

California Coastal Commission

# California Offshore Wind Energy Fisheries Working Group Meeting #6

July 9, 2025

## Introduction

In accordance with [Condition 7c of the California Coastal Commission's \(CCC\) concurrence](#) the five offshore wind energy lease sales issued by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) and [Senate Bill 286](#), the CCC convened the sixth California Offshore Wind Energy Fisheries Working Group meeting over two days on May 6 and 7, 2025. 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 sixth meeting of the Working Group included the following objectives:

- Receive updates from the CCC on the Coastal Zone Management Act, their role in the Offshore Wind Fisheries Strategy, federal actions and executive orders.
- 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 (Levels of Support)
  - Subgroup 4: Tribal Fisheries
  - Subgroup 5: Methodology for Comprehensive Project-Level Socioeconomic Analysis
  - Subgroup 6: Framework for Compensatory Mitigation
- Discuss objectives and timing for Working Group meeting #7, and identify interim tasks to Working Group members, subgroup members, and support staff as needed.

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 levels of support on the Draft Avoidance and Minimization Measures. A high-level summary of what was shared is included in the following sections.

## Meeting Date, Time, and Location

Virtual Meeting on Zoom

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

9:00 am – 3:00 pm PT.

Wednesday, May 7, 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 and updates, updates to the Methodology for Comprehensive Project-Level

Socioeconomic Analysis, and provided levels of support on the Draft Avoidance and Minimization Measures. A high-level summary of what was shared is included in the following sections.

## Key Topics and Themes

### California Coastal Commission Updates

CCC Working Group members and additional CCC staff, including Matthew Christen, Senior Attorney, and Cassidy Teufel, Deputy Director, provided responses to previously provided questions from Working Group members on the Statewide Strategy, how compensatory mitigation will be enforced, negotiations, and their role in protecting fishing communities in California. Major topics and comments from Working Group members related to the updates from the CCC are included below:

- Working Group members asked for clarification on the process and timeline for developing an industry-to-industry agreement. CCC noted that agreements are to be developed and submitted as part of the Consistency Certification, but it is their preference for the Working Group to come into agreement on the Statewide Strategy which would be implemented through the CCC's review of Construction and Operations Plans (COPs).
- Working Group members noted the need for the Statewide Strategy to consider impacts to the fishing community that cannot be minimized or avoided.
- Working Group members shared that the Statewide Strategy could benefit from greater clarity on how the document will be utilized once implemented.

### Subgroup 3 – Avoidance and Minimization Measures

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 provided comments and feedback on the updated Draft Avoidance and Minimization Measures document related to fishery surveys, transit lanes, communications with fisheries, decommissioning and removal of infrastructure, and introductory language.
- Working Group members noted the importance of including language that says impacts that cannot be adequately minimized or avoided to be added to the resiliency calculation.
- Working Group members discussed including “designing for removal” as part of the decommissioning measure. Some members shared challenges with anticipating what decommissioning will look like before plans have been developed.

The draft Avoidance and Minimization Measures document was updated to reflect the above comments. On Day 2 of the meeting, Working Group members provided their levels of support on the document. Members present shared general support and qualified support, with several members sharing fundamental disagreement due to the need for greater clarity on Chapter 1 of the Statewide Strategy. Following the meeting, the facilitation team followed up with one Working Group member who missed the meeting, and the Working Group member provided their support for the updated document.

### Subgroup 4 – Tribal Fisheries Agreement

CCC staff presented an overview of the work completed so far and next steps for the Tribal Fisheries subgroup, including outreach to California Tribes in a series of roundtables, coordination with Northern Economics on the socioeconomic impacts methodology, and development of Tribal-specific components of each of the chapters in the Statewide Strategy. Major topics and comments from Working Group members are included below:

- Working Group members discussed the process and timing for consultation with Tribes in California, whether non-federally recognized Tribes are included in the process, and if CCC includes Tribes in Washington and Oregon in their consultations.
- Working Group members asked for the definition of Tribal fisheries to be included in the definitions section of the overall document.

## **Subgroup 5 - Methodology for Comprehensive Project-Level Socioeconomic Analysis**

Northern Economics provided an update on their scope of work, literature review, interview summary, and expert panel workshop. Major topics and comments from Working Group members related to the work of Subgroup 5 are included below:

- Working Group members asked clarifying questions about the update from Northern Economics on the expert panel workshop. Some key topics included the types of data being used for the analysis and how to address impacts that are not quantifiable.
- Working Group members also noted the importance of integrating the work done by Northern Economics with the subgroups.
- Working Group members suggested additional resources for Northern Economics to review including the Plains All American settlement document, the comments made by the Pacific Fisheries Management Council (PFMC), and a letter prepared by 16 fishing associations.

## **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 definitions and a draft resiliency framework. Major topics and comments from Working Group members related to the draft documents are included below:

- Working Group members discussed the eligibility of uses for resiliency funds and whether the fund could cover registered lobbying or litigation for the benefit of the fishing community. Fisheries representatives largely supported the use of funds for lobbying and litigation, noting they would not use the funds against the offshore wind industry or projects. Developers and CCC staff noted concerns around the use of funds for lobbying or litigation, particularly whether those uses would directly address impacts from offshore wind development.
- Working Group members discussed eligibility for direct compensation and whether fishermen that fish within the California lease areas but do not have California fishing licenses would be eligible for payments. CCC staff shared that their jurisdiction is within California state waters only and that including fishermen from other states would likely involve those states and a their CZMA process.
- Working Group members suggested properly defining “legal entities” in the documents.