

Identification of OCS Renewable Energy Space-Use Conflicts and Analysis of Potential Mitigation Measures

Project Team

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The project team, under contract with the Minerals Management Service, is conducting a study to identify space-use conflicts and ways to mitigate the conflicts between renewable energy development and current and potential new uses in coastal and offshore waters of the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Tasks include identifying potential space-use conflicts through a literature review and meetings with the full range of ocean users and in-depth interviews with commercial and recreational fishers. Input sought from stakeholder will also include strategies to minimize and mitigate conflicts and the most effective means for maintaining ocean industry-government communication. For the purpose of forecasting where spatial conflict is most likely to arise, a geospatial database and GIS maps will be compiled from available spatial information on ocean usage from existing sources and from the stakeholder process. Continual coordination between this effort and that of the regional ocean councils on both coasts is a priority to ensure cost effectiveness and avoid duplication. The results of this study will be used to inform decision making in the management and development of renewable energy on the Federal waters of the OCS.

Objectives: Identify and characterize potential space and use conflicts that could result from OCS renewable energy activities in the Atlantic and Pacific regions.

Describe strategies and specific measures for avoiding or resolving these conflicts, including mechanisms for improved communication and cooperation among stakeholders.

Major Tasks and Timeline:

1. Literature review and annotated bibliography. April 2010
2. Development of a geospatial database Draft April 2010 / Final March 2011
3. Stakeholder engagement
Meetings (approx. 7 on each coast) April 2010 – April 2011
Guided conversations with individuals from offshore sectors Summer 2010
4. Coordination with regional ocean councils On-going
Alignment of activities and information sharing
5. Final report September 2011