

California Coastal Commission

California Offshore Wind Energy Fisheries Working Group Meeting #5

February 12, 2025

Introduction

In accordance with [Condition 7c of the California Coastal Commission's concurrence](#) the five offshore wind energy lease sales issued by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) and [Senate Bill 286](#), the California Coastal Commission convened the fourth California Offshore Wind Energy Fisheries Working Group meeting over two days on September 30 and October 1, 2024. The goal of the California Offshore Wind and Fisheries Working Group is to develop a statewide strategy for avoidance, minimization, and mitigation of impacts to fishing and fisheries that prioritizes fisheries productivity, viability, and long-term resilience. The strategy is expected to include: protocols for communication; best practices for surveys and data collection; a methodology for comprehensive socioeconomic analysis of direct and indirect impacts to fishing; a framework for compensatory mitigation for unavoidable impacts; and a fishing agreement template that memorializes the elements of the strategy.

Meeting Objectives

The fifth meeting of the Working Group included the following objectives:

- Receive an overview of subgroup progress and discuss and provide input on draft text and work products being developed by the subgroups.
 - Subgroup 3: Avoidance and Minimization Measures
 - Subgroup 4: Tribal Fisheries
 - Subgroup 5: Methodology for Comprehensive Project-Level Socioeconomic Analysis
 - Subgroup 6: Framework for Compensatory Mitigation: Framework for Compensatory Mitigation
- Review and provisional levels of support on Protocols for Communication.
- Discuss objectives and timing for Working Group meeting #6, and identify interim tasks to Working Group members, subgroup members, and support staff as needed.

Meeting Date, Time, and Location

Virtual Meeting on Zoom

Tuesday, January 7, 2025

9:00 am – 3:00 pm PT.

Wednesday, January 8, 2025

9:00 am – 3:00 pm PT.

Meeting Format

The meeting was conducted online on Zoom over the two days. During the meeting, Working Group members provided feedback on the updated Draft Avoidance and Minimization Measures and Framework for Compensatory Mitigation draft documents. Further, the group discussed the Tribal Fisheries Agreement, updates to the Methodology for Comprehensive Project-Level Socioeconomic Analysis, and shared provisional levels of support on the Draft Protocols for Communication. A high-level summary of what was shared is included in the following sections.

Key Topics and Themes

Subgroup 3 – Avoidance and Minimization Measures

The leads from Subgroup 3 provided updates on the progress achieved regarding the updated Draft Avoidance and Minimization Measures document. Major topics and comments from Working Group members related to the work of Subgroup 3 are included below:

- Working Group members discussed the need to include transit corridors in Table 2, as well as inclusion of a definition in the document. Members suggested including measures for developers to coordinate their efforts to reduce impacts and monitor their vessels using AIS.
- Working Group members discussed the language around safety risks with decommissioning and whether to include language that allows for structures to remain if safety risks are too high. Working Group members generally supported including language that says, “There may be circumstances where removal poses unreasonable safety risk, or an alternative provides better environmental outcomes”, in addition to adding language that the state is strongly committed to ensuring full removal.
- Working Group members brought up whether to include compaction in Table 5. Most members were in favor of removing the item from Table 5, given there was no clear mitigation measure and to include it as a secondary impact.
- Working Group members provided additional comments on Marine Coordination Centers and fisheries surveys.
- Working Group members were asked about items needed to support the document at a future meeting. Some members shared the need to understand offshore wind data collection, concerns around economic feasibility, including agencies identified in Table 5 in the discussions, and the need to review language that may overlap with existing measures being addressed by other agencies. Overall, Working Group members suggested reviewing and tightening the language of the document.

Subgroup 4 – Tribal Fisheries Agreement

California Coastal Commission staff presented an overview of the work completed so far and next steps for the Tribal Fisheries Agreement subgroup. Major topics and comments from Working Group members are included below:

- Working Group members asked for a definition of Tribal fisheries.
- Working Group members discussed Tribal interests in fisheries beyond commercial interests including sustenance and cultural interests.
- Working Group members shared key points of interests for Tribes in this process including land, culture, political voice, and economic self-sufficiency.
- The Working Group discussed the next steps for Subgroup 4, which include additional subgroup meetings and outreach with other California Tribes.
- Some Working Group members asked about confidentiality regarding meetings with CoreHub and other Tribes.
 - CCC staff shared in their review of the Charter, the meetings with Tribes outside of the Working Group membership would not violate the Charter as they would not share confidential documents with non-Working Group members.

Subgroup 5 - Methodology for Comprehensive Project-Level Socioeconomic Analysis

Subgroup 5 leads and the California Coastal Commission staff presented an overview of Subgroup 5's objectives and the goal of the Methodology for Comprehensive Project-Level Socioeconomic Analysis. Northern Economics provided an update on their scope of work, literature review, and proposed interviews. Major topics and comments from Working Group members related to the work of Subgroup 5 are included below:

- Melissa Errend with Northern Economics provided an update on the literature review and invited Working Group members questions and discussion.
 - Working Group members asked about the UC Santa Barbara study funded by BOEM that may inform Northern Economics' work. Some members discussed reviewing BOEM's mitigation guidelines.
 - Some Working Group members asked how data limited fisheries will be handled in the methodology, as well as for-hire fisheries.
 - Other Working Group members asked whether the methodology would account for the multi-decadal timeline of the projects.
 - Working Group members also asked about translating exposure into an assessment of unrecovered economic activity and revenues.
- Melissa Errend with Northern Economics provided an update on the interviews and potential gaps. She invited Working Group members to provide comments and ideas for the interviews.
 - Some Working Group members highlighted the need to understand native perspectives in this process.
 - Other Working Group members asked Northern Economics to consider including Dennis King and WHOI in the shoreside impacts discussions.

Draft Protocols for Communication

Drafting Team members presented an overview of the Draft Protocols for Communication document. Major topics and comments from Working Group members related to the draft document are included below, and are described in order of the discussion:

- Working Group members discussed the use of the term "Fisheries Resiliency Organizations" throughout the document, where some expressed that the use of "Fisheries Resiliency Organizations" can be confusing. The group discussed updating the document to focus on "Fisheries Organizations" and include a definition that includes fisheries resiliency organizations.
- Some Working Group members highlighted concerns around being overly prescriptive about data sharing in the document. Others noted that data sharing can be complex, especially regarding Tribal data. Some members suggested including examples of data sharing to provide additional clarity.
- Working Group members brought up several considerations for the Recommendations for Future Developers section of the document, noting the need to keep the language more general, encouraging efficiency between developers as much as possible, and incorporating regional considerations.

- Working Group members provided additional comments on the document language around fisheries representatives, clarifying language around communications and engagement, Tribal fisheries communications protocols, and defining engagement.

Subgroup 6 – Framework for Compensatory Mitigation

Subgroup 6 – Framework for Compensatory Mitigation leads provided updates on the progress achieved regarding the draft Framework for Compensatory Mitigation documents including draft purpose and goals statements and a draft resiliency framework. Major topics and comments from Working Group members related to the draft documents are included below:

- Working Group members shared several suggested edits to the purposes of the Framework for Compensatory Mitigation document including updating the “coexistence of industry operations” purpose.
- Working Group members provided comments on the objectives including the use of a third-party in administration of funds, standardizing claims criteria, and clarifying what is meant by negotiations.
- Some Working Group members offered to review the document after the meeting and provide definitions for some of the terms used throughout the document.