Finding of No Historic Properties Affected
for the
Commercial Wind Lease and Grant Issuance within the Central Atlantic Wind Energy Areas on the Outer Continental Shelf Offshore Delaware, Maryland, and/or Virginia

Finding

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) has made a Finding of No Historic Properties Affected (Finding) for this undertaking, pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 United States Code [U.S.C.] 306108) and 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 800.4(d)(1), of the Section 106 regulations, "Protection of Historic Properties." BOEM will ensure the Finding will be met through BOEM's inclusion of lease and grant stipulations requiring lessees/grantees to avoid any potential historic properties identified through their high-resolution geophysical surveys while conducting bottom-disturbing activities associated with site characterization activities.

Documentation in Support of the Finding

I. Description of the Undertaking

Summary

This document describes BOEM's compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA and documents the agency's Finding for the undertaking including the issuing of commercial and research leases within the Central Atlantic wind energy areas (WEAs) and granting rights-of-way (ROWs) and rights-of-use and easement (RUEs) in the region. BOEM has prepared this documentation in support of the Finding, following the standards outlined in 36 CFR § 800.11(d) (Documentation Standards). BOEM is providing this Finding and supporting documentation to the entities that have agreed to be consulting parties for the undertaking (see the *Consultation with Appropriate Consulting Parties and the Public* section below). This Finding and supporting documentation will be made available for public inspection by placement on BOEM's public website prior to the bureau issuing the leases.

Federal Involvement

The Energy Policy Act of 2005, Pub. L. No. 109-58, added Section 8(p)(l)(C) to the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Lands Act (OCSLA). This new section authorized the Secretary of the Interior to issue leases, easements, or ROWs on the OCS for the purpose of renewable energy development, including wind energy development (see 43 U.S.C. § 1337(p)(l)(C)). The Secretary delegated this authority to the former Minerals Management Service, now BOEM. Final regulations implementing the authority for renewable energy leasing under the OCSLA (30 CFR Part 585) were promulgated on April 22, 2009.

On July 31, 2023, BOEM announced that it completed the Area Identification process to delineate the WEAs in the Central Atlantic, pursuant to 30 CFR § 585.211(b) (Appendix A). BOEM has determined that issuing commercial leases within the WEAs and granting ROWs and RUEs within the region constitutes an undertaking subject to Section 106 of the NHPA, and that the subsequent site characterization activities constitute activities that have the potential to cause effects on historic properties.

Description of the Wind Energy Areas

The Central Atlantic WEAs consists of three areas designated as Area A-2, Area B-1, and Area C-1 (Figure 1). Table 1 provides the area in acres of each WEA, and the closest distance in nautical miles from each WEA to Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia, as well as North Carolina.

Table 1. Description of the Central Atlantic wind energy areas

Wind Energy Area	Area (Acres)	Closest Distance to Delaware (nautical miles)	Closest Distance to Maryland (nautical miles)	Closest Distance to Virginia (nautical miles)	Closest Distance to North Carolina (nautical miles)
A-2	101,769	26.4	28.9	43.4	128.3
B-1	78,283	24.5	18.9	19.0	89.9
C-1	176,493	87.2	61.1	30.9	35.4
Total	**356,545**	--	--	--	--

Source: BOEM 2023 (Table 1-1)

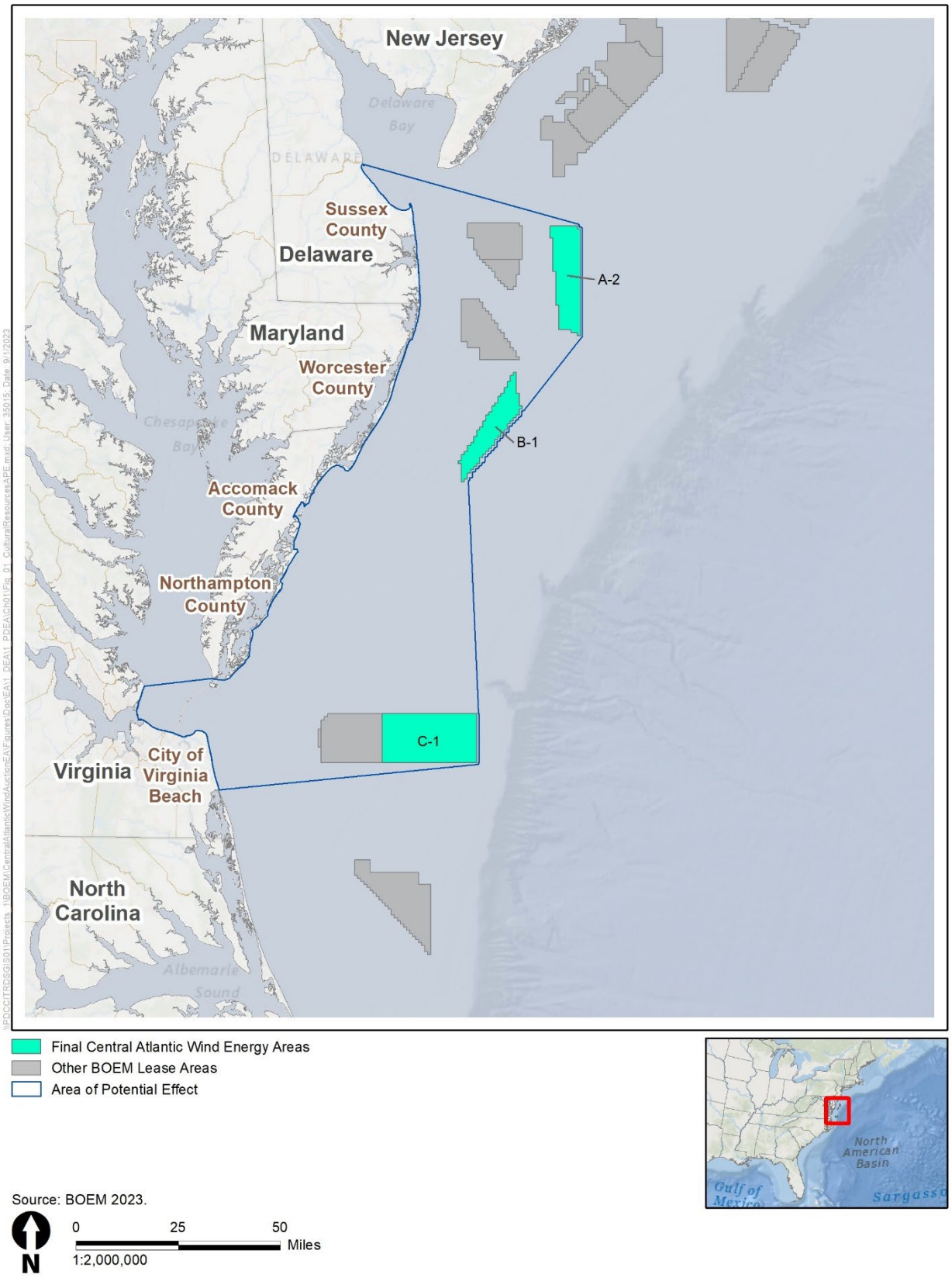


Figure 1. The Central Atlantic wind energy areas and area of potential effects

The Undertaking

The undertaking includes the proposed issuance of commercial leases within the three WEAs and granting of ROWs and RUEs in the region, and takes into account the execution of associated site characterization activities on these leases or grants. A lessee must submit the results of site characterization surveys with their plans (e.g., 30 CFR § 585.610, § 585.626, and § 585.645). Although BOEM does not issue permits or approvals for these site characterization activities, it will not consider approving a lessee's plan if the required survey information is not included.

Site characterization activities include both high-resolution geophysical (HRG) surveys, which do not involve seafloor-disturbing activities, and geotechnical investigations, which may include seafloor-disturbing activities. Retrieval of lost equipment may occur, as necessary. HRG surveys are designed to acquire shallow hazards data, identify potential archaeological resources, characterize seafloor conditions, and conduct bathymetric charting. BOEM anticipates that HRG surveys would be conducted using the following equipment: swath bathymetry system, magnetometer/gradiometer, side-scan sonar, and shallow and medium (seismic) sub-bottom profiler systems. This equipment does not come in contact with the seafloor and is typically towed from a moving survey vessel that does not require anchoring. BOEM does not consider an HRG survey to be an activity that has the potential to cause effects on historic properties, and this activity is not considered further in this Finding.

Geotechnical testing or sampling involves seafloor-disturbing activities and therefore has the potential to cause effects on historic properties. Geotechnical testing is conducted to assess the suitability of sediments to support a structure or transmission cable under any operational and environmental conditions that might be encountered (including extreme events), and to document soil characteristics necessary for the design and installation of all proposed structures and/or cables. Geotechnical investigation may include the use of equipment such as gravity cores, piston cores, vibracores, deep borings, and cone penetration tests, among others. Some of these methods may additionally require the use of anchored vessels, multi-point anchored barges, or jack-up barges.

BOEM also anticipates cases where geotechnical testing methods may be employed as part of the identification of historic properties. In some instances, direct sampling may be the only available method of testing the presence or absence of horizons of archaeological potential within features of interest identified during geophysical survey.

The undertaking does not, however, include cable installation or connection to shore-based facilities, installation of site assessment equipment (e.g., meteorological buoys), or consideration of commercial-scale wind energy facilities. Should a lessee propose to deploy site assessment equipment within the Central Atlantic WEAs, they would submit a Site Assessment Plan (SAP) to BOEM, which BOEM would consider under a separate Section 106 review. Should a lessee propose to construct and operate a commercial-scale wind energy facility within the Central Atlantic WEAs, they would submit a Construction and Operations Plan (COP) to BOEM, which BOEM would consider under a separate Section 106 review. Should a developer propose installation of a regional backbone transmission system, they would submit a General Activity Plan (GAP) to BOEM, which BOEM would consider under a separate Section 106 review.

Area of Potential Effects

As defined in the Section 106 regulations (36 CFR § 800.16(d)), the area of potential effects (APE) is the geographic area or areas within which an undertaking may directly or indirectly cause alterations in the character or use of historic properties, if any such properties exist. The dimensions of the APE are influenced by the scale and nature of an undertaking and may be different for different kinds of effects caused by the undertaking.

The APE for this undertaking is defined as the depth and breadth of the seabed that could potentially be affected by seafloor/ground-disturbing activities associated with site characterization activities. The APE for site characterization activities includes the discrete horizontal and vertical areas of the seafloor that may be impacted through geotechnical sampling, which may include the collection of core samples, soil borings, or other bottom-disturbing techniques that could directly affect historic properties on or below the seafloor, if present. In addition, geotechnical sampling may also require the use of barges or anchored vessels that could also directly affect historic properties, if present.

Site characterization activities could occur within the extent of the Central Atlantic WEAs and along corridors that extend from the WEAs to the onshore energy grid. It is anticipated these ROW/RUE routes would consist of a minimum 200-foot-wide corridor centered on any anticipated cable locations. Because no ROW or RUE grants considered as part of this undertaking have been issued, BOEM is uncertain of the exact location of these cable corridor surveys. However, BOEM can anticipate their geographic extent given that power generated from potential Central Atlantic lease areas would need to be transmitted to shore, either directly from the lease areas by individual export cables to onshore cable landings and/or to offshore regional transmission system(s). These potential export cables are anticipated to be offshore Delaware, Maryland, and/or Virginia. Therefore, for the purposes of this undertaking, BOEM estimates that the APE associated with cable site characterization activities would occur within discrete corridors in the region between shore and the Central Atlantic WEAs as far north as a line drawn between the northwestern corner of WEA A-2 and central Delaware and as far south as a line drawn between the southwestern corner of WEA C-1 and the southeastern Virginia coastline (see Figure 1).

Based on the distance from shore and the minor in scale and temporary manner in which site characterization studies will likely occur, BOEM has concluded that the equipment and vessels performing these activities will be indistinguishable from existing lighted vessel traffic from an observer onshore. Therefore, BOEM has not defined, as part of the APE, onshore areas from which the site characterization activities would be visible. In addition, there is no indication that the issuance of a lease or grant of a RUE or ROW and subsequent site characterization will involve expansion of existing port infrastructure. Therefore, onshore staging activities are not considered as part of the APE for this specific undertaking.

Consultation with Appropriate Consulting Parties and the Public

BOEM issued a Call for Information and Nominations on April 29, 2022, and subsequently released Draft WEAs on November 16, 2022. On July 31, 2023, BOEM published the Announcement of Area Identification (Area ID) Memorandum for the Commercial Wind Energy Leasing on the OCS in the Central Atlantic. BOEM published a Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Assessment on August 1, 2023, which remained available for public review and comment through August 31, 2023. BOEM engaged with stakeholders through coordination with

the Central Atlantic Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force throughout the process, including holding Task Force meetings on February 16, 2022, and October 10, 2023.

BOEM staff engaged and coordinated with Central Atlantic Tribal Governments by holding Tribal coordination meetings. A Tribal coordination meeting was held on December 9, 2021, to discuss offshore wind in the Central Atlantic, Task Force roles and responsibilities, and a review of the leasing process. This meeting was attended by representatives of the Chickahominy Indian Tribe – Eastern Division, Delaware Tribe of Indians, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Nansemond Indian Nation, Pamunkey Indian Tribe, Shinnecock Indian Nation, and The Delaware Nation. A Tribal coordination meeting was held on December 5, 2022, to discuss the Central Atlantic Draft WEAs, and was attended by representatives of the Chickahominy Indian Tribe – Eastern Division, and Delaware Tribe of Indians. A Tribal coordination meeting was held on September 6, 2023, to discuss the Central Atlantic Final WEAs, and was attended by representatives of the Delaware Tribe of Indians and the Mashantucket (Western) Pequot Tribe.

BOEM is currently preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) to consider potential environmental consequences of site characterization activities (i.e., biological, archaeological, geological, and geophysical surveys and core samples) and site assessment activities (i.e., installation of meteorological buoys) associated with issuing wind energy leases in the Central Atlantic WEAs. The EA also considers potential environmental consequences of granting ROWs and RUEs for subsea cable corridors in the Central Atlantic and takes into account the execution of associated site characterization activities within these potential easements. The Draft EA was published on January 12, 2024, and BOEM held a 30-day public review and comment period for the EA, which closed on February 12, 2024.

BOEM received comments on the Draft EA related to cultural resources and consultation from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Park Service (NPS). The EPA's comments encouraged BOEM to continue to work with federally recognized Tribes and to conduct additional outreach to Tribes to ensure they are receiving correspondence pertaining to BOEM's undertakings. The NPS's comments were regarding potential effects to NPS-managed resources such as National Historic Landmarks (NHLs) which may occur as a result of future actions following lease issuance (i.e., future proposed offshore renewable energy development). None of the other comments received concerned historic properties, the scope of historic property identification efforts, or any other topic relevant to the Section 106 review of the undertaking that is the subject of this Finding.

BOEM initiated Section 106 consultation for the undertaking of issuing a commercial lease and the issuance of ROW/RUE grants within the Central Atlantic WEAs by sending an e-mail, including an electronic copy of the initiation letter, on August 11, 2023, to the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Maryland SHPO, Virginia SHPO, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP). A hard copy of the letter was mailed on August 15, 2023. On the same dates, BOEM sent electronic and hard copy letters of invitation to consult to the following 23 federally recognized tribes:

- Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
- Catawba Indian Nation
- Chickahominy Indian Tribe
- Chickahominy Indian Tribe-Eastern Division

- Delaware Tribe of Indians
- Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
- Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
- Mashantucket (Western) Pequot Tribe
- Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe
- Mohegan Tribe of Connecticut
- Nansemond Indian Nation
- Pamunkey Indian Tribe
- Rappahannock Tribe
- Seminole Tribe of Florida
- Shawnee Tribe
- Stockbridge-Munsee Community Band of Mohican Indians
- The Delaware Nation
- The Narragansett Indian Tribe
- The Shinnecock Indian Nation
- Tuscarora Nation
- Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe
- Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah)
- United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians

Of these tribes, the Shawnee Tribe responded to BOEM on August 30, 2023, declining to participate. The remaining 22 federally recognized tribes did not respond to BOEM's invitation to consult; however, BOEM has elected to include these tribes in the final list of Consulting Parties (Appendix B), and to continue to provide them with information and documents throughout the environmental review process, including this Finding, unless they contact BOEM to explicitly decline to participate or opt-out of consultation.

The list of potential Section 106 consulting parties for the undertaking was developed and included federal and state agencies, local governments, state-recognized tribes, and non-governmental organizations including historical societies, museums, and historic preservation organizations (see Appendix B). An electronic copy of the letter of invitation to consult was sent via e-mail on August 11, 2023, and a hard copy of the letter was mailed on August 15, 2023, to over 200 individuals representing over 90 organizations on the list of potential Section 106 consulting parties, informing them about the undertaking and inviting them to be an NHPA Section 106 consulting party to the project. These letters, in part, solicited comment and input regarding the identification of, and potential effects on, historic properties from leasing and site assessment activities for the purpose of obtaining public input for the Section 106 review (36 CFR § 800.2(d)(3)) and to determine their interest in participating as a consulting party (see Appendix B). BOEM received requests to become consulting parties from 23 entities in addition to the three affected SHPOs and the 22 federally recognized tribes mentioned above. Therefore, BOEM's Final Consulting Parties List and BOEM's List of Consulting Federally Recognized Tribes for this undertaking (see Appendix B) includes a total of 48 entities.

BOEM shared this Finding in draft form with the 22 federally recognized tribes, Delaware SHPO, Maryland SHPO, Virginia SHPO, and the consulting parties on December 12, 2023, for a 45-day

review and comment period which closed on January 26, 2024. BOEM received concurrence on this Finding from the Maryland SHPO on December 27, 2023 (Appendix C). No comments were received from the Delaware SHPO or the Virginia SHPO. Per 36 CFR § 800.4(d)(1)(i), "If the SHPO/THPO [Tribal Historic Preservation Officer], or the Council if it has entered the section 106 process, does not object within 30 days of receipt of an adequately documented finding, the agency official's responsibilities under section 106 are fulfilled."

BOEM received additional comment letters on the Finding from the Catawba Nation on January 12, 2024, the City of Virginia Beach on January 5, 2024, the National Park Service on January 26, 2024, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on January 26, 2024, the U.S. Navy History and Heritage Command on December 14, 2023, and the Virginia Department of Military Affairs on December 18, 2023. These letters each stated the entities' agreement with BOEM's Finding, and some entities expressed their desire to consult on the future Section 106 reviews of potential offshore wind development in the Central Atlantic lease areas.

II. Description of the Steps Taken to Identify Historic Properties

BOEM has reviewed existing and available information regarding historic properties that may be present within the APE, including any data concerning possible historic properties not yet identified. Sources of this information include consultation with the appropriate parties, including the Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia SHPOs, and information gathered through BOEM-funded studies.

Relevant BOEM studies include a review of the prior *Commercial Wind Lease Issuance and Site Assessment Activities on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf Offshore New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia, Final Environmental Assessment* (BOEM 2012a) and *Inventory and Analysis of Archaeological Site Occurrence on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf* (BOEM 2012b). These studies compiled information on reported shipwrecks and modeled the potential for pre-European contact sites based on reconstruction of sea level rise, human settlement patterns, and site formation and preservation conditions. A review of reported potential marine archaeological resources in BOEM's Atlantic Shipwreck Database was also conducted (BOEM 2020). BOEM's Atlantic Shipwreck Database does not represent a complete listing of all potential marine archaeological resources on the Atlantic OCS, but rather serves as a baseline source of existing and available information for the purposes of corroborating and supporting identification efforts. To supplement this research, BOEM also reviewed the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Automated Wreck and Obstruction Information System (AWOIS) database to identify additional known shipwrecks or unidentified submerged obstructions within the APE (NOAA 2016). BOEM also performed file searches within the Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia SHPOs' cultural resources databases to identify any known historic properties within the APE from those sources.

To date, the Central Atlantic WEAs have not been subjected to a complete and comprehensive archaeological identification survey; however, the types of historic properties expected to be present within the APE include marine archaeological resources, which are the physical remnants of past human activity that occurred at least 50 years ago and are submerged underwater and can include both pre-contact and historic-period archaeological sites.

Pre-contact Period Historic Properties

During the Late Pleistocene, at the Last Glacial Maximum (circa 20,000 years before present [B.P.]), the glaciers that covered vast portions of the Earth's surface sequestered massive amounts of water as ice and lowered global sea level approximately 394 feet (120 meters). As the glaciers began to retreat, global sea levels rose gradually, increasing by about 66 feet (20 meters) by circa 15,000 B.P. Following this time, global temperatures fluctuated through alternating periods of warming and cooling, with rapid sea level rise occurring during warming periods. During the period from approximately 14,300–13,600 B.P. sea level rose approximately 66 feet (20 meters), and during the period from approximately 11,600–11,000 B.P. sea level rose approximately 49 feet (15 meters). The rate of sea level rise slowed from this point to approximately 7000 B.P., after which it slowed significantly and gradually approached its present rate (BOEM 2012b).

Research characterizing the specific marine transgression rates in the Middle Atlantic draws primarily from broader regional data, as locally derived data are limited. Conservative estimates of sea level rise in the Middle Atlantic place sea levels at approximately 394 feet (120 meters) below present levels at the Last Glacial Maximum (circa 20,000 B.P.), at approximately 230 feet (70 meters) below present levels at 13,000 B.P., at approximately 98 feet (30 meters) below present levels at 10,000 B.P., between 49 and 59 feet (15 and 18 meters) below present levels at circa 8000 B.P., and around 33 feet (10 meters) below present level by 6000 B.P. (BOEM 2012b). The Central Atlantic WEAs and potential cable corridors are located within the region of the OCS that formerly may have been exposed above sea level and available to human occupation during the early pre-contact period. Sea level data provides a guide to where submerged archaeological sites may be present on the OCS. The highest rate of sea level rise occurred during a period of known occupation along the Middle Atlantic coast, which archaeologists place at approximately 11,600–11,100 B.P. This period was followed by a much slower rate of sea level rise. The rate of sea level rise slowed to approximately 0.3 inch (0.8 centimeter) per year until circa 7000 B.P., after which the rate of sea level rise slowed even further (0.08 inch [0.2 centimeter] per year or less). After 7000 B.P., archaeological sites would have been subject to a higher frequency of erosion or destruction by the process of marine transgression (BOEM 2012a).

Offshore marine archaeological resources include submerged pre-contact sites. Pre-contact cultural traditions are typically presented in a sequence of named chronological periods that are based on a variety of factors including changing climatic conditions, material culture and technological changes, settlement patterns, subsistence, and trade. The designated start and end dates for each chronological period should be viewed as reference points representing gradual change rather than abrupt cultural shifts. The regional pre-contact chronology often employed by archaeologists to divide the span of time between the first Native Americans settlement of the region and the arrival of European explorers in the 16th century includes three periods (Paleoindian, Archaic, and Woodland). The Paleoindian period spans roughly 15,000–10,000 B.P. It is followed by the Archaic period, which is divided into three sub-periods: the Early Archaic (10,000–8000 B.P.), the Middle Archaic (8000–6000 B.P.), and the Late Archaic (6000–3000 B.P.). Some researchers in the Mid-Atlantic ascribe a fourth sub-period in the Archaic time span, designated the Transitional or Terminal Archaic (3000–2700 B.P.). The subsequent Woodland period (3000–400 B.P.) postdates any possibility for submerged sites on the OCS (BOEM 2012b).

Paleoindian society was semi-nomadic within a defined territory using a broad spectrum of plants and animals for subsistence (BOEM 2012b). Small to medium-sized fauna would have been the

predominant focus for game, as the large megafauna (mammoth and mastodon) populations were declining in response to climatic changes (Custer et al. 1983; Gardner 1989). Paleoindian sites are distinguished by their distinctive stone tool technology including fluted projectile points. However, Paleoindian sites on the Central Atlantic coast are rare. While numerous isolated finds of fluted points have been identified in the Chesapeake Bay area, few intact archaeological sites have been documented. More intensely occupied Paleoindian camp sites tend to be located near freshwater sources and sources of high-quality lithic material for making stone tools (Anderson and Sassaman 1996; Gardner 1989; Mounier 2003). The dearth of sites may be attributed to the notion that many Paleoindian site locations are now submerged (Blanton 1996; BOEM 2012b). The Paleoindian period was a time of slowly moderating climate with cooler temperatures, increased precipitation, and rapid sea level rise. Several episodes of melting occurred (up to 11,000 B.P.) as a result of the North American ice sheet collapsing. As the sea level rose and isostatic rebound occurred, smaller drainages were captured and deeply incised drainages formed across portions of the OCS. These drainages formed highly localized productive estuarine environments that would have been utilized for food procurement, freshwater sources, and habitation as the marine transgression continued moving shoreward across the OCS. The enhanced sediment flows in these drainages associated with catastrophic flooding and increased precipitation would have provided for localized burial of possible Paleoindian sites, if present, below the transgressive sediment reworking (BOEM 2012b; Kraft et al. 1983).

By the Early Archaic period, the climate had become warmer with less precipitation. Sea level had risen from approximately 230 feet (70 meters) to 98 feet (30 meters) below present-day levels. Prior to this inundation, the Central Atlantic WEAs were likely exposed, dry land, although it would have been proximal to the shoreline and experiencing continued transgression with rapid burial of deeply incised drainages, ponds, or lagoons. After inundation, the WEAs would have been exposed to wave- and current-based sediment transport and reworking throughout the remainder of the Archaic Period to the present day. By the Middle Archaic period, sea level rise would have approached 49 feet (15 meters) below present-day levels, and the location of the Central Atlantic WEAs would have been completely submerged. By the Late Archaic period, climatic and environmental conditions approached present-day conditions.

Corresponding with lower global sea level during the Late Pleistocene, the section of the OCS where the Central Atlantic WEAs are located was once exposed, dry land that was subsequently submerged by rising sea levels during the Early Holocene. These once-exposed areas are identified as having a high potential for the presence of now-submerged archaeological sites dating to the time periods during which they were exposed. Possible Paleoindian period settlement areas on the Middle Atlantic OCS are identified offshore the Delmarva Peninsula in the vicinities of the Norfolk and Washington canyons (BOEM 2012b). Around 13,000 B.P., these areas would have contained coastal zone characteristics such as barrier island lagoons where archaeological sites were likely to exist and where site burial was highly possible (BOEM 2012b). Based on models of sea level rise, the Central Atlantic WEAs have a high potential for the presence of pre-contact marine archaeological sites dating from the Paleoindian through Early Archaic periods, and very low to no potential for the presence of submerged pre-contact archaeological sites more recent than the Middle Archaic period.

Historic Period Historic Properties

Offshore marine archaeological resources in these general areas include submerged, historic period shipwrecks, which may date from as early as the 16th century to the present (BOEM 2012a, 2012b). Shipwrecks potentially located in the WEAs could date as far back as the 16th century with ships of discovery, but the bulk of the potential losses is more likely to be from the 19th to mid-20th century. The potential for finding shipwrecks increases in areas such as historic shipping routes, approaches to seaports, reefs, straits, and shoals. The distribution of shipwrecks offshore Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia generally correlate with vessel traffic, especially in the vicinity of port approaches and navigational hazards. The greatest concentration of known or reported shipwrecks per-linear mile of coastline in the Atlantic Region is found offshore the Mid-Atlantic states (BOEM 2012a). However, many of the WEAs are in regions that have not been previously surveyed for the presence of submerged archaeological resources. Based on prior research (BOEM 2012a, 2012b) and the current review of the BOEM Atlantic Shipwreck Database (BOEM 2020) and other relevant sources, all three Central Atlantic WEAs and the APE covering the possible area for cable routes to shore are characterized as having a high probability for containing shipwrecks or other submerged historic-period archaeological resources.

Results of Databases Queries

A review of BOEM's Atlantic Shipwreck Database revealed that there are 41 marine archaeological resources, or potential marine archaeological resources, reported within the WEAs (BOEM 2020). Of these 41 resources within the WEAs, 20 are shipwrecks with documented vessel names; 12 of the 20 reported shipwrecks within the WEAs have documented dates for sinking. The remaining 21 of the 41 total resources reported within the WEAs include 16 unidentified anomalies, 2 barges, and 3 unnamed downed aircraft. Additionally, the location reliability for 39 of the identified resources is classified as medium, with one entry classified as having low location reliability and one classified as high location reliability. The previously recorded submerged historic resources identified in BOEM's database and located within the WEAs are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Marine archaeological resources reported in the BOEM Atlantic Shipwreck Database within the Central Atlantic WEAs

Wind Energy Area ID	Record ID #	Vessel Name and Type	Position Accuracy	Year Sunk
A-2	14	*Terror Wreck*, Freighter, Steam	Medium	Unknown
A-2	1228	*Ark*, Unknown	Medium	Unknown
A-2	1286	*Northern Pacific Barge*, Barge	Medium	Unknown
A-2	2468	*Solvang*, Unknown	Medium	Unknown
A-2	3072	*Tartar*, Unknown Gasoline Screw	Medium	1915
A-2	3182	Barge, Barge	Medium	Unknown
A-2	3195	*Insane*, Unknown	Medium	Unknown
A-2	7988	Unidentified, Unknown (AWOIS# 1060)	Medium	Unknown
A-2	8020	Unidentified, Unknown (AWOIS# 1106)	Medium	Unknown
A-2	8022	Unidentified, Unknown (AWOIS# 1108)	Medium	Unknown
A-2	8023	Unidentified, Unknown (AWOIS# 1110)	Medium	Unknown
A-2	8025	Unidentified, Unknown (AWOIS# 1113)	Medium	Unknown

Wind Energy Area ID	Record ID #	Vessel Name and Type	Position Accuracy	Year Sunk
A-2	9062	*Jacob Jones*, Destroyer, Steam	Low	1942
A-2	9543	*Northern Pacific*, Passenger, Steam	Medium	1922
A-2	9790	*Faithful Steward*, Frigate, Sail	Medium	1785
A-2	10046	*T.J. Hooper*, Schooner (AWOIS# 1065)	Medium	1935
A-2	10060	*Jacob Jones* (Stern), Destroyer, Steam (AWOIS# 3044)	Medium	1942
A-2 Subtotal				*17*
B-1	7960	Unidentified, Unknown (AWOIS# 1020)	Medium	Unknown
B-1	7961	Unidentified, Unknown (AWOIS# 1022)	Medium	Unknown
B-1	7962	Unidentified, Unknown (AWOIS# 1024)	Medium	Unknown
B-1	8935	*Char + Vernon*, Trawler	Medium	1961
B-1	10516	*San Gil*, Freighter, Oil Screw (AWOIS# 1026)	Medium	1942
B-1 Subtotal				*5*
C-1	974	Unknown (bomb)	Medium	Unknown
C-1	976	Unknown (lost net)	Medium	Unknown
C-1	2310	*Greenland*, Barque	Medium	1864
C-1	2607	*Capt. Starns Wreck*, Unknown	Medium	Unknown
C-1	3674	Unidentified, Unknown	Medium	Unknown
C-1	3675	Unidentified, Unknown	Medium	Unknown
C-1	3676	*Old Wreck*, Unknown	Medium	Unknown
C-1	7931	Unidentified, Barge (AWOIS# 845)	Medium	Unknown
C-1	9629	Unidentified, Unknown	Medium	Unknown
C-1	9631	Unidentified, Unknown	Medium	Unknown
C-1	9632	Airplane, Aircraft	Medium	Unknown
C-1	9636	Airplane, Aircraft	Medium	Unknown
C-1	9637	Airplane, Aircraft	Medium	Unknown
C-1	9641	Unidentified, Unknown	Medium	Unknown
C-1	9642	Barge, Barge	Medium	Unknown
C-1	9799	*Hibernia*, Merchant	High	1775
C-1	10269	*Vicky*, Unknown (AWOIS# 819)	Medium	Unknown
C-1	10291	*Eidsvold*, Freighter, Steam (AWOIS# 816)	Medium	1918
C-1	10332	*Spring Chicken*, Trawler, Diesel Screw	Medium	1944
C-1 Subtotal				*19*
TOTAL				**41**

Source: BOEM (2020)

In addition to the 41 resources within the WEAs listed in Table 2, the review of BOEM's Atlantic Shipwreck Database revealed that there are an additional 694 marine archaeological resources, or potential marine archaeological resources, reported within the APE external to the WEAs (BOEM 2020).

Furthermore, the NOAA AWOIS Database (NOAA 2016) documents a total of 323 wrecks and 299 obstructions in the APE; however, many of these directly correspond with entries in BOEM's Atlantic Shipwreck Database (BOEM 2020). Culling the AWOIS database entries that are duplicated in the BOEM database indicates an additional 153 wrecks and 198 obstructions that are unique to the AWOIS database and located in the APE. All 153 of the AWOIS wrecks in the APE are located outside of the WEAs. Just one AWOIS obstruction (ID# 15019) is located within WEA C-1, and the remaining 197 obstructions are in the broader APE.

A search of the Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia SHPO databases revealed that there are 39 known offshore marine archaeological resources, or potential marine archaeological resources, within the APE (Delaware SHPO 2023; Maryland SHPO 2023; Virginia SHPO 2023). None of the 39 resources are located within the WEAs. Twenty-six of the resources are classified as shipwrecks, of which 14 include a site or vessel name and 12 are unidentified. The remaining 13 of the 39 total resources are unidentified submerged anomalies. One resource is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), 1 has been determined eligible by the Virginia SHPO for the NRHP, 3 are classified by the Virginia SHPO as "potentially eligible" pending further evaluation for the NRHP, and the remaining 34 have not been evaluated for NRHP eligibility. The previously recorded offshore marine archaeological resources, or potential marine archaeological resources, identified in the SHPO databases are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Marine archaeological resources reported in SHPO databases within the APE

Source	Resource Name	Resource Number	NRHP Status
DE SHPO	Bethany Beach Wreck Site	7S-K-030	Unevaluated
DE SHPO	*Tracy-Merrimac* Shipwreck Site	7S-G-149	Unevaluated
DE SHPO	*HMS DeBraak* Wreck Site	7S-D-047	Unevaluated
DE SHPO	Roosevelt Inlet Shipwreck Site	7S-D-091	Listed
DE SHPO	Beach Plum Island Wreck Site	7S-D-084	Unevaluated
DE Subtotal			*5*
MD SHPO	*Yankee*	18WO153	Unevaluated
MD SHPO	*Dune* Wreck	18WO154	Unevaluated
MD SHPO	*Van Driessche* Wreck	18WO225	Unevaluated
MD SHPO	NI-25/26 (*Navy* Wreck)	18WO237	Unevaluated
MD SHPO	NI-39 (*Winter Quarter* Wreck)	18WO238	Unevaluated
MD Subtotal			*5*
VA SHPO	Dogleg NE Cluster A	44NR0051	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	Dogleg SW Cluster A	44NR0052	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	TS Center North Cluster A	44NR0053	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	TS Center North Cluster B	44NR0054	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	TSW-West 1 Cluster A	44NR0055	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	TSE-East 2 Cluster A	44NR0056	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	TSE-East 5 Cluster A	44NR0057	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	Thimble Shoals Channel E5 Buffer, Cluster A Target	44NR0058	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	Target CR001	44VB0376	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	Target LA001	44VB0377	Unevaluated

Source	Resource Name	Resource Number	NRHP Status
VA SHPO	Unidentified Submerged Anomaly	44VB0399	Potentially Eligible
VA SHPO	VBWA, Submerged Anomaly	44VB0400	Potentially Eligible
VA SHPO	Unidentified Submerged Anomaly	44VB0401	Potentially Eligible
VA SHPO	Lynnhaven Inlet Wreck	44VB0239	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	Unidentified Shipwreck	44AC0139	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	Unidentified Shipwreck	44AC0202	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	Unidentified Shipwreck	44AC0402 - Possible Location 1	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	Unidentified Shipwreck	44AC0402 - Possible Location 2	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	Unidentified Shipwreck	44AC0403	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	Unidentified Shipwreck	44AC0404	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	Unidentified Shipwreck	44AC0454	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	Unidentified Shipwreck	44AC0457	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	Unidentified Shipwreck	44AC0458	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	USS *Despatch*	44AC0554	Eligible
VA SHPO	British Steamship *Oakdene*	44AC0555	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	*Copper Bottom* Wreck	44AC0781	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	Unidentified Shipwreck	44VB0090	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	Unidentified Shipwreck	44VB0348	Unevaluated
VA SHPO	Unidentified Shipwreck	44VB0349	Unevaluated
VA Subtotal			*29*
TOTAL			**39**

Sources: Delaware SHPO 2023; Maryland SHPO 2023; Virginia SHPO 2023.
DE = Delaware; MD = Maryland; VA = Virginia.

The Roosevelt Inlet Shipwreck Site (NRHP Reference #06001056; State# 7S-D-091) is listed on the NRHP for its national significance under NRHP Criteria A and D in the areas of commerce, maritime history, and transportation. The site includes a wood-hulled commercial sailing ship lost during the period from 1762–1775 in the lower Delaware Bay offshore Lewes Beach in Sussex County, Delaware. Nearly 38,000 artifacts have been collected from the submerged primary wreck mound, debris fields, and the shoreline. After the initial discovery and archaeological exploration, the site was stabilized to preserve a majority of the wreck in the marine environment (Delaware SHPO 2023; Griffith and Fithian 2006).

The USS *Despatch* (44AC0554) has been determined eligible for the NRHP. The wooden-hulled, steam-propelled ship was commissioned in 1873 and purchased by the federal government 3 years later for the use of the Cabinet and other officials. The USS *Despatch* served Presidents Rutherford B. Hayes, James A. Garfield, Chester A. Arthur, and Benjamin Harrison as the first presidential yacht before sinking in 1891 offshore Assateague Island (Langley 2005; Virginia SHPO 2023).

In summary, the Central Atlantic WEAs have a high potential for the presence of marine archaeological resources, including submerged pre-contact period archaeological sites dating from the Paleoindian through Early Archaic periods as well as submerged historic period resources including shipwrecks. However, lease and grant stipulations will require lessees/grantees to avoid

any potential historic properties identified through their high-resolution geophysical surveys during the conduct of ground-disturbing activities associated with site characterization activities. The required avoidance of historic properties will ensure BOEM's Finding of No Historic Properties Affected for this undertaking, consistent with 36 CFR § 800.4(d)(1).

III. Required Elements in the Lease and or Grant

As described in the Draft EA (BOEM 2023: Appendix H), BOEM will require lessees to avoid or minimize potential impacts on the environment by complying with regulatory requirements and conditions imposed by consultations. These Standard Operating Conditions (SOCs) would be detailed in the Final Sale Notice and implemented through lease stipulations to reduce or eliminate potential risks or conflicts with specific environmental resources, including potential historic properties. Implementation of these lessee requirements through lease stipulations will ensure BOEM's Finding of No Historic Properties Affected for this undertaking, consistent with 36 CFR § 800.4(d)(1). Inclusion of the following elements in the lease will ensure the identification and avoidance of historic properties and is a requirement of this Finding.

The following elements, designed to avoid impacts on offshore historic properties from ground-disturbing activities associated with site characterization surveys, would be included in commercial leases issued within the Central Atlantic WEAs and ROWs and RUEs grants in the region:

- The lessee must not knowingly affect a potential archaeological resource without the lessor's prior approval.
- The lessee must provide the results of an archaeological survey with its plans.
- The lessee must ensure that the analysis of archaeological survey data collected in support of plan submittal and the preparation of archaeological reports in support of plan submittal are conducted by a Qualified Marine Archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards (48 *Federal Register* 44738–44739) and has experience analyzing marine geophysical data.
- The lessee may only conduct geotechnical exploration activities in support of plan submittal in locations where an archaeological analysis of the results of geophysical surveys has been completed. This analysis must include a determination by a Qualified Marine Archaeologist as to whether any potential archaeological resources are present in the area that could be affected by bottom-disturbing activities.
- Geotechnical sampling activities must avoid any potential archaeological resources by a minimum of 164 feet (50 meters). The avoidance distance must be calculated by the Qualified Marine Archaeologist from the maximum discernible extent of the archaeological resource.
- Upon completion of geotechnical exploration activities, a Qualified Marine Archaeologist must certify, in the lessee's archaeological report(s) submitted with a plan, that such activities did not affect potential historic properties identified as a result of the HRG surveys performed in support of plan submittal, except as follows: in the event that the geotechnical exploration activities did affect potential historic properties identified in the archaeological surveys without the lessor's prior approval, the lessee and the Qualified Marine

Archaeologist who prepared the report must instead provide a statement documenting the extent of these impacts.

In addition, BOEM would require that the lessee observe the unanticipated finds requirements at 30 CFR 585.802. The following elements would be included in leases issued within the Central Atlantic WEAs and ROW and RUE grants in the region:

- If the lessee, while conducting site characterization activities in support of plan (i.e., SAP and/or COP or GAP) submittal, discovers a potential archaeological resource such as the presence of a shipwreck or pre-contact archaeological site within the project area, the lessee must:
    - Immediately halt seafloor-disturbing activities in the area of discovery;
    - Notify the lessor within 24 hours of discovery;
    - Notify the lessor in writing by report within 72 hours of its discovery;
    - Keep the location of the discovery confidential and take no action that may adversely affect the archaeological resource until the lessor has made an evaluation and instructs the applicant on how to proceed; and
    - Conduct any additional investigations as directed by the lessor to determine if the resource is eligible for listing in the NRHP (30 CFR 585.802(b)). The lessor will direct the lessee to conduct such investigations if: (1) the resource has been affected by the lessee's project activities; or (2) impacts on the resource cannot be avoided. If investigations indicate that the resource is potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP, the lessor will tell the lessee how to protect the resource or how to mitigate adverse effects on the site. If the lessor incurs costs in protecting the resource, under Section 110(g) of the NHPA, the lessor may charge the lessee reasonable costs for carrying out preservation responsibilities under the OCSLA (30 CFR 585.802(c–d)).

IV. The Basis for the Determination of No Historic Properties Affected

This Finding is based on a review of existing and available information conducted by BOEM, consultation with federally recognized Tribes, SHPOs, and consulting parties, avoidance stipulations outlined in the required elements of a lease or grant, and conclusions drawn from this information. The proposed undertaking includes the issuance of commercial leases within the Central Atlantic WEAs and ROW/RUE grants in the region and takes into account the execution of associated site characterization activities.

The required identification and avoidance measures that will be included in leases and grants will ensure that the proposed undertaking will not affect historic properties. Therefore, no historic properties will be affected for the undertaking of issuing a commercial lease within the Central Atlantic WEAs, consistent with 36 CFR § 800.4(d).

V. References

Anderson, D.G., and K.E. Sassaman

1996 Modeling Paleoindian and Early Archaic Settlement in the Southeast: a Historical Perspective. Pages 16–28 in D.G. Anderson and K.E. Sassaman (eds.), *The Paleoindian and Early Archaic Southeast*. University of Alabama Press, Tuscaloosa.

Blanton, D.B.

1996 Accounting for Submerged Mid-Holocene Archaeological Sites in the Southeast: A Case Study from the Chesapeake Bay Estuary, Virginia. Pages 217 in K.E. Sassaman and D.G. Anderson (eds.), *Archaeology of the Mid-Holocene Southeast*. University Press of Florida, Gainesville.

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM)

2012a *Commercial Wind Lease Issuance and Site Assessment Activities on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf Offshore New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. Final Environmental Assessment*. U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Office of Renewable Energy Programs. OCS EIS/EA BOEM 2012-003.

2012b *Inventory and Analysis of Archaeological Site Occurrence on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf*. U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, New Orleans, Louisiana. OCS Study BOEM 2012-008.

2020 Atlantic Shipwreck Database. U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. Archived version dated August 2020. Accessed: September 13, 2023.

2023 *Commercial Wind Lease Issuance and Site Assessment Activities on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf of the Central Atlantic. Draft Environmental Assessment*. U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Office of Renewable Energy Programs. OCS EIS/EA BOEM 2024-003.

Custer, J.F., J. Cavallo, and R.M. Stewart

1983 Paleo-Indian Adaptations of the Coastal Plain of Delaware and New Jersey. *North American Archaeologist* 4:263–276.

Delaware State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

2023 Cultural and Historical Resource Information System (CHRIS). Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs. Available: https://chris-users.delaware.gov/#. Accessed: August 22, 2023.

Gardner, W.M.

1989 An Examination of Cultural Change in the Late Pleistocene and Early Holocene (circa 9200 to 6800 B.C.). Pages 5–51 in J.M. Wittkofski and T.R. Reinhart (eds.), *Paleoindian Research in Virginia: A Synthesis*. Archaeological Society of Virginia, Courtland.

Griffith, D.R., and C. Fithian

2006 *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for the Roosevelt Inlet Shipwreck.* Prepared for the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, D.C. Prepared by the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office, Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, Dover, Delaware.

Kraft, J.C., D.F. Belknap, and I. Kayan

1983 Potentials of Discovery of Human Occupation Sites on the Continental Shelves and Nearshore Coastal Zone. Pages 87–120 in P.M. Masters and N.C. Flemming (eds.), *Quaternary Coastlines and Marine Archaeology: Towards the Prehistory of Land Bridges and Continental Shelves*. Academic Press, London.

Langley, S.B.M.

2005 *Archeological Remote Sensing Survey and Diver Investigation of Maritime Resources off Assateague Island National Seashore, Worcester County, Maryland and Accomack County, Virginia*. Report prepared for the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Assateague Island National Seashore, Berlin, Maryland. Report prepared by the Maryland Historical Trust, Office of Archeology, Crownsville, Maryland.

Maryland State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

2023 Medusa—Maryland's Cultural Resource Information System. Mayland Historical Trust. Available: https://apps.mht.maryland.gov/medusa. Accessed: August 21, 2023.

Mounier, R.A.

2003 *Looking Beneath the Surface: The Story of Archaeology in New Jersey*. Rutgers University Press, Piscataway.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

2016 Automated Wrecks and Obstructions Information System (AWOIS). Office of Coast Survey. Available: https://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/data/wrecks-and-obstructions.html. Accessed: August 21, 2023.

Virginia State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

2023 Virginia Cultural Resource Information System (VCRIS). Virginia Department of Historic Resources. Available: https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/programs/vcris. Accessed: August 23, 2023.

VI. Appendices

Appendix A: Central Atlantic Area Identification Memorandum Pursuant to 30 CFR § 585.211(b)

Appendix B: List of Consulting Parties, List of Consulting Federally Recognized Tribes, List of Potential Consulting Parties, and Letter Invitation Example

Appendix C: Concurrence Letters from the Affected State Historic Preservation Offices

Appendix A: Central Atlantic Area Identification Memorandum Pursuant to 30 CFR § 585.211(b)

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20240-0001

Memorandum

To: Elizabeth Klein
Director

From: David Diamond
Acting Chief, Office of Renewable Energy

DAVID DIAMOND
Digitally signed by DAVID DIAMOND
Date: 2023.07.28 15:04:18 -04'00'

Subject: Central Atlantic Area Identification Pursuant to 30 C.F.R. § 585.211(b)

I. Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to document the analysis and rationale used to develop recommendations for three Final Wind Energy Areas (WEAs) in the Central Atlantic offshore the States of Delaware, Maryland, and the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) Office of Renewable Energy Programs is requesting concurrence from the BOEM Director on the recommended Final WEAs.

II. Development of the Final WEAs Recommendation

On November 16, 2022, BOEM published on Regulations.gov for public comment the analysis and rationale used to develop recommendations for Draft WEAs. The detailed analysis and the rationale for the Draft WEAs are documented in the Development of the Central Atlantic Wind Energy Areas, which can be found at https://www.boem.gov/central-atlantic.

During the 30-day Draft WEA comment period, BOEM held four engagement meetings to gather feedback from federally recognized Tribes, Federal, State and local governments, nongovernmental organizations, fishery and maritime industries, wind developers, and the public at large. The comment period closed on December 16, 2022, and BOEM received 67 comments on the Draft WEAs. BOEM reviewed the comments, and through a partnership with NOAA's National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS), new data were incorporated into the Central Atlantic spatial model to inform the Final WEA recommendation. A summary of the major comments received on the Draft WEAs is located in **Appendix A.** The detailed analysis and the rationale for the Final WEA recommendation is documented in the Final WEA Report, "A Wind Energy Area Siting Analysis for the Central Atlantic Call Area," which is located in **Appendix B** of this document.

A. Major Differences Between the Draft and Final WEAs

BOEM recommends several changes to the Draft WEAs that resulted from new information becoming available and comments received on the Draft WEAs. These changes resulted in additional removal of areas due to spatial incompatibility with wind energy (constrained or constraint) or modifications within the suitability submodels (weighting). BOEM made the following changes to the size of the WEAs based on recommendations received. For a more complete description of changes after the publication of the Draft WEAs, please refer to the Final WEA Report.

1. Department of Defense (DoD) Activities

DoD is committed to supporting national offshore wind energy goals, and BOEM works closely with DoD to identify areas that avoid or minimize impacts to national defense. National defense activities conducted on the outer continental shelf are most typically at-sea military testing, training, and operations using the airspace, sea surface, and undersea space. As a part of BOEM's ongoing coordination with DoD, the Military Aviation and Installation Assurance Siting Clearinghouse (Clearinghouse) coordinated review of the Central Atlantic Call Areas. NCCOS incorporated the DoD Assessment into the Constraints and National Security submodels of the Central Atlantic spatial model.

a. The U.S. Air Force provided the Clearinghouse with an assessment on February 17, 2023. Therein, the Air Force divided the Central Atlantic Call Area into six priority categories to display the general severity of potential impacts to missions presented by offshore wind turbine development (Figure 1). These impacts range from severe (Priority 1) to no impact (Priority 6). The U.S. Air Force considered Priority 1, 2 and 3 areas to contain constraints such that they are appropriate for removal from consideration as Final Wind Energy Areas (WEAs). Priority Areas 4, 5 and 6 were weighted and added to the National Security Submodel. as described in the Final WEA report.

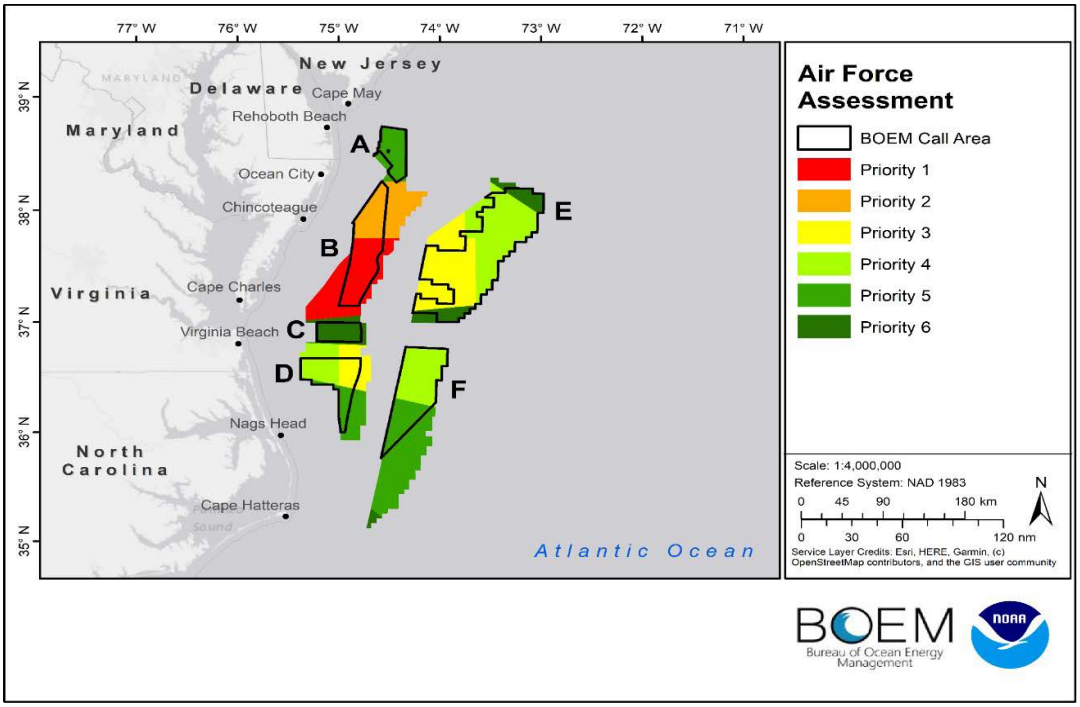


Figure 1: U.S. Air Force Assessment on Central Atlantic Call Areas

After additional consultation with the Clearinghouse on the suitability in Call Area B, BOEM and the Department of the Air Force (DAF) agreed to undertake an in-depth review of a subsection in the northern portion of Call Area B that the DAF designated as having Priority 2-level severity of impact (Figure 2). The purpose of this review is to determine if the impacts to military operations could be accepted or mitigated if the development in Call Area B is restricted to this subsection. This subsection was weighted 0.5 denoting uncertainty in the National Security Submodel in order to determine if suitable area for wind development could exist should the area be cleared by DAF. The results of this additional model run identified suitable area within subsection B which has been named B-1 (Figure 9). The DAF will complete a final in-depth review of B-1 which will be used to inform whether or not any area within B-1 should be proposed as a lease area in any future proposed sale notice. If the area is proposed for leasing, necessary mitigation would be identified in the sale notice(s) to inform bidders in advance of a future lease sale.

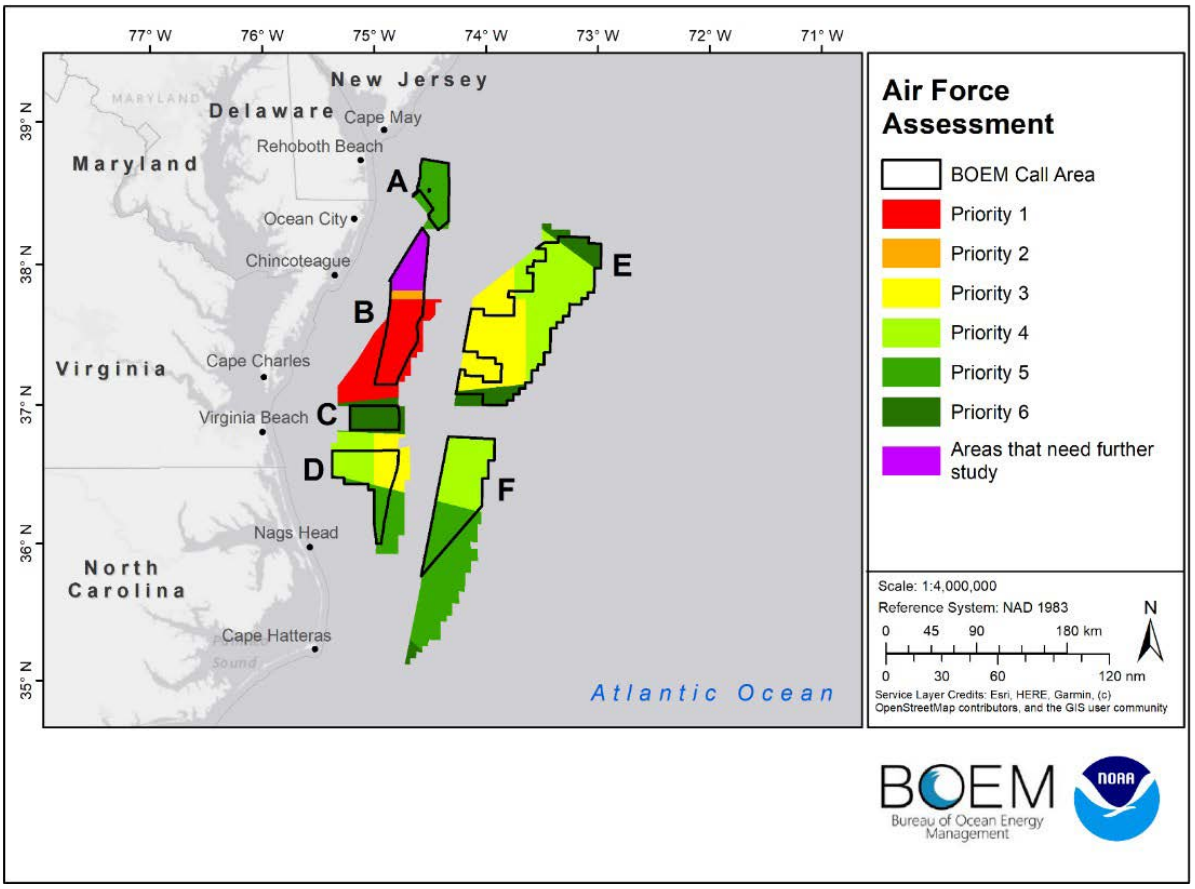


Figure 2: Adjusted DAF Assessment on Central Atlantic Call Areas

b. The U.S. Navy provided the Clearinghouse with a draft assessment on February 10, 2023. This assessment evaluated risk to national defense missions and prioritized the locations where potential conflicts will generate the greatest risk to national security due to the magnitude of impacts and the inability to feasibly or affordably mitigate them (Figure 3). The U.S. Navy assessment grouped the level of impact into the following categories:

- Priority 1: Extreme risk to Naval Testing, Training and Readiness. Development in these locations will conflict with current and future Navy requirements, and generate the greatest consequences to the Navy, to possibly include mission failure. Affected activities include those that must take place near fixed shore infrastructure, and intense operations that are hazardous to non-participants. Replicating capabilities or mitigating the impacts on missions is not considered feasible.
- Priority 2: Major risk to Naval Testing, Training and Readiness. Development will conflict with current and future Navy requirements and diminish the capacity of the area to support critical capabilities. Mitigating impacts is not considered feasible without negative consequences to at-sea military readiness activities.
- Priority 3: Modest risk to Naval Testing, Training and Readiness. Development will conflict with current and future Navy requirements,

and impact future flexibility for large scale test and training activities.

The Navy separately identified Call Areas A and C as areas with the potential to conflict with Navy at-sea activities. However, the Navy anticipates an ability to acceptably mitigate mission impacts in these areas through the inclusion of stipulations in the lease sale.

The Navy considers areas identified as Priority 1 and 2 to be currently unsuitable for wind energy development and, thus, BOEM removed them from further consideration (Figure 3). The areas removed as constraints included the entirety of Call Areas B and D as well as portions in E and F.

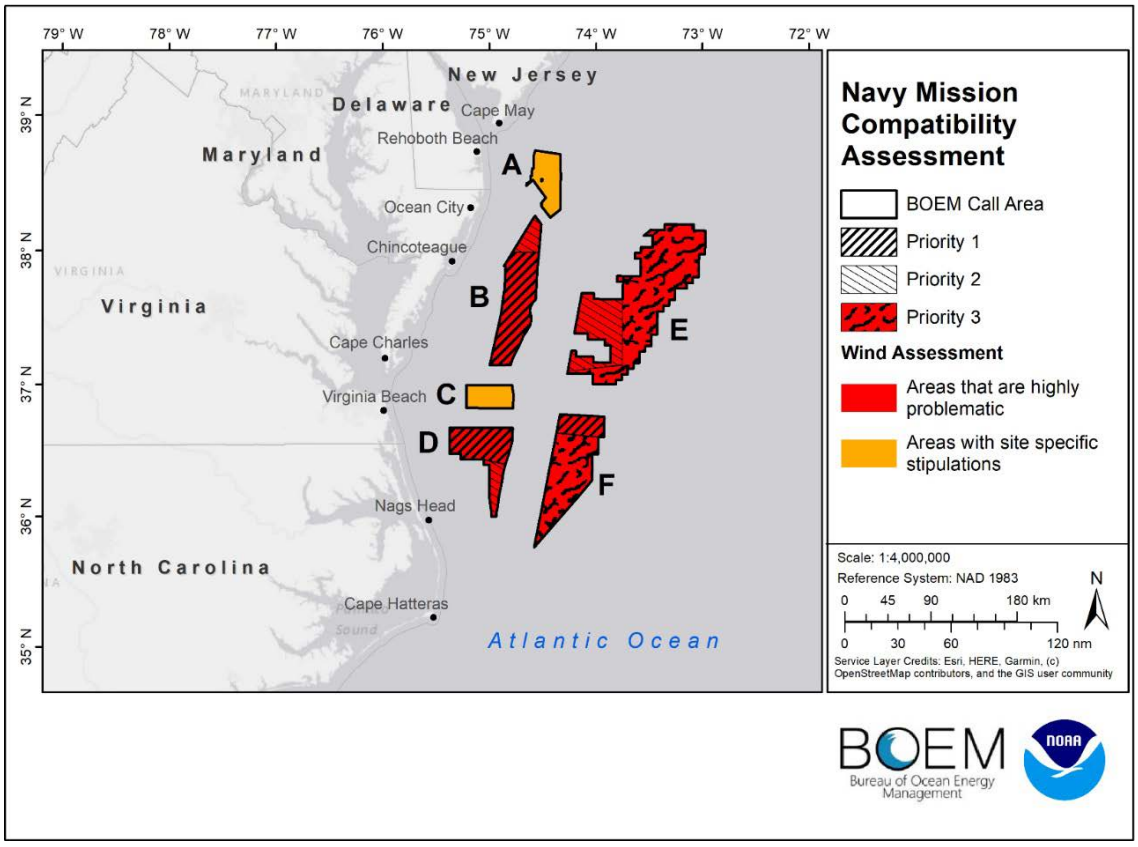


Figure 3: U.S. Navy Assessment on Central Atlantic Call Areas

Following DoD and Department of Navy (DON) commitment to evaluate the compatibility of the subset of Call Area B *(*Figure 4), this subsection was weighted 0.5 denoting uncertainty in the National Security Submodel in order to determine if suitable area for wind development could exist should the area be cleared by DON. The results of this additional model run identified suitable area within subsection B which has been named B-1 (Figure 9). The DON will complete a final in-depth review of B-1 which will be used to inform whether or not any area within B-1 should be proposed as a lease area in any future proposed sale notices. If the area is proposed for leasing, necessary mitigation would be identified in the sale notice(s) to inform bidders in advance of a future

lease sale.

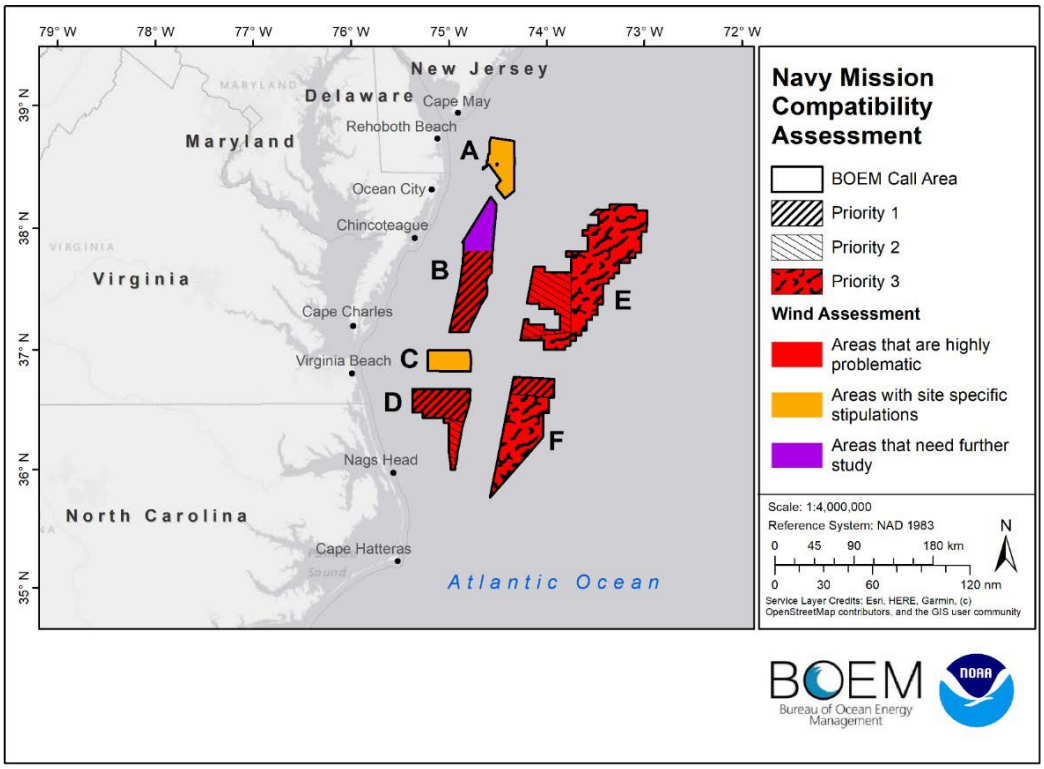


Figure 4: Adjusted DON Assessment on Central Atlantic Call Areas

2. NASA Mission Compatibility Assessment

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) provided a mission compatibility assessment. Red areas were determined to be incompatible with wind energy development. These areas were assigned a score of 0 and moved to the constraints submodel. After additional consultation with NASA, the red area on the map below was modified to remove overlap with the northern portion of Call Area B and subsequently added to the National Security Submodel with a weighted score of 0.5; an in-depth assessment is being conducted by NASA on this area to determine if existing and future activities could co-exist with wind energy development, with appropriate mitigation. Yellow areas within NASA's Hazard Area were assigned a score of 0.5 (Figure 5). The results of the final in-depth NASA assessment will be used to inform whether the northern portion of Area B should be proposed as a lease area in any future proposed sale notice. If the area is proposed for leasing, necessary mitigation would be identified in the sale notice(s) to inform bidders in advance of a future lease sale.

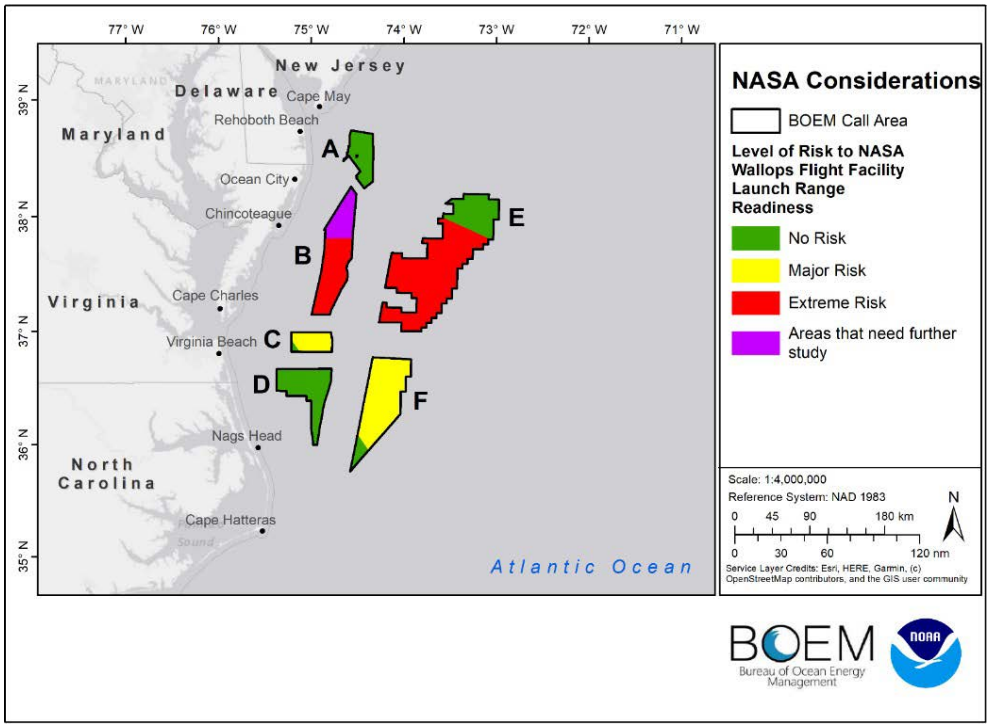


Figure 5: Adjusted NASA Assessment on Central Atlantic Call Areas

3. Navigation

BOEM incorporated the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Consolidated Port Approaches Port Access Route Studies, which was published on September 9, 2022, (CPAPARS) as a constraint in the NCCOS spatial model, because the USCG's safety fairways, once finalized, would prohibit the presence of surface structures. This data layer was updated to include USCG's modifications to proposed shipping safety fairways published on March 10, 2023 (Figure 6). The March 2023 proposed modifications reduced the amount of the area removed from consideration (constraints) within Call Area A and the northern portion of Call Area B. As the proposed safety fairways have not been finalized, BOEM will continue coordinating with USCG throughout both agencies' processes, including during any future development of any proposed lease areas.

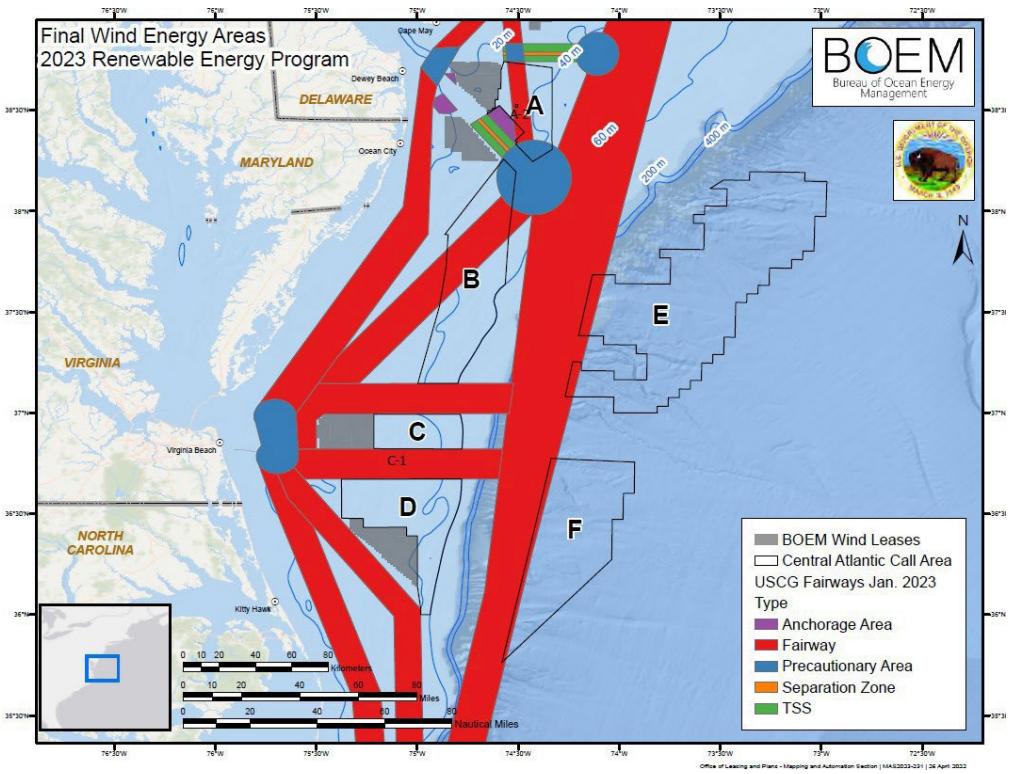


Figure 6: USCG modified PARS

4. *Deep Sea Corals*

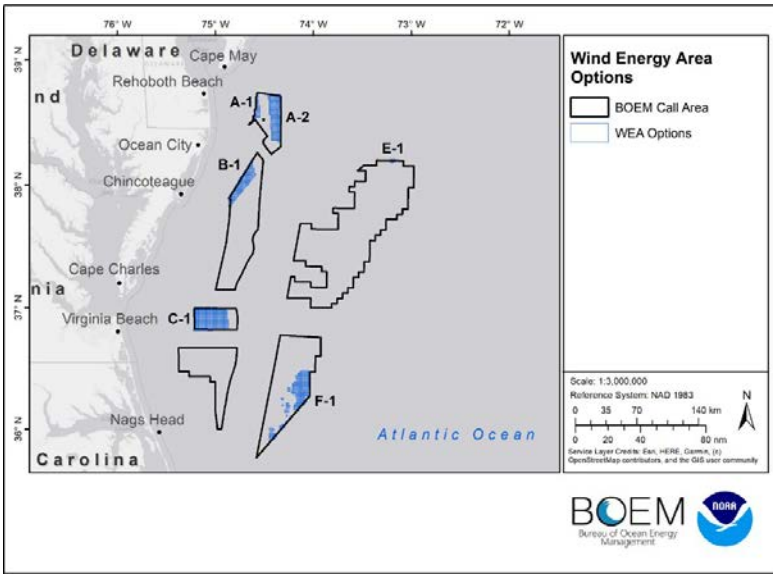
Deep sea corals provide habitat for diverse ecologically and economically important marine species within the Atlantic Ocean and beyond. In the mid-Atlantic, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) designated the Frank R. Lautenberg Deep Sea Coral Protection Area across over 40,000 square miles of seafloor, including canyon heads and canyons offshore of the shelf break. Deep sea corals have been observed or are expected to occur (modeled suitable habitat) within and adjacent to the deepwater draft WEAs (Areas E and F). BOEM removed from consideration observed coral locations with a 1,000 m buffer; canyon heads were also removed as they are considered highly suitable for deep sea coral habitat. The broader Frank R. Lautenberg Deep Sea Coral Protection Area was not removed. Instead, BOEM incorporated the modeled coral and hard bottom habitat as a combined habitat layer provided by NMFS within the natural resources submodel in the suitability model. Thus, the probability of coral occurrence in the deepwater WEAs was weighted based on the intensity of their potential occurrence (Z-membership function). After publishing the draft WEAs, the joint BOEM and NCCOS modeling team discovered that the weighting of the coral and hardbottom sublayer in the model did not accurately reflect NMFS' recommendations. The coral and hardbottom sublayer was rescaled for the Final WEAs model run resulting in slightly less wind energy suitability in the western extent of Area E.

5. *Blue Water Fishermen's Association Exclusion Area*

Following the publication of the draft WEAs, the Blue Water Fishermen's Association (BWFA) contacted BOEM to review pelagic longline (PLL) fishing activities along the shelf break. Through BOEM's partnership with NCCOS, BOEM was able to provide BWFA with Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) transit data specific to PLL activities (from 2012-2022) within the Central Atlantic broad planning area. The PLL activities overlap with 62 aliquots, or aliquot parts, in the Call Area, totaling 22,068 acres along the northwestern region of draft WEA E-1. The PLL community explained that their operations occur in the dynamic oceanographic conditions along the shelf break and deepwater areas near E-1. PLL fisheries data (VMS; 2012-2022) provided by NOAA showed an overlap with the western reaches of Area E. In discussions with the BWFA, they indicated a need for more space for their gear, which can be miles long when fully deployed. The proximity of PLL gear to floating offshore wind platforms and mooring lines poses an entanglement risk. The BWFA submitted a formal comment (December 16, 2022) during the draft WEA open comment period requesting the removal of those aliquots that overlap with PLL fishing activities. The Final WEA model reflects the removal of those aliquots recommended by the BWFA.

B. Final WEA Recommendations

After carefully considering all received comments and additional data, NCCOS provided BOEM with six Final WEA Options (Figure 7). Two of these, A-1 and E-1, are currently not considered viable based on the small number of suitable acres available for development combined with the likely wake effects and needed setbacks from an existing lease for A-1. BOEM continued analyzing the four remaining Final WEA options for consideration.



Option	*Acres*
A-1	*19,570*
A-2	*101,767*
B-1	*78,285*
C-1	*143,755*
E-1	*3,202*
F-1	***101,411***

Figure 7: Final Wind Energy Area Options at 95% confidence interval

1. *Characterization of Option A-2*

Option A-2 encompasses 101,767 acres and is approximately 26.4 nautical miles (nm) from Delaware Bay (Figure 8). The mean depth of A-2 is 37 m and it has a capacity of 1.2-2.3 GW.[1] Remaining conflicts in A-2 include surf clam and scallop fishing areas, and sand ridge trough complexes. BOEM recommends adopting option A-2 as a Final WEA.

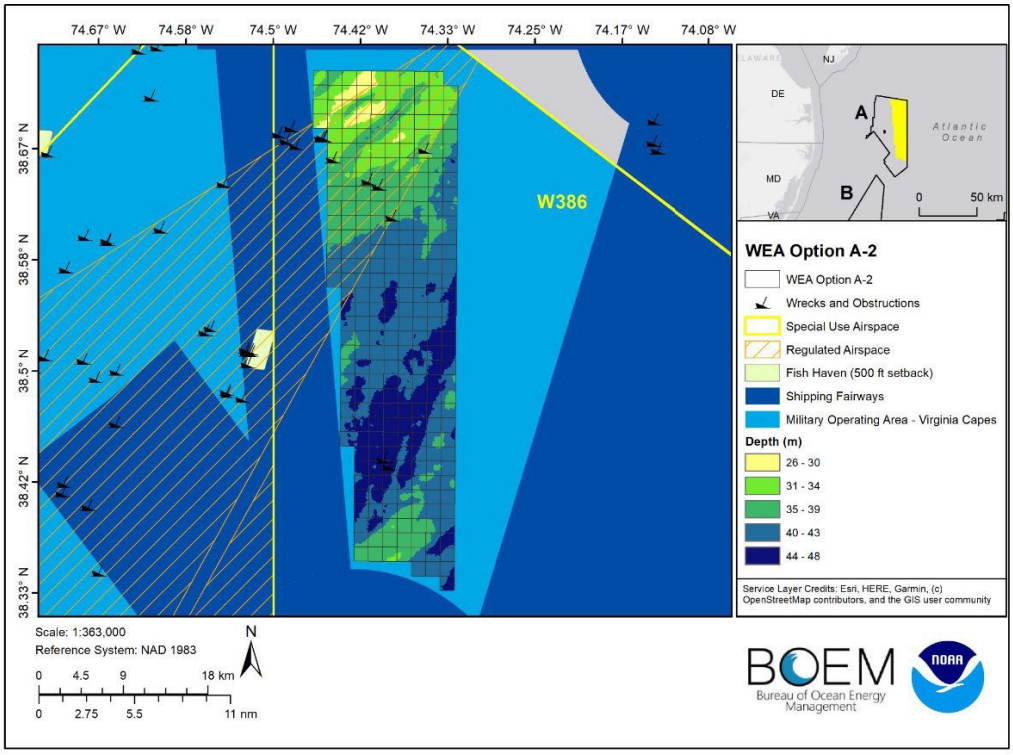


Figure 8: Final Wind Energy Area Option A-2

2. *Characterization of Option B-1*

Option B-1 is located in the northwest portion of Call Area B (Figure 9). The 78,285-acre site is located approximately 24.5 nm offshore Assateague Island, 56 nm southeast of the Delaware Bay inlet, and 23.5 nm offshore Ocean City, MD. The mean depth of B-1 is 32 m, with a maximum depth of 42 m and a minimum of 22 m; estimated capacity ranges from 0.9 - 1.8 GW. Remaining conflicts include fishing activities, fisheries surveys, vessel traffic, and additional assessment by the DoD Clearinghouse and NASA. BOEM recommends adopting option B-1 as a Final WEA.

[1] Capacity estimated using National Renewable Energy Laboratory's 3 megawatts per square kilometer (0.01214058 MW/acre) (low estimate) and the Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind Commercial Project, lease OCS A-0483, proposed facility of 2,587 MW within 112,799 acres (0.02293460 MW/acre) (high estimate).

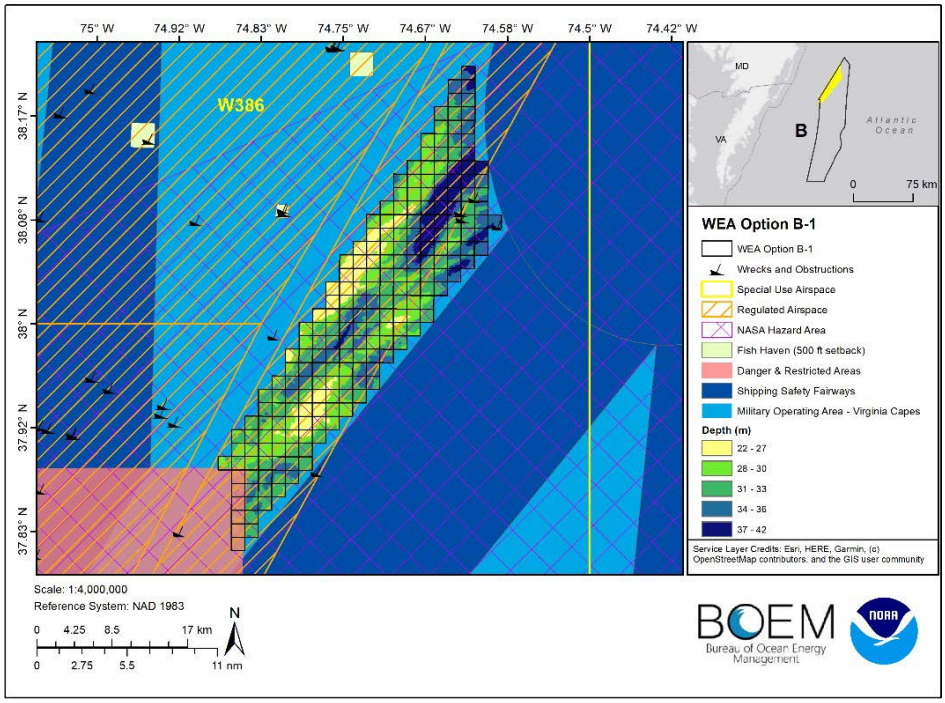


Figure 9: Final Wind Energy Area Option B-1

3. Characterization of Option C-1

Option C-1 encompasses 143,755 acres and is approximately 35 nm from Chesapeake Bay (Figure 10). The mean depth of C-1 is 36.5 m. BOEM recommends expanding C-1 to the east to contain all of the area identified as draft WEA C (Figure 11). The expanded C-1 WEA encompasses 176,506 acres and would support approximately 2.1 – 4.0 GW of energy production if fully developed. Due to the proposed USCG shipping and safety fairway nearby, it is expected that the vessel traffic will shift from draft WEA C into this fairway, which will aid in deconflicting the expanded eastern portion (Figure 12). Remaining conflicts include a NMFS recommended 20 km conservation setback along the 100 m contour on the shelf break, NMFS independent fisheries surveys, and an area in the center of WEA C-1 that has recently experienced increased fishing effort. BOEM recommends adopting option C-1 as a Final WEA.

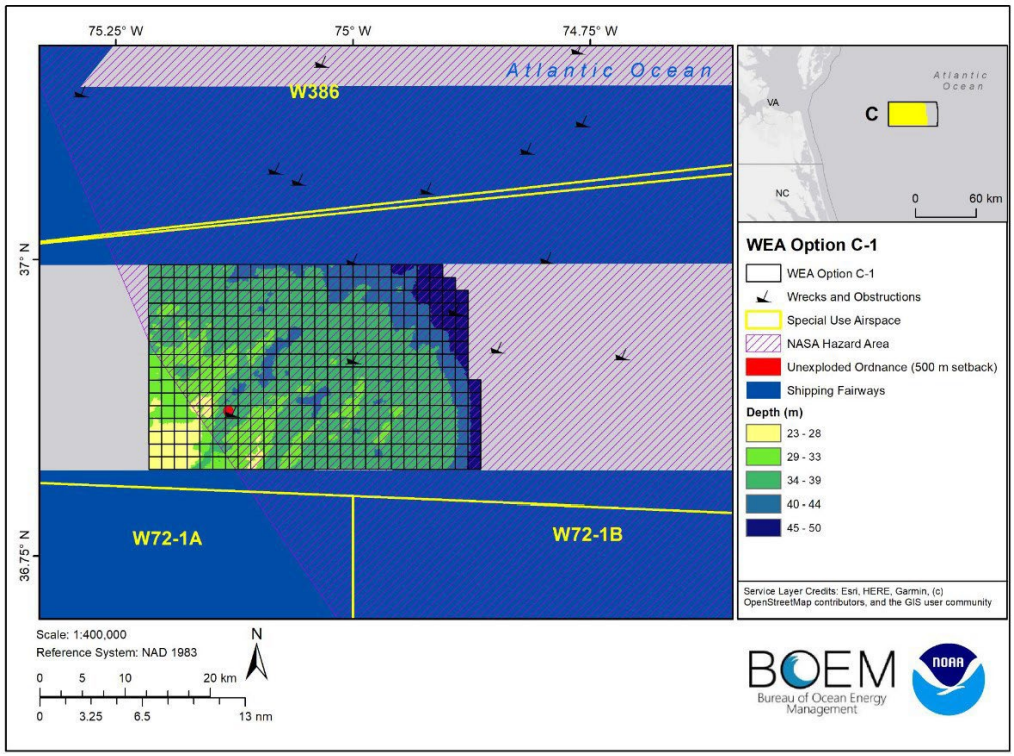


Figure 10: Final Wind Energy Area Option C-1

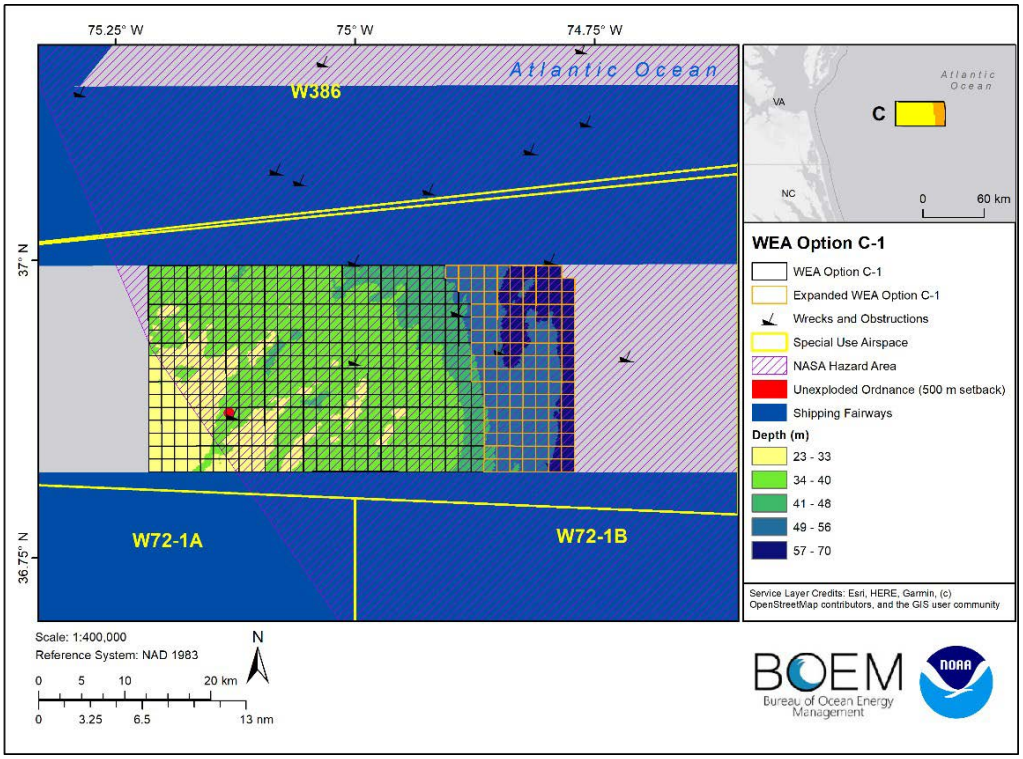


Figure 11: Final Wind Energy Area Option C-1 Expanded

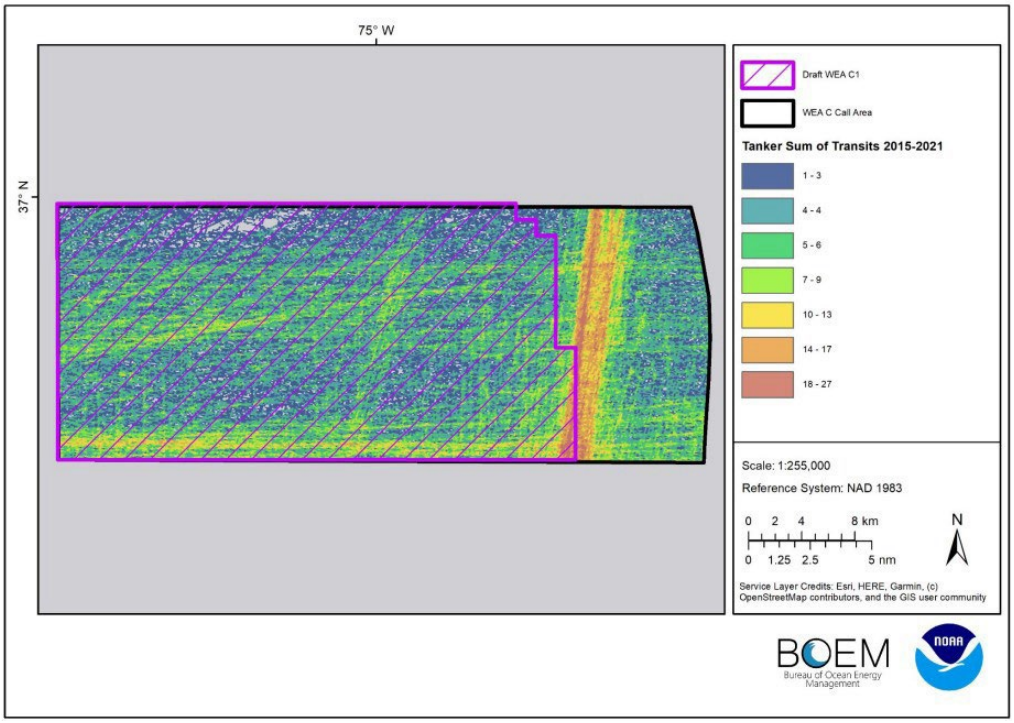


Figure 12: Tanker Sum of transits (2015-2021) in expanded Option C

4. Characterization of Option F-1

Option F-1 encompasses 101,767 acres and is approximately 90 nm from Chesapeake Bay (Figure 13). The mean depth of F-1 is 2,437 m. and it is considered a deepwater Call Area.

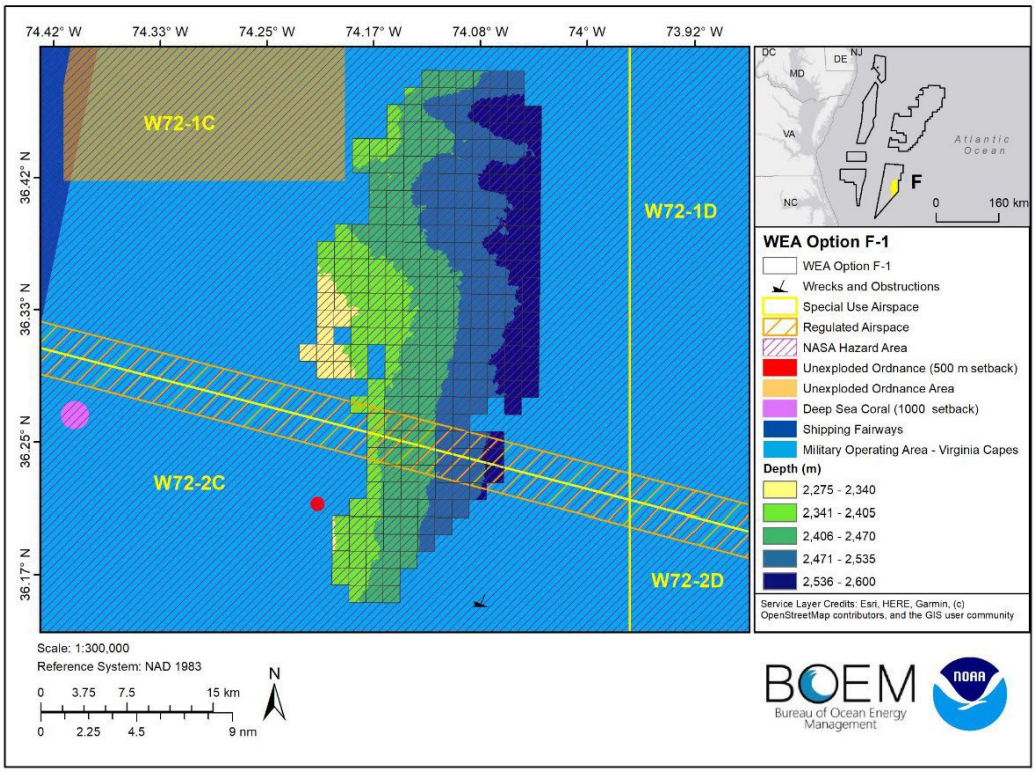


Figure 13: Final Wind Energy Area Option F-1

BOEM is recommending deferring WEA identification within the entirety of the deepwater Call Areas until further study can be completed. Feedback received, or lack thereof, indicates questions remain on the near-term technological and cost viability of floating wind facilities in ultra-deepwaters beyond 1,300 m and at significant distance from shore. In addition, several identified constraints and other information received related to suitability of these areas require further investigation to allow for a more informed determination. Some of these issues include acquiring more information and study of the DoD and NASA compatibility assessments, and data on deep sea coral locations and habitat. Deferring a WEA determination at this time would preserve the entirety of Areas E and F as Call Areas.

III. Conclusion

As a result of the comments received and as discussed above, BOEM has made several revisions to the Draft WEAs. BOEM recommends moving forward with Options A-2, B-1, and the expanded C-1 area as the Final Wind Energy Areas for the Central Atlantic (Figure 14).

The final WEAs total 356,558 acres and would support approximately 4.3 – 8.1 GW of energy production if fully developed. The final WEAs represent approximately 9.1% of the 3,897,388 acre Call Area.

While not all potential conflicts could be avoided in the final WEAs, if the areas were to move forward in the leasing process, additional public comment through

a proposed sale notice will help to inform final lease area boundaries and possible lease stipulations to further mitigate potential impacts from wind energy development.

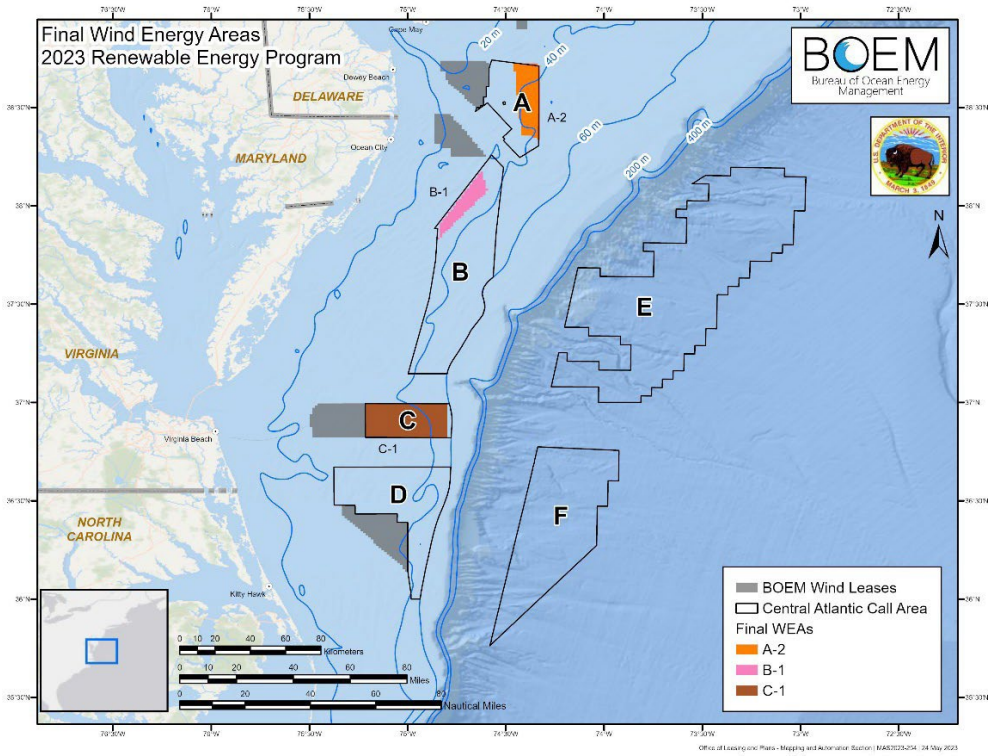


Figure 14: Final Wind Energy Area Recommendations

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Bridgette Duplantis, Project Coordinator, Office of Leasing and Plans, Leasing and Financial Responsibility Section, 1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard, New Orleans, Louisiana 70123, Bridgette.Duplantis@boem.gov.

IV. Director Concurrence

☒ Yes

☐ No

ELIZABETH KLEIN
Digitally signed by ELIZABETH KLEIN
Date: 2023.07.28 16:28:25 -04'00'

Elizabeth Klein
Director, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

Appendix B: List of Consulting Parties, List of Consulting Federally Recognized Tribes, List of Potential Consulting Parties, and Letter Invitation Example

Appendix B.1: BOEM Central Atlantic Wind Auction Environmental Assessment Section 106 Consulting Parties List

The following is a current list of consulting parties to the NHPA Section 106 review of the Central Atlantic Wind Lease Environmental Assessment as of November 24, 2023. Consultation is ongoing, and therefore, BOEM anticipates there may be additions or revisions to this list.

Government or Organization	Contact Person
Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission	Elaine Meil Anne Doyle
Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	W. Shawn Arnold Barry Bleichner
Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe	Walt Red Hawk Brown
Choptico Band of Piscataway-Conoy Indians	Rico Newman
City of Rehoboth Beach	Laurence Christian Evan Miller Stan Mills
City of Virginia Beach	Mark A. Reed Kathy M. Warren
Delaware State Historic Preservation Office	Gwen Davis Sarah Carr
Maryland Department of Natural Resources	Catherine McCall Laura Canton
Maryland Historical Trust (State Historic Preservation Office)	Beth Cole
National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC) and Wallops Flight Facility (WFF)	Irene Romero Shari Miller
Naval History and Heritage Command, Underwater Archaeology Branch	Bradley A. Krueger Alexis Catsambis
Northampton County	Charles Kolakowski Susan McGhee
Preservation Delaware	Dee Durham
Preservation Maryland	Christiana Limniatis Nicholas Redding
Preservation Virginia	Elizabeth S. Kostelny
Town of Dewey Beach	Bill Zolper William Stevens
Town of Fenwick Island	Susan Brennan Natalie Madgeburger
Town of Ocean City	Terence J. McGean
Town of South Bethany	Maureen Hartman Timothy Saxton

Government or Organization	Contact Person
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Jared N. Pritts Anna Lawston Naomi Handell
U.S. National Park Service	Mary Krueger Kathy Schlegel
U.S. Navy Region Mid-Atlantic	Juliana Prevatt Henkel Jennifer L. Harty
Virginia African American Cultural Center	Amelia Ross-Hammond
Virginia Department of Historic Resources (State Historic Preservation Office)	Roger Kirchen Adrienne Birge-Wilson
Virginia Department of Military Affairs, Virginia Army National Guard	Susan Smead Lisa Vaughan Jordan Tristan G. Bradsher
Worcester County	Weston Young

Appendix B.2: BOEM Central Atlantic Wind Auction Environmental Assessment Section 106 List of Consulting Federally Recognized Tribes

The following is a current list of federally recognized Tribes consulting on the NHPA Section 106 review of the Central Atlantic Wind Auction Environmental Assessment as of November 24, 2023. Consultation is ongoing, and therefore, BOEM anticipates there may be additions or revisions to this list.

Government or Organization	Contact Person
Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma	John Raymond Johnson Devon Frazier Carol Butler
Catawba Indian Nation	Bill Harris Wenonah Haire
Chickahominy Indian Tribe	Stephen Adkins Dana Adkins Wayne Adkins
Chickahominy Indian Tribe—Eastern Division	Gerald Stewart Jessica Phillips Tanya Stewart Doris Austin
Delaware Tribe of Indians	Brad KillsCrow Susan Bachor Jimmie Johnson
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians	Richard Sneed Russell Townsend
Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma	Glenna Wallace Brett Barnes Paul Barton
Mashantucket (Western) Pequot Tribe	Rodney Butler Crystal Whipple Michael E. Johnson Stormy Hay
Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe	Brian Weeden Carlton Hendricks David Weeden Jason Steiding
Mohegan Tribe of Connecticut	James Gessner James Quinn
Nansemond Indian Nation	Keith Anderson Marion Werkheiser Will Cook Ellen Chapman

Government or Organization	Contact Person
Pamunkey Indian Tribe	Robert Gray Allyson Gray Kendall Stevens Shaleigh Howells
Rappahannock Tribe	Anne Richardson Jack Ryan
Seminole Tribe of Florida	Marcellus Osceola, Jr. Tina Osceola Paul Backhouse Kevin Cunniff
Stockbridge-Munsee Community Band of Mohican Indians	Shannon Holsey Craig Kroening, Jr. Jeff Bendremer Bonney Hartley Antoinette Tourtillott
The Delaware Nation	Deborah Dotson Katelyn Lucas Carissa Speck
The Narragansett Indian Tribe	Anthony Dean Stanton John Brown Dinalyn Spears
The Shinnecock Indian Nation	Bryan Polite Shavonne Smith Bianca Collins Jeremy Dennis Tela Troge Lance Gumbs
Tuscarora Nation	Tom Jonathan Bryan Printup
United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians	Joe Bunch Whitney Warrior
Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe	Frank W. Adams Leigh Mitchell Reggie Tupponce
Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah)	Cheryl Andrews-Maltais Bettina Washington Lael Echo-Hawk Al Clark Kevin Devine Tara Thomas Barbara Spain

Appendix B.3: BOEM Central Atlantic Wind Auction Environmental Assessment Section 106 Potential Consulting Parties List

The following is a list of federally recognized Tribes, governments, and organizations that BOEM contacted from August to October 2023, inviting them to be a consulting party to the NHPA Section 106 review of the Central Atlantic Wind Auction Environmental Assessment.

Government or Organization
100 Black Men of Virginia Peninsula
Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
Accohannock Indian Tribe
Accomack County
Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP)
American Battlefield Trust
Assateague Peoples Tribe
Baltimore American Indian Center
Beach to Bay Heritage Area
Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement
Catawba Indian Nation
Cedarville Band of Piscataway Indians
Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe
Chickahominy Indian Tribe
Chickahominy Indian Tribe—Eastern Division
Choptico Band of Indians
City of Hampton
City of Lewes
City of Norfolk
City of Rehoboth Beach
City of Virginia Beach
Council of Virginia Archeologists
Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control
Delaware State Historic Preservation Office
Delaware Tribe of Indians
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
Eastern Shore of Virginia Historical Society
Hampton Roads Community Action Program
Lenape Indian Tribe of Delaware
Lewes Historical Society
Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs

Government or Organization
Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Maryland Historical Trust (State Historic Preservation Office)
Mashantucket (Western) Pequot Tribe
Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe
Mattaponi Indian Tribe
Mohegan Tribe of Connecticut
Nansemond Indian Nation
Nansemond River Preservation Alliance
Nanticoke Indian Association, Inc.
National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Goddard Space Flight Center and Wallops Flight Facility
Native American Lifelines Baltimore
Nause-Waiwash Band of Indians, Inc.
Naval History and Heritage Command (Underwater Archaeology Branch)
Northampton County
Nottoway Indian Tribe of Virginia
Pamunkey Indian Tribe
Patawomeck Indian Tribe of Virginia
Piedmont Environmental Council
Piscataway Conoy Tribe of Maryland
Piscataway Indian Nation
Pocomoke Indian Nation
Preservation Delaware
Preservation Maryland
Preservation Virginia
Princess Anne County/Virginia Beach Historical Society
Rappahannock Tribe
Rehoboth Beach Historical Society
Scenic Virginia
Seminole Tribe of Florida
Shawnee Tribe
Stockbridge-Munsee Community Band of Mohican Indians
Sussex County
The Delaware Nation
The Narragansett Indian Tribe
The Shinnecock Indian Nation
Town of Bethany Beach
Town of Dewey Beach
Town of Fenwick Island
Town of Ocean City
Town of South Bethany
Tuscarora Nation
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Government or Organization
U.S. Coast Guard
U.S. Department of Defense, Siting Clearinghouse
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Fleet Forces Command
U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service
U.S. National Park Service
U.S. Navy Region Mid-Atlantic
United Keetowah Band of Cherokee Indians
Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe
Virginia African American Cultural Center
Virginia Beach History Museums
Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
Virginia Department of Historic Resources (State Historic Preservation Office)
Virginia Department of Military Affairs, Virginia Army National Guard
Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources
Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah)
Worcester County
Youghiogheny River Band of Shawnee Indians, Inc.

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20240-0001

RE: Invitation to consult on the Central Atlantic Wind Energy Lease Issuance; ***response requested by no later than 30 days of receipt of this letter***

Dear Potential Consulting Party:

On August 1, 2023, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), announced the publication of the agency's Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) to consider the potential environmental impacts associated with site assessment and site characterization activities expected to take place after lease issuance for wind energy related activities in the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) offshore Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia (i.e., Central Atlantic), pursuant to 30 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 585.211(a). BOEM has determined that the issuance of commercial leases and subsequently approving site assessment activities in these lease areas constitute an undertaking subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 USC § 306101), and its implementing regulations (36 CFR 800). BOEM will serve as the lead Federal agency for the NHPA Section 106 review.

This letter has four purposes:

- To invite your organization to be a consulting party to the NHPA Section 106 review;
- To provide information on the undertaking and the Area of Potential Effects (APE) (Enclosure, *Project Location and APE Map*) to help inform your decision as to whether or not you wish to be a consulting party;
- To inform you of ICF's assistance in the consultation process; and
- To provide information on the next steps in the NHPA Section 106 process for parties choosing to participate.

1. Invitation to Consult Under Section 106 of the NHPA

With this letter, BOEM invites you to be a consulting party to the NHPA Section 106 review of this undertaking. Consulting parties have certain rights and obligations under the NHPA and its implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800. By becoming a consulting party, you would be actively informed of steps in the review process and your input would be actively sought. You would be given opportunity to review and provide comments on BOEM's Finding of Effect document developed as part of the Section 106 process.

2. Definition of the Undertaking and Area of Potential Effects for the Undertaking

On July 31, 2023, BOEM released the Announcement of Area Identification (Area ID) Memorandum, available for review on BOEM's website for the Project at https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/central-atlantic. The Area ID

Memorandum documents the analysis and rationale used to develop the Wind Energy Areas (WEAs) in the Central Atlantic. The Central Atlantic is an offshore area extending generally south from offshore Delaware to Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. The Proposed Action would issue commercial leases within the WEAs and grant of rights-of-way (ROWs) and rights-of-use and easement (RUEs) in the region of the OCS offshore Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. The Project location is depicted on the enclosed map.

If issued, the commercial leases would not authorize any construction activities on the OCS. However, once the lease is issued, the lessee will commit to site assessment activities in the lease area (i.e., placement of a meteorological ocean buoy) and site characterization activities (i.e., geophysical and geotechnical, biological, and archaeological surveys and monitoring activities) in and around the lease area and between the lease area and the shoreline. Information gathered from site assessment and site characterization activities would be used by the lessees to develop construction and operations plans (COPs) for potential future construction and operation of offshore wind turbines and associated commercial wind energy facilities, which BOEM would consider in a subsequent environmental analysis after receiving the COP.

This EA does not consider construction and operation of any commercial wind energy facilities within the Central Atlantic, which, if proposed, would be evaluated by BOEM as a separate NEPA action and NHPA Section 106 review for the undertaking. More information regarding the Commercial Lease Area and NEPA process may be found at https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/central-atlantic.

The APE for this undertaking is defined as the depth and breadth of the seabed that could potentially be affected by seafloor/ground-disturbing activities associated with site characterization activities. This includes the discrete horizontal and vertical areas of the seafloor that may be affected through geotechnical sampling, which may include the collection of core samples, soil borings, or other bottom-disturbing techniques that could directly affect historic properties on or below the seafloor, if present. In addition, geotechnical sampling may also require the use of barges or anchored vessels that could also directly affect historic properties, if present.

Site characterization activities could occur within the extent of the Central Atlantic WEAs and along corridors that extend from the WEAs to the onshore energy grid. It is anticipated these ROW/RUE routes would consist of a minimum 200-foot-wide corridor centered on any anticipated cable locations. Because any ROW or RUE grants considered as part of this undertaking have not been issued, BOEM is uncertain of the exact location of these cable corridor surveys. However, BOEM can anticipate their general geographic extent given that power generated from potential Central Atlantic lease areas would need to be transmitted to shore, either directly from the lease areas by individual export cables to onshore cable landings and/or to offshore regional transmission system(s). These potential export cables are anticipated to be offshore Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. Therefore, for the purposes of this undertaking, BOEM estimates that the APE associated with cable site characterization activities would occur within discrete corridors in the region between shore and the Central Atlantic WEAs as far north as a line drawn between the northwestern corner of WEA A-1 and central Delaware and as far south as a line drawn between the southwestern corner of WEA C-2 and the southeastern Virginia coastline (see Enclosure, *Project Location and APE Map*).

Based on the distance from shore and the minor in scale and temporary manner in which site characterization studies will likely occur, BOEM has concluded that the vessels performing these activities will be indistinguishable from existing lighted vessel traffic from an observer onshore. Therefore, BOEM has not defined as part of the APE onshore areas from which the site characterization activities would be visible. In addition, there is no indication that the issuance of a lease or grant of a RUE or ROW and subsequent site characterization will involve expansion of existing port infrastructure. Consequently, onshore staging activities are not considered as part of the APE for this specific undertaking.

3. ICF Assistance

BOEM has assigned ICF as the third-party contractor to facilitate the Section 106 consultation process. All Federal oversight and decisions will remain with BOEM. ICF's role in this Section 106 review is administrative; ICF will coordinate communication with the consulting parties; facilitate distribution of BOEM-approved documents; and provide technical assistance.

4. Next Steps

If you would like to be a Section 106 consulting party to this Undertaking, please respond to the primary contact at ICF for the Project, David Birnbaum, at (703) 225-5711 or via email at CentralAtlanticWindLeaseEA.Section106@icf.com.

Please submit your request to become a consulting party ***no later than 30 days of receipt of this letter.*** While you may also request to be a consulting party at a later date, the Section 106 consultation may advance without your input and your opportunity to fully comment. If you are requesting consulting party status, designate one representative and one alternate from your organization to receive future correspondence. Please provide contact information for each representative including a current mailing address, email address, and phone number. We also request that you indicate your preferred correspondence method: hard copy correspondence by mail, electronic correspondence via email, or both.

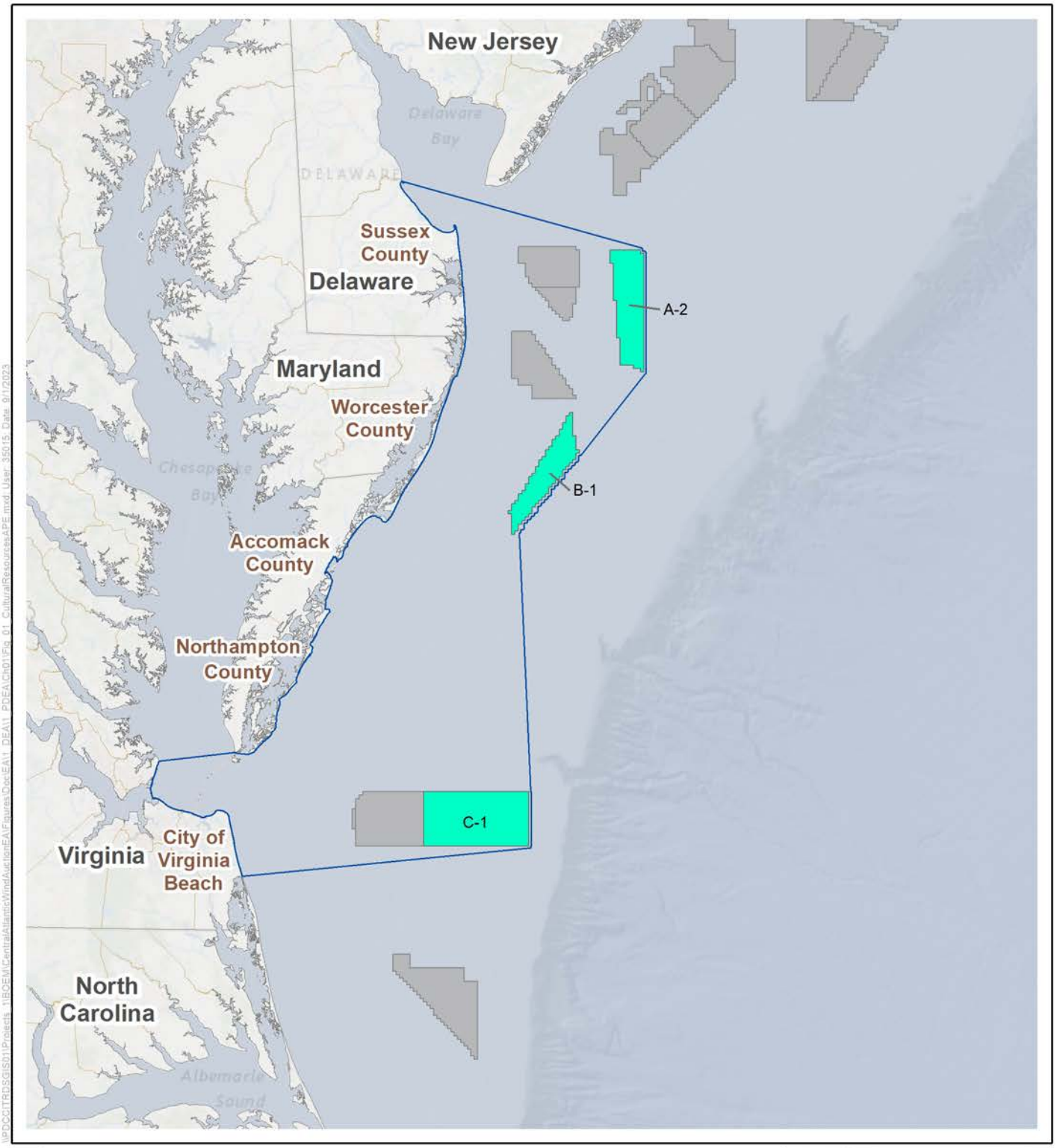
Please contact the BOEM Environmental Coordinator, Lisa Landers, at (703) 787-1520 or Lisa.Landers@boem.gov if you require additional information. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Sarah Stokely
Section 106 Team Lead
Environmental Branch for Renewable Energy
Office of Renewable Energy Programs

Enclosure: Project Location and APE Map

cc: Laura K. Schnitzer, BOEM



Final Central Atlantic Wind Energy Areas
Other BOEM Lease Areas
Area of Potential Effect

Source: BOEM 2023.

N

0 25 50 Miles

1:2,000,000

Appendix C: Concurrence Letters from the Affected State Historic Preservation Offices

From:	Beth Cole - MHT
To:	Central Atlantic Wind Lease EA Section 106
Cc:	Stokely, Sarah C; Becky Roman -MDP-; Troy Nowak -MDP-
Subject:	Re: BOEM – Request for Review of the Section 106 Draft Finding of Effect Report for the Central Atlantic Wind Auction Project
Date:	Wednesday, December 27, 2023 11:51:15 AM
Attachments:	~~image002.png~~

Dear BOEM,

Thank you for providing the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT), Maryland's State Historic Preservation Office, with the opportunity to review and comment on BOEM's *Draft Finding of No Historic Properties Affected for the Commercial Wind Lease and Grant Issuance within the Central Atlantic Wind Energy Areas on the Outer Continental Shelf Offshore Delaware, Maryland, and/or Virginia*. MHT reviewed the draft document pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and we concur with BOEM's finding of ***no historic properties affected*** for resources in Maryland for this undertaking. We appreciate BOEM's coordination on the current undertaking and look forward to future consultation on the development of offshore wind energy projects in this area, if applicable.

Please contact me if you have questions or need further assistance. Have a Happy New Year!

Beth Cole

To check on the status of a submittal, please use our online search:
https://apps.mht.maryland.gov/compliancelog/ComplianceLogSearch.aspx

Beth Cole
Administrator, Project Review and Compliance
Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Department of Planning
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032
beth.cole@maryland.gov / **410-697-9541**
MHT.Maryland.gov

On Tue, Dec 12, 2023 at 10:06 AM Central Atlantic Wind Lease EA Section 106 <CentralAtlanticWindLeaseEA.Section106@icf.com> wrote:

> Dear Beth Cole,
>
> The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), serving as lead Federal agency under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), has made a Finding of No Historic Properties Affected (Finding) pursuant to 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 800.4(d)(1) for the undertaking of issuing commercial leases within the Wind Energy (WEAs) and granting of rights-of-way (ROWs) and rights-of-use and easement (RUEs) in the Central Atlantic region of the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS).

The attached PDFs are electronic versions of the following documents:

- A letter requesting your review and comments on the Finding within 45 calendar days of receiving this correspondence.
- The Draft Finding of Effect Report.

Hard copies of these documents have been sent to your office in addition to this electronic correspondence. ICF has also submitted this project in the Maryland Historic Trust e106 Online Project Submittal System.

These documents are also available for download using this secure link: 2023-12-12_Draft FOE. This link will function only for individuals on the project's confirmed consulting parties list. If you would like to add individuals to the confirmed consulting parties list, please e-mail me back using the contact information below providing the individual's name, affiliation, and e-mail address.

If you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please contact me at CentralAtlanticWindLeaseEA.Section106@icf.com, or (703) 225-5711. We respectfully request you please submit your response no later than Friday, January 26, 2024.

Sincerely,

David Birnbaum

DAVID BIRNBAUM

ICF, on behalf of BOEM

Central Atlantic Wind Auction Project Section 106 Lead