

## Environmental Studies Program: Studies Development Plan | FY 2021–2022

Title	Partners in Offshore Wind Environmental Research – California (POWER–California)
Administered by	Pacific OCS Region
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Conducting Organization(s)	TBD
Total BOEM Cost	TBD
Performance Period	FY 2021–2023
Final Report Due	TBD
Date Revised	August 10, 2020
PICOC Summary	
<i><u>Problem</u></i>	Wind energy development offshore California is on the horizon. BOEM and the State of California need to better understand the potential environmental effects and appropriately plan development. Many stakeholders also recommend increased Federal-State coordination on scientific research.
<i><u>Intervention</u></i>	BOEM and select State and Federal agencies will jointly develop a funding solicitation for research focused on potential environmental effects as well as monitoring methods/technologies associated with prospective offshore wind energy development.
<i><u>Comparison</u></i>	N/A
<i><u>Outcome</u></i>	Improved understanding of the potential environmental effects of offshore wind energy development and enhanced collaboration/cooperation between Federal and State agencies interested in California offshore wind energy development.
<i><u>Context</u></i>	The geographic scope is focused on California. If the model is successful, we will consider expanding in the future to include Oregon and Hawaii.

**BOEM Information Need(s):** BOEM Pacific Region needs authoritative baseline and monitoring data to inform offshore wind energy leasing decisions offshore central and northern California. This information would also support stakeholder outreach anticipated future site and impact characterization.

**Background:** The State of California has ambitious renewable energy goals including relying on zero-emission energy sources for its electricity by 2045. BOEM has been actively working with the State of California for years on the development of offshore wind energy. Stakeholders recommend additional environmental studies as well as increased Federal-State coordination in

their planning and execution. At an October 2019 California Energy Commission (CEC) hearing, State Commissioners highlighted the need for enhanced scientific cooperation with BOEM.

**Objectives:**

1. Address subset of environmental information needs raised by stakeholders.
2. Improve Federal-State coordination of environmental effects research on offshore wind energy.

**Methods:** There are multiple potential models for this new Federal-State effort. Based on preliminary discussions with representatives from the California Ocean Protection Council (OPC), CEC, and several Federal agencies, BOEM is considering a joint funding solicitation for environmental studies to inform prospective California offshore wind energy management decisions. The process would include third-party peer review. Funding decisions would be made in coordination with all funding partners; but each agency would choose which proposal(s) to fund. That approach is modeled after the National Oceanographic Partnership Program (NOPP) Broad Area Announcement (BAA) process.

The most aggressive timeline for implementation would be publication in fall 2020 with projects selected for funding in early 2021.

**Specific Research Question(s):**

1. What are the potential environmental effects associated with prospective wind energy development offshore California?
2. What emerging technologies are under development to better monitor the potential effects?

**Current Status:** Proposed

**Publications Completed:** N/A

**Affiliated WWW Sites:** N/A

**References:**