

Environmental Studies Program: Studies Development Plan | FY 2024–2025

Field	Study Information
Title	Traditional Native Hawaiian Voyaging and Cultural Fishing and Boating Practices on the OCS
Administered by	Pacific OCS Region
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Procurement Type(s)	Cooperative Agreement or Inter-agency Agreement
Performance Period	FY 2024–2026
Final Report Due	TBD
Date Revised	August 10, 2023
Problem	BOEM needs a better understanding of the types of traditional Native Hawaiian cultural concerns that could be affected by OCS energy development offshore Hawai`i for consideration in leasing decisions, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) reviews, and offshore wind energy plan reviews. Successful outreach to the Native Hawaiian and kama`āina ¹ community is often inhibited by incomplete information and a lack of BOEM's presence in the community.
Intervention	Guided discussions (purposeful sampling) between BOEM and Native Hawaiians and the local community
Comparison	Characteristics of traditional voyaging areas and cultural fishing practices unique to Hawai`i and their vulnerability to prospective offshore energy development
Outcome	Human dimension data (both qualitative and quantitative) on Hawaiian cultural fishing/boating and traditional voyaging pathways and new cultural information to aid characterizing these important cultural practices. BOEM can better engage with the communities when informed and can best analyze possible impacts and identify potential future mitigations. Analysis of traditional voyaging path vulnerabilities and Native Hawaiian and kama`āina' attitudes toward offshore wind energy projects will be valuable for energy planning.
Context	Potential leasing areas on the OCS of Hawai`i

BOEM Information Need(s): The goal is to obtain information to ensure orderly OCS development offshore. This study will inform floating offshore wind NEPA analyses and NHPA Section 106 consultations in Hawai`i and help BOEM understand potential impacts to traditional Native Hawaiian voyaging activities and current cultural fishing activities. Hawai`i is undergoing a transformation to move from being almost completely reliant on imported fossil fuels to one that is powered by clean renewable energy. Hawai`i was the first state to commit to 100% clean renewable energy for electricity, to a net-

¹ A kama`āina may be considered to be someone who lives in Hawaii for a long time, or may be expanded to include people who once lived there but have moved away. Kama`āina is not necessarily ancestry based.

negative emissions goal. This study effort integrates environmental science with historical and traditional knowledge and compliments other BOEM-funded studies (D'Iorio et al. 2015, Watson et al. 2022, Van Tilburg et al. 2017).

Background: The State of Hawai'i Energy Office has repeatedly stated, in 2017 and 2022, that they lack information necessary to conduct outreach activities for NEPA impact analyses.² Native Hawaiians are known to have ancestral ties to the ocean. Understanding the types and areas of cultural activities (e.g., celestial navigation and cultural fishing) is essential to consider during planning for offshore development. Outrigger canoeing has been revived as a Hawaiian practice, along with ocean navigation and boat construction.

Objectives: Synthesize archival data on traditional voyaging and cultural fishing resources that could be affected by offshore wind energy development. Concerns exist about light impact from turbines and the view obstruction on traditional navigators and cultural fishing practices. This study will identify areas where potential visual impacts may be of concern s in advance of planning efforts to facilitate kama'āina and Native Hawaiian community engagement and public outreach. This study may assist BOEM in visual analysis in Area(s) of Potential Effect (APEs). The timing of this effort is critical as collecting these data substantially (e.g., five years) before any project is established enables BOEM and project proponents the best opportunity to understand the human environment in Hawai'i and respond appropriately.

Develop a tool to visualize renewable energy build out to increase understanding of how offshore development may impact voyaging, cultural fishing, and boating use. This may include, but is not limited to, Hawaiian fishing/boating and traditional voyaging pathways in an exportable database format and GIS shapefiles or story maps, and a traditional naming "glossary" for voyaging, seafaring, marine environment, fish, and marine mammals.

Methods: Compile data from archival and secondary sources. Compile and summarize information from Native Hawaiian communities regarding traditional use areas that could be affected by offshore development. Conduct guided in-person discussions (purposeful sampling method or another similar methodology) with navigators and cultural fishers in the kama'āina and Native Hawaiian communities. Collect human dimensions data from leaders in the community. Together with the Native Hawaiian community, BOEM will identify and implement protocols to address potentially sensitive information that will be excluded from the published final report. Identify best practices for incorporating traditional knowledge into analyses for NHPA and NEPA reviews. Prepare final report(s) of findings that detail(s) these efforts and maps/visual aids, as well as an exportable database of discussion results.

Specific Research Question(s):

1. What areas of traditional voyaging are of significance to the Native Hawaiian Community?
2. What areas of cultural boating and fishing are of significance to the Native Hawaiian and kama'āina community?

² There is a PROUA effort on voyaging. PROUA did not map specific traditional and customary Hawaiian uses of the ocean. Workshops were held in eight locations throughout Hawai'i providing a foundation to build upon. See D'Iorio et al. 2015.

3. How can mitigation for potential impacts from offshore wind energy development be adapted to the unique culture and values of Hawai'i and Pacific Islanders?

Current Status: N/A

Publications Completed: N/A

Affiliated WWW Sites: N/A

References:

D'Iorio M, Selbie H, Gass J, Wahle C. 2015. The Pacific Regional Ocean Uses Atlas, Data and tools for understanding ocean space use in Washington, Oregon and Hawaii. Camarillo (CA): U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Pacific OCS Region. 702 p. Report No.: OCS Study BOEM 2015-014.

Van Tilburg H, Watson TK, Faria K, Hoomanawanui K, Ho-Lastiama I, Ritte W, Maly K, Nahoopii M, Horcajo K, Kaupiko K, Ball D. 2017. A guidance document for characterizing Native Hawaiian cultural landscapes. Camarillo (CA): U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. 208 p. Report No.: OCS Study BOEM 2017-023.

Watson TK, Hoomanawanui K, Thurman R, Thao B, Boyne K. 2017. Na 'Ikena I Kai (Seaward Viewsheds): Inventory of Terrestrial Properties for Assessment of Marine Viewsheds on the Eight Main Hawaiian Islands. Camarillo (CA): US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Pacific OCS Region. 140 p. Report No.: OCS Study BOEM 2017-022.