

Assessing Social, Cultural, and Economic impacts of Floating Offshore Wind on Maine's Fishing Communities

Baseline Offshore Wind Livelihood Impact Needs Exploration
(BOWLINE)

Maine Offshore Wind Research Consortium Advisory Board
October 15, 2025



Gulf of Maine
Research Institute

Overall Goal:
Baseline assessment of potential social, economic, and cultural impacts of floating offshore wind development on Maine's fishing industry

Economic Assessment

- Scenario-based assessment
- On the water impacts
 - Fishing ground and landed values, incorporating potential changes in fishing behavior
- Shoreside impacts
 - Shoreside infrastructure
 - Employment & wages

Socio-cultural Assessment

- On the water impacts
 - Collection of "stories from the sea"
- Shoreside impacts
 - Comparative case study of select communities, utilizing existing and new interview data and other resources
- Map conversations of OSW impacts



Synthesis: Potential overall impacts and impacted communities

Engagement

- Inclusive and iterative participation from fishing communities
- Knowledge co-production
- Build stakeholder capacity to understand, critique, and apply the assessment results in their decision making

Economic Assessment



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Socio-cultural Assessment



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Engagement



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Maine Coast Fishermen's Association
(Advisor)

External Review

PEER Associates (Project Evaluation)



Potential on the water impacts

- Spatio-temporal distribution of fishing effort and associated landings values
- Modeling approach developed by Livermore & Guilfoos (2024) - previously applied to estimate OSW impacts on SNE scallop



Potential shoreside impacts

- Local employment and wage multipliers
- Estimation approach previously applied to estimate the impacts of changes commercial fishery harvesting in Alaska and West Coast communities

Impacts that will take place in the future
⇒ Assumptions on what the future will look like

Scenarios to consider

- Fishing behavior
- OSW technology
- Shoreside infrastructure



To build broad community relationships and minimize the risk of survey fatigue, utilize existing archival and research data as much as possible, then interview to fill the gap



On the water impacts

- Stories from the sea to explore community values, history, and identity and to document historical changes
- Explore connections between offshore fishing grounds and onshore communities

Shoreside impacts



- Gather ethnographic data and conduct comparative case study of select communities
- Anticipated positive and negative impacts
- How potential impacts may be distributed within and across communities

Project Advisory Committee

- Provide feedback to the project team
- Develop fluency with economic and socio-cultural assessment
- Support the team in translating research findings for public dissemination
- Invitation sent to all Industry-representing Research Consortium Advisory Members

Workshops to foster capacity to use study findings

- Workshop # 1 (with PAC, December, date will be announced soon)
 - Build stakeholder understanding of study approaches and assumptions
 - Begin scenario development
- Workshop 2 (late spring ~ summer)
 - Sharing of results
 - Feedback on the findings for final refinement
 - Discussions of assumptions, variables , etc.
 - Recommend next steps

Upcoming: Workshop #1

Workshop goals:

- Building stakeholder understanding of socioeconomic impact assessment methods and assumptions.
- Equipping PAC members with the knowledge to explain and critique the assessment throughout the project.
- Presenting initial methodological approaches and inviting feedback to refine and adapt the project's approach.
- Discussion of offshore wind (OSW) development scenarios and how fishery sectors may operate under different scenarios, with explicit explanations of assumptions.



Online or Phone Survey

- Elicit fishing preferences and decisions with floating offshore wind
- Build on fishery co-existence study
- Results will help develop scenarios used in the economic assessment



Interviews

- Town managers, fishing industry, community members, labor unions, etc.
- Identify communities first, then reach out to interview participants
 - 5 - 6 communities
 - Communities selected to capture variability

Sharing Information and Updates

- GMRI Website, Offshore Wind Resource Hub, Social Media, and E-newsletter
 - Google Search “gmri offshore wind”
- Appreciate feedback on how we should share study findings

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Thank you!