

VINEYARD NORTHEAST

CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATIONS PLAN VOLUME I APPENDIX

MARCH 2024

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VINEYARD



OFFSHORE

PUBLIC VERSION

Vineyard Northeast COP

Appendix I-I Fisheries Communication Plan

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Revision	Date	Description
0	July 2022	Initial submission.
1	April 2023	Updated the description of Vineyard Offshore’s Fisheries Liaison and made other minor revisions.
2	November 2023	Updated to address United States Coast Guard (USCG) Round 3 Comments (dated August 8, 2023), revised communication protocols to align with Vineyard Northeast’s current practices, and made other minor revisions.
2	March 2024	Resubmitted without revisions.

Vineyard Northeast/Lease Area OCS-A 0522

Fisheries Communication Plan

Vineyard Offshore

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Vineyard Northeast/Lease Area OCS-A 0522

Fisheries Communication Plan

I. Introduction

Vineyard Offshore is an offshore wind development company established by the same team that developed Vineyard Wind 1 (Lease Area OCS-A 0501), the nation's first commercial-scale offshore wind project. Vineyard Offshore leads the development of two lease areas along the US East Coast - Lease Area OCS-A 0522 (also known as Vineyard Northeast) and Lease Area OCS-A 0544 (also known as Vineyard Mid-Atlantic).

The Fisheries Communication Plan (FCP) is a living document based on best practice guidance and input from fishermen and fisheries stakeholders. It outlines our proactive approach to fisheries communication to ensure effective and regular engagement with a wide range of fishermen and fisheries stakeholders. This FCP aligns with the Vineyard Wind 1 FCP, which was first drafted in 2011 to improve communication with fishermen potentially affected by the development of that offshore wind project. Since then, our communications plan and approach have evolved and grown with over 10 years of input from fisheries stakeholders. This document is regularly updated, in response to stakeholder feedback and to incorporate lessons learned, to ensure communication protocols and tools remain relevant and effective.

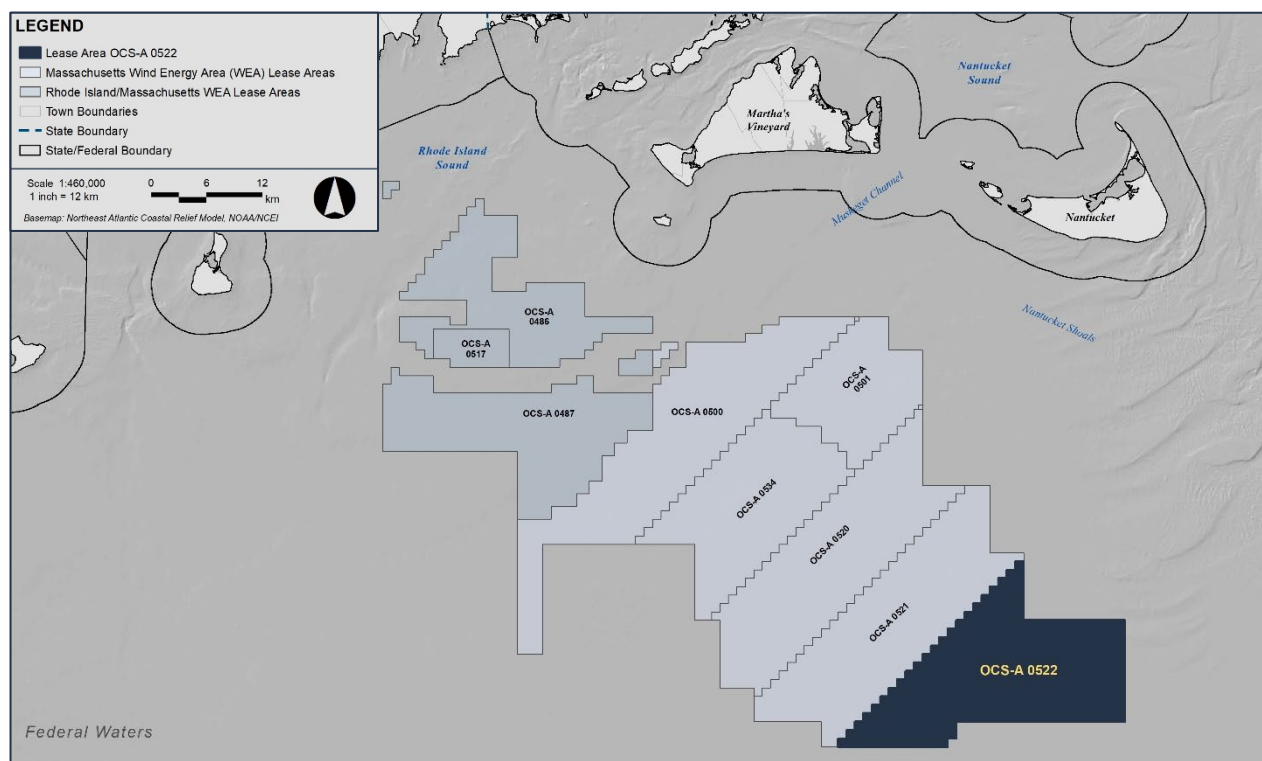
Vineyard Offshore strongly believes that the offshore wind and fishing industries can successfully work alongside each other in the marine environment, and we will continue the approach we started with Vineyard Wind 1 to build bridges between the two sectors. We will also continue to fund research, share data, participate in regional science initiatives, and expand our prior efforts to hire fishermen and/or fishing vessels to support offshore site assessment and data-gathering activities.

Visit <https://www.vineyardoffshore.com/fisheries-522> to sign-up for updates, to view Offshore Wind Mariner Updates (OWMUs), and to fill out an online Vessel Request for Information (RFI) form with vessel specifications and crew certifications if vessel owners are interested in working on Vineyard Northeast. Charts showing the Lease Area, frequently asked questions (FAQs), and our fisheries science reports can also be found on the website.

II. Vineyard Northeast

Vineyard Offshore is developing Lease Area OCS-A 0522, as Vineyard Northeast, for wind energy production on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). The Lease Area is approximately 132,370 acres in size and is located approximately 25 nautical miles from Nantucket (see Figure 1). The Lease Area abuts SouthCoast Wind's Lease Area OCS-A 0521 along its northwestern edge and has water depths between 17.5-35 fathoms (105-210 feet).

Figure 1 Vineyard Northeast Lease Area OCS-A 0522



III. Potentially Affected Fisheries

An analysis published by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries in 2022 indicates that the commercial fisheries likely to be most affected¹ by offshore site assessment, construction, and operational activities for Vineyard Northeast are: (1) Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Fishery Management Plan (FMP);² (2) Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass; (3) Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish; (4) Sea Scallop; and (5) Tilefish. Other FMPs and fisheries may also be affected. Vineyard Offshore is conducting fisheries outreach and engagement with different fisheries to verify and refine NOAA Fisheries' assessment of potentially impacted commercial and recreational fisheries in Lease Area OCS-A 0522 as well as along any offshore export cable corridors.

IV. Fisheries Team

Our fisheries communication efforts are led by Fisheries Manager (FM) Crista Bank, a fisheries biologist with deep knowledge of fishing practices as well as an extensive network of personal

¹ NOAA Fisheries defines "most impacted" as the FMPs deriving the most revenue from an area over the 14-year analysis period of 2008 to 2021, indicating the highest potential for impact to the industry from a reduction in fishing area.

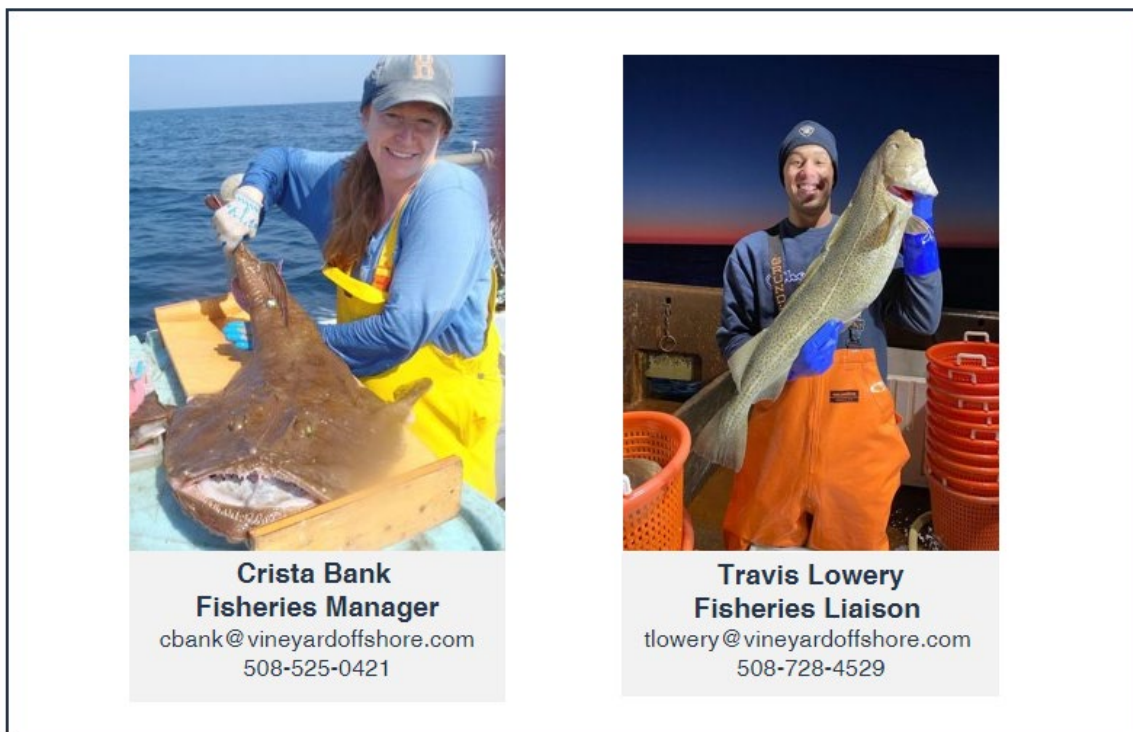
² The ASMFC FMP includes the following species: American lobster, cobia, Atlantic croaker, black drum, red drum, menhaden, NK Sea Bass, NK Seatrout, spot, striped bass, tautog, Jonah crab, and Pandalid shrimp.

relationships with fishermen and fishery organizations in the region (see Figure 2). Crista oversees Vineyard Offshore’s efforts to build and maintain relations with the commercial and recreational fishing industries and surrounding communities. This includes directing outreach, developing fisheries research programs, and identifying potential workforce opportunities for fishing industry involvement. She has spent the last five years laying the groundwork for these strategies as a Fisheries Liaison (FL) on the Vineyard Wind 1 project.

Crista’s fisheries communication efforts are supported by Travis Lowery who serves as the FL for Vineyard Offshore. He is primarily responsible for developing and delivering our New England fisheries program. This program includes a range of components, such as outreach, communication strategy engagement, project planning, workforce development, and fisheries science. Travis is a fisheries biologist who spent six years working for the Marine Fisheries Field Research Group at UMass Dartmouth’s School for Marine Science and Technology. He spent over 300 days at sea as chief scientist working on cooperative research projects. He most recently led the ventless trap and larval surveys in the Vineyard Wind 1 lease area.

Our fisheries team is readily available by phone, email, and text for ongoing communication (see Figure 2 and our website for contact information). Fishermen can also sign up for general updates and news, OWMUs, and information requests by filling out a contact form on our website.

Figure 2 Vineyard Offshore’s Fisheries Manager and Liaison



Vineyard Offshore’s fisheries team also includes Fisheries Representatives (FRs), Onboard Fisheries Liaisons (OFLs), and scout vessels. Information about the role of FLs, FRs, OFLs, and scout vessels on offshore wind projects is provided below.

Lastly, Vineyard Offshore also employs a Marine Liaison Officer who is responsible for safe marine operations and ensuring that Vineyard Offshore is a good neighbor while on the water. As such, there will be frequent interaction, information exchange, and coordination between the fisheries team and the Marine Liaison Officer.

a. Fisheries Liaisons

FLs are employed by offshore wind developers to implement FCPs and serve as a communication conduit between offshore wind developers and the fishing industry. At Vineyard Offshore, the FL serves as a readily accessible and knowledgeable point of contact within the company that fishermen and FRs can efficiently and effectively communicate with. The FL is also tasked with:

- developing relationships and direct lines of communication with individuals that are representative of potentially impacted fishing regions, industries, and communities;
- understanding and conveying current fishing industry concerns and feedback to the Vineyard Offshore team to identify and work towards solutions;
- maintaining existing working relationships with FRs, and identifying and onboarding new FRs;
- identifying potentially affected fisheries and developing communication protocols and tools that create two-way communication channels;
- coordinating with the FLs employed by other offshore wind developers to streamline fisheries communication and outreach events, collaborate on fisheries research and support, and standardize programs, as appropriate;
- working with scientists, federal and state agencies, fishermen, and fisheries stakeholders to develop monitoring plans for fish species and habitats of concern; and
- identifying and expanding training and work opportunities for fishermen and fishing vessels.

b. Fisheries Representatives

FRs do not work on behalf of offshore wind developers but represent a particular fishing community, organization, gear type, port, region, state, or sector(s). FRs are responsible for communicating fisheries concerns, issues, and other input to offshore wind developers. Typically, an FR is an active fisherman or group representing active fishermen within the region, fishery, state, or sector they represent. While FRs are compensated for their time and expenses by offshore wind developers, their duty is to the fishing region, industry, organization, gear type, or sector they represent.

Vineyard Offshore is committed to maintaining an effective network of FRs. Vineyard Offshore engages with nine FRs who represent a variety of gear types and homeports in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, and Rhode Island (see Figure 3). Vineyard Offshore is also working

closely with New Jersey-based fishermen. Vineyard Offshore welcomes additional FRs. If you are interested or have suggestions, please contact our FM.

Figure 3 Vineyard Northeast Fisheries Representatives



c. Onboard Fisheries Liaisons and Scout Vessels

OFLs are experienced fishermen employed to assist geophysical and geotechnical site assessment survey vessel captains with on the water communication and to document fishing gear in the area to help avoid interactions. OFLs continue the role of the FLs offshore so that there is effective communication on-site and in real-time. OFLs report to the FLs and serve as the FLs' "eyes, ears, and voice" during offshore operations.

Among other things, the OFL records observed fisheries activities, ensures survey vessel operations are compliant with the FCP and other fisheries-related policies, and seeks to avoid negative fisheries interactions by looking out for fixed gear and establishing communications (usually by very high-frequency [VHF] radio) with fishing vessels when appropriate. In the event of a negative fisheries interaction, the OFL works with the FLs and relevant FRs to resolve the matter safely, fairly, and efficiently.

Vineyard Offshore also employs local fishing vessels to serve as scout vessels. The scout vessels work ahead of the geophysical and geotechnical site assessment survey vessels and report the fixed gear locations back to the OFL on the survey vessel to avoid any gear interaction. The scout vessel identifies fishermen actively working in the area so the FL can reach out to them with detailed survey vessel information throughout the remainder of the survey activity. This approach has proven effective at reducing the risk of fixed gear interactions during offshore activities.

V. Fisheries Engagement

Starting with the Vineyard Wind 1 project, Vineyard Offshore's team has over a decade of experience engaging with commercial and recreational fishermen, vessel owners, fishing advocacy organizations, shore support services, and fisheries research institutions. Our FM and other members of our staff have met with hundreds of fisheries stakeholders in recent years, including fishermen from various gear types and sectors, fishing advocacy organizations, and

local fisheries groups who are most likely to be affected by offshore wind development on the OCS. Aside from building relationships with the region's fishermen and fisheries stakeholders, a key objective of our engagement efforts is to build trust and look for mutually beneficial opportunities to work with the fishing industry.

Vineyard Offshore has and will continue to employ a variety of outreach methods and tools to communicate and maintain relationships with fishermen and fisheries stakeholders. These outreach methods and tools include, but are not limited to, the following:

- organizing bi-weekly meetings with FRs to share project information and discuss concerns and current issues facing the fishing industry;
- working with FRs to distribute flyers, charts, FAQs, and other relevant information through their networks and communication channels;
- creating outreach materials for fishing communities to distribute at different events as well as local bait and tackle shops in the region;
- holding "port hours" with FLs from other offshore wind developers at ports in Montauk, New York, New Bedford, Massachusetts, Narragansett, Rhode Island, and Stonington, Connecticut to provide information to fishing vessel crews who fish in or transit through the Lease Area;
- maintaining a website with information specifically for fishermen, including fisheries science information, charts, mariner updates of offshore vessel activity, and RFIs;
- maintaining a database of fishing vessels interested in offshore wind, survey vessel, and guard vessel work as identified through the Vessel RFI;
- reaching out to local recreational fishing organizations and clubs;
- presenting project information and updates on fisheries science at recreational organization meetings;
- hosting tables at commercial marine expos and recreational fishing shows;
- engaging with recreational fishing tournaments and derby organizers, including sponsoring events; and
- relying on word of mouth (i.e., reaching out to a fisherman at the request of another fisherman).

Vineyard Offshore is in regular contact with the relevant federal and state agencies on fisheries-related matters. In addition, we are active participants in the following technical working groups, advisory boards, councils, and commissions:

- International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (member of Working Group on Offshore Wind Development and Fisheries)
- Massachusetts Fisheries Working Group on Offshore Wind Energy
- Massachusetts Habitat Working Group on Offshore Wind Energy
- Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
- New England Fishery Management Council
- New York State Energy Research and Development Authority's (NYSERDA's) Environmental Technical Working Group
- NYSERDA's Fisheries Technical Working Group

- American Clean Power New York Bight Fisheries Working Group
- Regional Wildlife Science Collaborative for Offshore Wind
- Responsible Offshore Science Alliance

Finally, we understand that some fishermen do not feel adequately represented by fishing organizations or FRs, and therefore prefer to share information and concerns individually and through different channels of communication. We recognize that individuals' concerns are just as important as group concerns and will continue to reach out to individual fishermen and respect requests for anonymity.

VI. Offshore Communication Protocols

a. Overview

The offshore communications protocols outlined below will be adjusted and adapted over time to reflect best practices and lessons learned. Similar protocols will be standardized and implemented for construction activities at the appropriate time.

E-mail and text alerts are a critical communication tool to keep fishermen apprised of offshore activities, and we actively encourage all fishermen and fisheries stakeholders to sign up for these alerts on our website.

b. Fishing Industry Communication Protocol Before and During Offshore Survey Work

Our offshore survey work communication protocol, which incorporates recommendations from fishermen and state agency protocols, is as follows:

- coordinate with the US Coast Guard to issue Notices to Mariners.
- create OWMUs that include a description of the planned activity, pictures of the vessel(s) and equipment to be deployed, a chart showing the location of the activity, vessel contact information, OFL contact information (if applicable), and scout vessel picture(s) and contact information (if applicable). OWMUs support deconfliction of the marine space such that local mariners, including fishing vessels, can choose to avoid survey locations.
- publish OWMUs on our website and social media channels and send them via email and SMS text alert to those that have opted to receive notifications.
- work with FRs to share information through their email lists and other media channels.
- announce and publicize survey activities through state agencies, fishing organization websites, fish houses, and newsletters.
- send out regular email and/or text updates detailing progress, both for work completed and upcoming work areas, to various parties during offshore work.

c. Geological Survey Vessel Communication and Fishing Gear Protocols

Vineyard Offshore contracts with local fishermen to serve as OFLs onboard survey vessels to assist vessel captains with communication and document fishing gear in the area to help avoid

interactions, as noted above. OFLs with local fishing experience and knowledge of the area are typically contracted for the duration of a survey vessel's operations.

Before a survey trip begins, the FL and OFL attend pre-trip meetings with the survey vessel captain and crew to review the specifics of the fisheries active in the area. If an FL has known coordinates of fixed gear in the area, the information is shared with the survey vessel captain and OFL. The survey vessel captain and crew are instructed to communicate respectfully with fishermen and work around fishing gear to the greatest extent practicable.

The captain, crew chief, Vineyard Offshore's client representative, and OFL review and sign off on the communication and gear interaction protocols, which are outlined below, at the start of a survey campaign and whenever there is a new captain or party chief.

Communication Protocol for Survey Vessel Captains

Survey vessel captains and crew implement the following communication protocol during offshore surveys:

- Work around fishing gear to the greatest extent practicable.
- The OFL will have their own VHF unit to monitor radio communications.
- The OFL will communicate directly with fishing vessels in the area, if agreed upon with Captain.
- The OFL will be the main point of contact with the scout vessel.
- Alert OFL to all gear interactions at the time it occurs, waking the OFL if necessary.
- If a fishing vessel is not responding to radio calls, let the OFL try to communicate, waking them up if necessary.
- Plot fixed gear locations while OFL is off watch and relay information when OFL is back on watch.
- Report all communication with fishing vessels to the OFL, both positive and negative when OFL is off watch.
- The OFL will need access to the wheelhouse to set up equipment if practicable.
- OFL will need reliable internet connectivity.

Fixed Gear Interaction Protocols for Survey Vessel Crew

If an incident between a survey vessel and static fishing gear does occur, the following outlines the roles and procedures for such an event:

- Immediately alert OFL (wake up if off watch).
- Fishing gear interaction is logged in the daily report, electronic spreadsheet, and the Interaction Log, recording time, location, photos, details of events, etc.
- If the fishing gear is entangled around survey equipment and is brought on board, the OFL will determine if the fishing gear is actively engaged in fishing, or if it is abandoned fishing gear (i.e., ghost gear). If it is determined the fishing gear is actively engaged in fishing, and the line needs to be severed to release survey equipment, keep any severed gear on board.
- Photos should be taken and the time and vessel position when the released fishing gear is returned to the water should be recorded.

- If it is determined by the OFL that the fishing gear is not actively engaged in fishing, keep the abandoned fishing gear on board the vessel and record the position where it was retrieved.
- The gear should be brought back to shore, and if the owner can be identified, they will be notified, and the gear will be returned.
- Vessel location and time when an interaction begins and vessel location and time when the incident is over will be recorded.
- Buoy permit number and color is logged.
- Pictures are taken of the gear.
- FM is notified of all gear interactions as soon as possible.

d. Safety Management System/Emergency Communication Protocols

An important objective of this FCP is to enhance the safety of all ocean users in and around a project area during development, construction, operations, and decommissioning. Our Safety Management System will describe procedures for notifying the US Coast Guard of mariners in distress, of potential/actual search and rescue incidents, and any events or incidents that may impact maritime safety or security. Safety planning will be further elaborated on in future updates of the FCP.

VII. Fishing Gear Loss and Compensation

Vineyard Offshore has developed a fishing gear loss compensation process that allows fishermen to be quickly and fairly compensated so they can continue fishing. We use a standard gear loss/damage compensation form that is based on the form previously developed through coordination with FRs, FLs, and other developers for the Vineyard Wind 1 project. This form provides a standard approach to fishing gear loss compensation across several East Coast lease areas and projects. Fishermen can access the form on Vineyard Offshore's website at <https://www.vineyardoffshore.com/fisheries-522>.