of 2008 with the analysis and the studies are going on now as well as the integrated comprehensive monitoring plan that we have with regard to marine mammals.

As far as the coordination with the existing task force in planning groups, some of these include task force that have been mentioned already by Bob and others which include the wind energy task force. The office of the secretary defense clearing house which worse the wind energy task force. The area maritime security committees which are individual harbor security committees that we worked with the coast guard.

And the Navy's ocean serving system security group which deals with ocean observing systems specifically, BOE's and listening devices that maybe placed on in the vicinity of our operating ranges.

Next slide, please.

And important is, making sure that were operating from the same data. So our goal is, to identify authoritative publicly releasable data for use and management environmental regulatory reviews. It's important that we are looking at the same picture.

Navy is in the process of providing national security debt layers and the metadata to the Mid-Atlantic portal as well as the Northeast portal. Included in these layers are our period boundaries, submarine transit lanes and other areas of interest.

Next slide, please.

Among the ossuaries, we want to focus on the compatibility issues and potential impacts of national security. In many cases, organizations don't know who to contact with – our national security is in rise of the level of interest and they don't know until the very end that there is in fact a national security interest.

So we want to do this identify pass with these entities of proposing these activities to coordinate with DOD to review these – to review for national security impacts. We want to include these points of contacts within the data portal hopefully embedded within the metadata for these various layers so that if activities or infrastructure is being proposed in those areas that they know who to contact for and coordinate.

Examples of those is we have an organization, we know is fleet activities of fast fact case for activities within the Virginia Cape Operating areas as well as in northeast operating areas. We have the Navy forth cable protection offices for activities and cables in the area of cabling.

These are important points of contact that can help deconflict many of the activities proposed or otherwise within the military training and testing ranges.

As far as member entity and stakeholder involvement, we're working closely with our partners in the U.S. Coast Guard as well as others within DOD to ensure that we can – we know the right folks, deconflict the prose actions. We continue with our stakeholder engagement with – by seeking input from the department of defense's regional environmental coordinators who have routine interaction with communities that are involved with as well as the secretary of defense clearing house as well as intergovernmental task force in targeted stakeholders.

And that concludes my portion of the brief.

Laura Cantral: Thank you, Joe. All right, we're going to go to our next speaker, who is Ms. (Simple) with New Jersey who is going to talk about non-consumptive recreation list.

(Les Simple): Thank you and good afternoon. So can you go to the next slide, please.

The – our PB objectives from the framework for non-consumptive recreational use are to account for the importance of near shore and offshore non-consumptive recreational use and their local and regional economic contributions in the Mid-Atlantic. We want to make sure in the management of other ocean uses and resources that the non-consumptive recreational use impacts are considered.

Next slide, please.

While most user groups of fishing, wind, sand, commercial vessels have primary representative groups and primary agencies governing their activities, non-consumptive recreation on – typically has neither. Thus, this economic police significant sector might not be adequately considered nor consulting in various ocean planning decisions.

The intent of including non-consumptive recreation in the OAP is to raise awareness of the value of non-consumptive recreational uses to coastal communities, communities and empower entities in making decisions which potentially affect these users. We would like to make sure that occurs by continuing to collect data and information about non-consumptive recreational uses.

Next slide, please.

We would like to – in the collection of data also identify potential impacts and use conflicts to the high value areas. The math that you're seeing are formed the MARCO portal and the current data that is available. We would like to do this as an RPB by forming a workgroup and having this workgroup were closely or be provided assistance from stakeholders.

Next slide, please.

The work group would be charged besides getting data to identify and catalog current federal state travel processes authorities and regulations which influence non-consumptive recreational uses. We want to ensure that there is an understanding of what the authorities are and if were most protectively using them and at the federal and the state and the tribal layers.

Next slide, please.

Once we have a catalog of all of these authorities and processes we want to review them and see if there needs to be improvements.

Next slide, please.

Because of the – this sector is diffused, we want to hold workshops in each of the states if possible and resources are available to identify is we miss any knock in recreational uses or high value areas and make sure that all of that information is made available on the MARCO portal.

Thank you.

Laura Cantral: OK. Thank you, (Les) and a question has just come in. That you can fill from (Margaret Flanagan) who's asking what are some specific example of non-consumptive recreational uses.

(Les Simple): Not to some different reason or uses or surfing, boating. We are all watching birding, diving, you know, sightseeing you know, there's quite a number of them.

Laura Cantral: All right. Thank you. So we have couple more topics that are related to IJC actions that we want to get through. We want to hear about the data portal from Laura McKay and the coastal management act from Davis Kaiser.

And then I suggest that we also, Gwynne, you just follow David and give folks a quick update about cycles or engagement and then we'll have your remaining time to take up questions. So Laura McKay, you're up.

Laura McKay: OK. Thank you, Laura Cantral. As we've been talking, I hope that's been evident to you that data is critical to our Mid-Atlantic Ocean planning effort and that the portal is really the key tool that we have available to help us with all of these actions.

So, next slide, please.

So, it basically, four things that we want to keep an eye on here for the portal. Once is just to maintain the operational components that we have. All of the data development management and the web maintenance, so that's just keeping it up and running. The second thing we want to do is to really expand our public engagement to enhance the data and functionality and an example of that is something that's happening tomorrow actually at the Mid-Atlantic fisheries management council meeting.

We're having an open house to show the fish data that's going into the marine life data analysis. We're fully aware that the data that's being used, the trial surveys has limitations, we're asking the commercial fisherman to help us write what all of those limitations are so that people understands that when they view this data. What the limitations are and also to get input from them about how we can improve that data and we've already gotten some good feedback.

We know they like to have – in that type, data collected where you have a fisherman onboard with the troll to help identify key places to look and so forth. So we want to expand that sort of public engagement to enhance the data and that could apply to various data layers.

The third item is to review and add new data and mapping product to stay evolve. There's always continuing research going on, always new data layers and it's going to be critical to keep those updated in the portal and getting new features and layers in there.

And then, finally, the last one which is the most critically important action or trust to focus on is to transition this portal from its current short term funding just year to year. To a long term stable source of funding. And that is going to be a hard nut to crack but we need to somehow pull resources among the

federal agencies and possibly states to make sure that we have staff in place for a long period of time so that this portal is always available and useful ocean planning into the future.

One last thing since I think I might have a couple extra minutes, I failed to mention in the HOE actions the last one when I was talking about marine debris, I just wanted to let folks know that the Virginia CDM program is hosting marine debris summit March 7th through 9th and (Vims in Glister Point) Virginia, Virginia Institute of Marine Science. And we hope to have a half day dedicated to a session on regional marine debris reduction.

So I just want to let folks know if they are interested to look at our website for details on that coming up. But I will leave it at that and turn it back to you, Laura.

Laura Cantral: Thank you, Laura. So next, we're going to hear from David Kaiser who's with the Office for Coastal Management at NOAA who is going to talk about the Coastal Zone management act.

David.

David Kaiser: Great. Thanks. Next slide, please.

OK. So over the past year or so, there had been many discussions on how original planning body and a regional ocean plan can be used to enhance the coastal zone management act, federal consistency process. And you know, again, for those who don't know, so federal consistency is the Coastal Zone Management Act provision that allows states to review federal actions even federal actions in federal waters that may affect the uses and resources of a state's coastal zone.

And in October of this year, NOAA released a draft discussion paper talking about how the Regional Ocean Planning Effort and Coastal Zone Management Act could help each other out. And what we focused on are some potential action items under three categories.

Next slide.

So these are – and these have been discussed among the federal agencies and with the coastal state and the regional planning body and they – right now, we're looking at the three primary activities. One is, enhancing federal notice to states and tribes and so this would be a way for states, tribes and others to find out about potential federal actions affecting coastal uses of resources in a more timely fashion.

And so, we're looking at the potential use of the data portal if that could be set up in a certain way to post notices and then also to provide automatic notification to folks and then also potentially state and tribal list serves that the federal agencies would use.

The second item is using the data portal as a means to help folks make a better coastal effects determination, so that could be an applicant needing to evaluate coastal effects, it could be a federal agency but really will focusing on how a state can use a regional ocean plan and the data portal to make better coastal effects analysis and what we call causal connections between a proposed action and impacts to coastal uses or resources.

The second item there under that is also looking at options for – and this gets a little technical but for identifying geographic areas in the federal waters where certain federal actions would be subject to CCMA, federal consistency review.

Third category of activities we're looking at is using NOAA's existing regulations for states and federal agencies to see if there may be some agreements that could be reached to exclude some federal actions from further CCMA review because they don't need to be done all the time or because they maybe minor in scope or to establish thresholds or conditions where an activity would or could or could not be subject to state CCMA review.

Next slide.

And so what we're looking at is given the timeframe of the Ocean Action Plan and the Regional Ocean Plan is establishing general objectives for these and then probably working out the logistics of the details of these as we go along and after the Ocean Action Plan is finalized. And to do that, we will establish

a working group of federal state, tribal, CCMA folks to look at these issues and some of the hurdles we might have to overcome and some of the negotiations that would have to occur to make these happen.

And also to make sure that whatever is agreed to meets NOAA's Coastal Zone Management Act regulatory requirements including those for public participation. And so this work will be facilitated by my office as we move forward. And I think that's it.

Laura Cantral: Thank you, David. So let's take a question for David from (Sarah Chases). (Sarah) is asking on page 12 of the CCM consistency discussion paper that you referred to, you said that not all impacts to a coastal user resource result in coastal effect that would trigger a consistency review. Could you please explain that.

David Kaiser: Sure. So you have activities that maybe occurring offshore and federal waters whether it's five miles offshore, or 20 miles offshore and you might have an impact. So you might have an activity that temporarily means that a whale swims over there instead of over there or that commercial fishing isn't really impacted in terms of its ability to fish but might be you know, for a very short temporary period have to avoid a certain area or something.

And the idea is that every impact that occurs out there, whether to a coastal use or to a coastal resource, doesn't raise the level of what we call a coastal effect, meaning that their use of their resource is not being impacted in such a way that rises to what we call a coastal effect.

Laura Cantral: All right. Thank you. So, our last presentation is Gwynne Schultz who is going to give you a sense of some upcoming stakeholder engagement opportunities. And Gwynne, off to you.

Gwynne Schultz: Good afternoon, everyone. So, on the next slide, you're going to see a list of upcoming stakeholder engagement activities. First on this list is a great opportunity to learn about the ecological and human use data synthesis products that were described earlier by Laura McKay and the Regional Ocean Assessment.

So, during this event that we've got scheduled for January 29th, in Dewey Beach, Delaware, the MARCO contractors will present their products and be available to answer questions.

We'll be posting information, you know, more about the logistics, on the MARCO website in early January. So, then in early 2016, the RPB will be drafting various chapters of the draft Ocean Action Plan. That will be discussed in person meeting scheduled for late March.

And as we work through the draft, especially looking at further refinement of these inter-jurisdictional coordination activities, RPB members will continue targeted outreach and engagement with stakeholders.

And you heard a few examples of those today, whether it was reaching out to Harbor Safety committees, wind energy task forces, and efficient community, just to name a few.

Then during the March RPB meeting, we're going to encourage stakeholders to attend and formally submit comments to stirring the designated public comment sessions. But back by popular demand, the RPB is also going to host a workshop the day before the meeting, similar to what we did during the last one. It was really well-received, and that's going to provide an opportunity for a better dialogue between RPB members and the workshop participants.

And moving on, the draft Ocean Action Plan will be released in mid-June for a 45-day public comment period. And to facilitate engagement during that public comment period, you know, we will be sponsoring a webinar similar to today, and then holding a series of public listening sessions throughout the region. And just as we do on a regular basis, anyone interested in submitting, you know, comments through our online system is also able to do at any time.

And then finally, in September, we will be holding our last kind of in-person meeting when we finalize the Ocean Action Plan before submitting it, and at that time, we'll also be providing an opportunity for stakeholder engagement and public comment.

So, that's just a quick overview of some of the opportunity for engagement that we have already identified, and we encourage you to reach out to us if you see other ways and opportunities that we can help facilitate that engagement.

With that, Laura, I'm going to turn it back to you.

Laura Cantral: Thank you, Gwynne. And so, stay tuned for more information about all of those events that Gwynne referenced. Your engagement is important to the RPB and really help to, you know, take advantage of all of those opportunities.

There is a question from (Noah Chessman) about stakeholder engagement, Gwynne, so let me just post it here. Is the RPB planning to reach out to the scientific community to review the in-depth output during the January-March 2016 time period? And if so, how?

Gwynne Schultz: OK. What I'm going to do is pass that to Laura McKay who is – kind of our point person on that.

Laura McKay: OK. On the January 29th meeting, yes. That scientist can certainly come. I just wanted to remind folks that as I mentioned earlier, there has been more than 80 scientists involved as that data has been being developed by the MDAT team.

So, there has been a lot of rigorous scientific review already, but certainly, anyone then who's interested would be invited to attend that presentation in January 29th.

Laura Cantral: All right. And (Matt Gauve) is asking, will there be evening components to the listening session similar to the last round of session?

Gwynne Schultz: (Matt), we have not yet really thought through the public listening session. We need to figure out first what kind of resources that we have, so that will help us identify, you know, whether we will – how many of them that we'll be having, and whether they will be, you know, be in each of the states or not. But we have heard your request and, you know, if we can, I think it's probably

a great idea to both get those folks that can come during the day, but those that are working and can't.

So, you know, we acknowledge your request and we'll just kind of have to figure out with the finances and the logistics.

Laura Cantral: OK. So, if you can tell from the slide, we're at our question and comment portion of this webinar, having concluded the series of presentations. And obviously, we've tried to take some questions along the way and we're going to use our remaining time to get through as many of the additional questions that have been posed as we can.

And we got several additional questions, a number of them related to the proposed actions on Healthy Ocean Ecosystems, a few that are asking about the nature of the RPB when it comes to developing recommendations and (the existing) recommendations and best practices.

So, I'm just going to start lobbing them over to you, presenters, and other members of the RPB if you want to chime in as I've said at the very beginning, you know, just indicate that you'd like to weigh in and we'll be glad to hear from you.

So, the first question, I think this is one for the colleagues, is more of a general IJC question, and it's from (Brent Greenfield). Would the RPB publish the list of criteria that are being used to drive the development of the draft action item?

Gwynne Schultz: Bob, are you – are you on? Well, this is Gwynne. I will start by saying during one of our – I think it was the last, no, one before that. During one of our meetings, the RPB did prepare a draft list of criteria that we use for inter-jurisdictional coordination actions, identifying which ones that we would be pursuing.

Those criteria are currently listed up on the (from) Mid-Atlantic website. And since that time, we have not revisited those criteria. But what we do have is currently up on the website.

Bob LaBelle: Yes. Gwynne, this is Bob. I agree. I was sitting and trying to remember where it was. I think that initially, we made sure that the candidate action items met the intent of the Ocean Policy Act. And so – and then from there, we progress to a list of candidate ideas that were then vetted through the RPB entities in terms of what was practical and doable, and of a longer nature, what we should sort of strive towards. So, I think that’s how it sort of developed.

Laura Cantral: OK. So, I’m going to go back to the questions that we got by topics, so sort of back to the top in three of the different topics. So, starting with Healthy Ocean Ecosystems, a few additional questions.

The – this next one is also from (Brent Greenfield). It was noted that the identification of ERA or areas with region wide features would lead to a final finding for interested parties. What is the RPB envisioning for this finding? Data, map, subjected conclusions, or editorial judgment, a combination thereof, or something different entirely?

Laura McKay: Hi. This is Laura. Yes. I think those final reports on each selected area would include maps, the best available scientific information and data that we have for that area, it would probably also note additional research needed. But yes. We would try to make it as complete as we can, laying out all of the available data for each area.

Laura Cantral: All right. Still on the Healthy Ocean Ecosystems topic, a question from (Noah Chessman). For the research forum agenda action that you described, how does the RPB plan to engage science community? I think this is similar to a question that we just took from (Noah). Including government scientists, but also scientists from academia, NGOs, and other scientists to ensure full vetting of the proposed research agenda.

Laura McKay: Yes. I think the idea would be to have a workshop that was quite open to I think both scientific experts, whether they’re academic or, you know, in other institutions, as well as traditional knowledge, folks who perhaps spend a good part of their lives out on the ocean and see a lot – we want to value that kind of input, as well.

So, yes. I think a fairly open kind of workshop to identify and help vet and prioritize research needs.

Laura Cantral: The next question is from (Ali Chase), and the question is, the work that's envisioned to identify trend in the help of ERA, what's the deadline for this work and will this research be included in the plan?

Laura McKay: I don't think their research will – I don't think it will be done before the spring. I think there's going to be too much to do. So, that would be part of the ongoing work.

And again, the idea would be once we agree upon the definition and have these areas identified, we would select them one by one to do this in-depth review to really go into a deep dive for each area about what those trends of health are in each area.

So, I would envision that as somewhat long-term, certainly not something that's going to be done in the next three months.

Laura Cantral: The next question is from (Sarah Chases) and it's really – it's a question and comment or comment and question.

And Laura, you may have a response that you want to share, also maybe it's a broader question, it's a process question. So colleagues, you may want to also weigh in.

It's important that IJC actions include agency commitment to improve management and conservation of ERA. This is needed in order to meet the first goal of the planning process, which is to promote ocean ecosystem health, functionality, and integrity through conservation, protections, enhancement, and restoration.

So far, we're not seeing such commitments in the IJC actions discussed today and are very concerned about that and the fact that the Healthy Ocean work group has backed off of making recommendations for management of ERA. How and when will these commitments be made?

Laura McKay: Yes. I understand the disappointment on the part of the environmental NGOs about that but I think it was also made very clear, especially from the fishing community and others that we have to be very careful not to overstep the authority or the lack of authority that the RPB has.

And so, any management decision will still be the realm of the individual federal agency that has responsibility for managing human uses in the area.

And again, that's because if we were to put management recommendations, specific management recommendations, into the plan or promulgate those recommendations and then the federal agencies are required to be in compliance with the plan, that creates that problem of an RPB potentially overstepping its authority.

So, we have to be very careful in how we – how this is worded and in terms of what the RPB does and does not have authority to do under the law.

So, I think the best that we can do is to really focus on pulling together and coordinating to get the best available science and data about the importance of these areas. And also putting together that information about how it's currently managed and what the trends are in that area.

I think we want to be very careful not to prohibit activities or suggest changes to regulation, you know, if we don't even know exactly what the cause and effect may be with particular human uses.

So, those have to be well understood. But we will do our best to collect this information and get this good in-depth reviews with these areas, make that information very accessible to all stakeholders so that the federal agencies with authority to make decisions do so with the best available science.

Laura Cantral: All right. Let's continue on this thread with a somewhat related question. And Bob, I think this is a good one for you to field for some clarification for (Matt Gauve) who is asking, if the agency representatives on the RPB run the recommendations by their agency and get approval from their agency that the recommendations make sense, how is that crossing the line of authority?

Agencies will be pre-approving a recommendation not being directed by the RPB, the RPB is agency, RPBs are supposed to improve management of ocean resources through change, not just compile data.

Bob LaBelle: Well, I think the ultimate goal is to have this information be applied in decision-making. And so, you know, first characterizing it as was Laura just nicely described, like the ERA effort. We want to get the best available information, put it in a regional clearing house that everyone uses at least as baseline information going forward in what their agency or their organization is studying or trying to decide.

So, I think the RPB effort was being cleared in each federal agency is what that is through being a champion has proposed to do to meet the overall goals of Federal Ocean Management.

And so, each agency, you know, as those reviews and approvals go up through the management chain in the agencies, they are stepping forward and saying, “Yes. We will do this the best of our ability as long as it fits in with our mission.”

And so, it’s not just sharing data for sharing’s sake. In BOEM for example, our research, we can’t spend any money on research unless its applied research that feeds into a decision making.

So, a lot of our environmental science information that’s based on data directly goes into supporting NEPA documents, biological opinions that, you know, look at potential impacts to the native species, marine mammals, et cetera.

And also, research on monitoring and mitigation and how existing uses can perhaps co-exist out there safely. So, the overall goal is certainly applying this information to agency decision making and the RPB, I believe, is a good tool to have agencies be able to do that, you know, in a cross-sharing of information basis.

Laura Cantral: All right. Next we have – we’re still on Healthy Ocean Ecosystems. We have a comment from (Eric Kanhee), (Eric), I hope I say your last name right.

There's quite a bit of discussion on future data gathering and processes, and best management practices for validation of ocean uses within each of the IJC workgroup. (Eric), I'm interpreting your comment correctly, I think he's offering a suggestion that each IJC workgroup include their impact on Healthy Ocean Ecosystems as positive work.

OK. So, we're going to move on to another topic now and take a couple of questions on wind energy. And the first question is from (Anne Merklin). I wanted to circle back on the question of stakeholder engagement in the offshore energy IJC. I'm still unclear what it will actually look like in execution.

Can you speak about how BOEM stakeholder engagement approaches will change as a result of the ocean plan as opposed to what BOEM is doing now with stakeholder engagement?

Bob LaBelle: Sure. This is Bob. I believe that some of the slides that I went over today outlined some of the higher level stakeholder engagement like this new White House group that's going to be looking towards exams, you know, overall safe offshore.

Likewise, we're asking stakeholders to use that federal registered notice that BOEM has outright now to tell us what they like and don't like about our regulations and processes or activities. So, that's wide open for comment in any way.

In addition, there's a number of workshops that I've mentioned there's – would be reaching out to groups that are involved with the industry to talk to them about what they feel about, you know, today's presentation, and we'll be doing that shortly.

We'll be certainly – BOEM is happy to provide the funding for the stakeholder workshop that Gwynne mentioned. That's going to be the day before our next RPB meeting in March. So, in all cases, we are trying to get more input on this.

Laura Cantral: Bob, here is another question for you and/or Laura to fill from (Ali Chasis) on the theme that we've already been discussing in other questions. Why is it OK to use data to develop best practices for wind and not use the ERA data to develop best practices or management improvement for the environment?

Bob LaBelle: I don't think that it is. I mean, we're going to use best data for all those things. I think the best practices that I think are referred to in some of the slides here go to the heart of what we're doing. Some of those best practices are early engagement with constituents when this project is coming along.

Another huge best practice is the commitment to use the portal data and to try to agree on what the best available information is. And you know, so the best practices specifically for feeding into offshore wind, I think we were trying to talking back to the overall best practices, of things that really engagement and using data, et cetera.

I certainly would think that we'd want to use the best information we can to go forward in looking at these ERAs. We have to figure out how they're going to be created. And I think the best way to do that is by full participation of all RPB members.

Laura Cantral: OK, Bob. One more for you. This is a comment from (Matt Gauve). About that offshore sand, sand raising need to also take into account impact to offshore recreational use such as diving, sand placement on beaches need to take into account tourism and recreation occurring on the beach and beach swimmer health.

Bob LaBelle: We appreciate that input. I didn't get into, you know, we were speaking of sand in a regional sense. But once an offshore sand site has been identified and that sand is going to be moved on to a specific beach, there's a whole host of environmental reviews that BOEM works with along with a corps of engineers and involves the public.

And you know, adding the non-consumptive recreational part is something that we can probably do a better job on, so I do appreciate that comment.

Laura Cantral: OK. So now, we have a handful of some general questions, not on any of the specific IJC actions necessarily. And this one, Bob, I think this one's for you. It's from (Brent Greenfield). Can you provide an update on the development of guidance on how agencies will use the plan, as well as the guidance on the nature and detail for agency commitment? What, if any, plans does the RPB have for public review and comment on such guidance?

Bob LaBelle: Yes. On that, we're working with the Northeast RPB to come up with a pretty basic overview of how federal agencies will commit to using the plan. And so, that's the document that's presently under review in both RPB. I believe that it's somewhat – I think it is a public document at this point, but I would have to check with the folks up there on that.

But the goal in that document is basically an outline of general statements that would be sort of like a template for each agency to use the information, and I believe the thought is that in the Northeast, I believe that they're going to put the federal registered notices out at some point to get input on that. The Mid-Atlantic hasn't fully discussed the result, whether we're going to go that route with the federal registered notice.

Laura Cantral: All right. And a final question from (Brent). The National Ocean Policy Coalition reiterate that 45 days of comment on the draft ocean plan is insufficient for user groups and public review and ask that the RPB commit to a minimum 90-day public comment period. Is the RPB open to considering a longer comment period?

Bob LaBelle: I think the RPB discussed this after that was raised. I believe (Brent) didn't have a full RPB meeting. I don't recall if it was the last one or the one before it. But we did discuss that and we looked hard at the schedule in terms of where we could patch them up with some more days for that review.

And unhappily, we – there's so much work to be done to make sure that this is done properly. They're taking another few weeks out of the preparation and the RPB I think discussed it and decided that we should not do that. And so, we encouraged anyone who really wants to comment to use that 45 days to the

best they could. And please, if any RPB member or practice, characterize this, please let us know.

Laura Cantral: All right. The final question that has come in is a question about uses that haven't been identified in this suite of IJC actions that have been presented today but the RPB is planning to include in the plan, and it's how is RPB planning on incorporating undersea fiber optic cables and undersea infrastructure into the plan?

Bob LaBelle: This is Bob again. I think we may have had some volunteers to do a cursory look at that as a play folder and full recognition of how important it is. There's no one champion that could step up at that time to take on this one. But I believe we are going to address it in the plan and we have a small working group that will be reaching out to that sector for input on what we do write about it in the plan.

Laura Cantral: OK. So, thanks to all of you who offered your questions and comments. As I mentioned, these will all be captured for the record and posted with the other materials after this webinar on the RPB website. If – seeing no other questions or comments coming in, I think we're ready to wrap up.

So, again, on behalf of the RPB, thank you very much for attending this webinar. We hear a lot of great input on the draft IJC actions and it, as always, is very, very important to this process in shaping this direction.

As a reminder, some (new) term opportunities for continued engagement include the MARCO event on January 29 in Dewey Beach, Delaware where the MARCO contractors will present ecological and human use data synthesis and regional ocean assessment products. And the stakeholder workshop the day prior to the RPB in-person meeting, so stay tuned for further details about all of those.

The materials will be up shortly on the website, and I think that will conclude our proceedings for today. Thank you and Happy Holidays.

Operator: Thank you to all of our participants for joining today. And we hope that you found this webcast presentation informative. This does conclude the webcast, and you may now disconnect. Have a good day.

END