

BOEM Renewable Energy Update to the MAFMC

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BOEM

June 14, 2016

Stages of Development

Identifying Wind Energy Areas

Task Force Consultation → Public Notice &
Comment

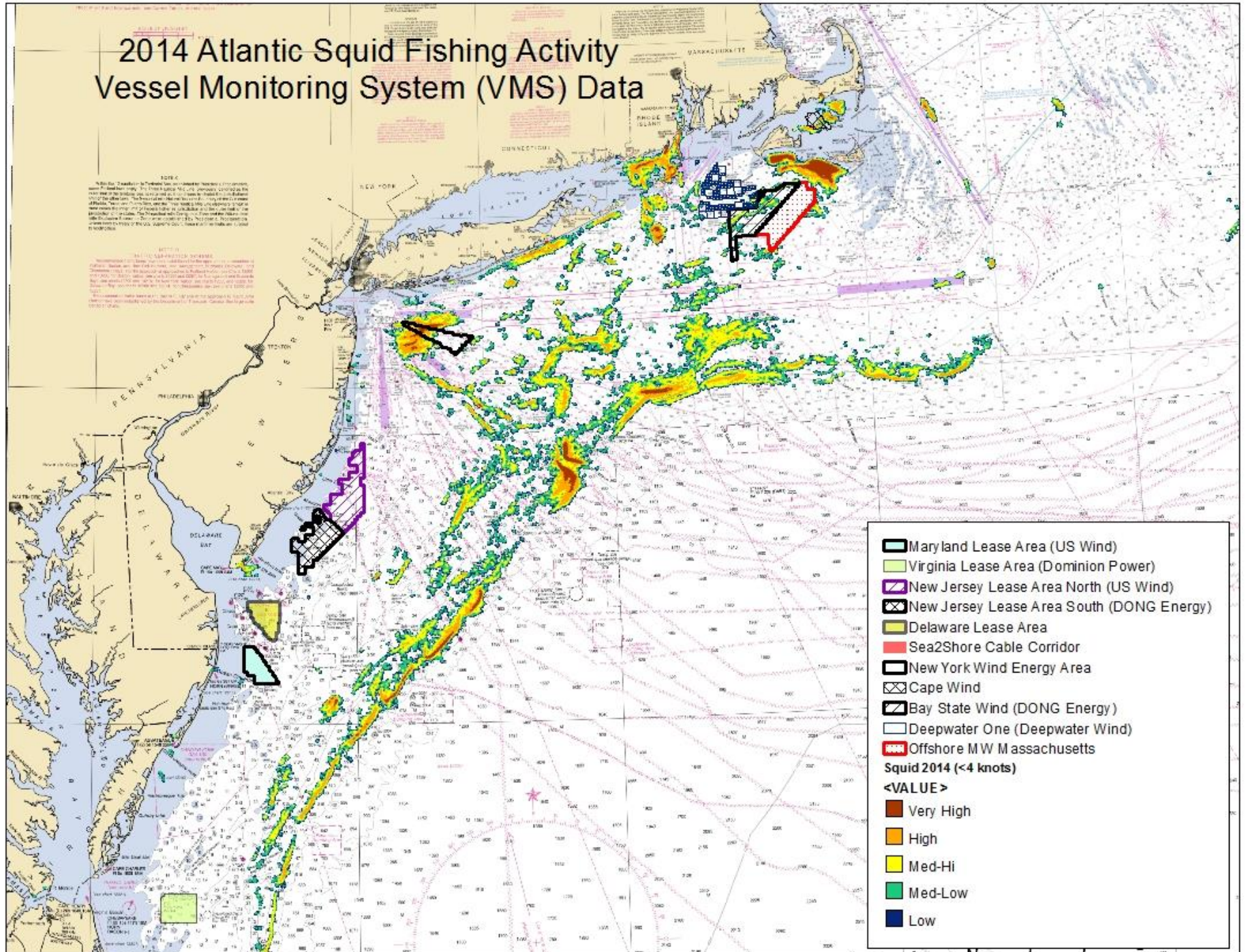
Leasing:

Notice → Environmental Assessment
→ Issuance

Site Assessment Plan
(Surveys)

Construction &
Operations Plan/EIS

2014 Atlantic Squid Fishing Activity Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) Data



Studies of Interest

- The BOEM **2017-2019 Studies Development Plan** has been posted: <http://www.boem.gov/SDP-2017-2019/>
- **Fishery Physical Habitat and Epibenthic Invertebrate Baseline Data Collection.** This study is assessing and characterizing benthic habitat and the epibenthic macroinvertebrate community in existing and proposed WEAs from Massachusetts to North Carolina via multibeam sonar, and optical (still and video) imaging of the seafloor. **Status:** An interim report on the Maryland WEA has been posted online, assessments of other areas are ongoing.
- **Southern New England Cooperative Ventless Trap Survey.** This project will help to fill a data gap in lobster abundance surveys. This project has established a cooperative ventless trap survey to monitor the potential effects of offshore renewable energy development. **Status:** Year 1 surveys have been completed and year 2 studies are ongoing.
- **EMF (Electromagnetic Field) Impacts on Elasmobranch (sharks, rays and skates) and American Lobster Movement and Migration.** The focus of this research is on determining the actual electromagnetic field emissions associated with undersea power cables and response to these fields by sensitive receptor organisms including the American Lobster and elasmobranch species (skates, etc.). **Status:** This began in the summer of 2015 with EMF observations occurring in Long Island Sound.

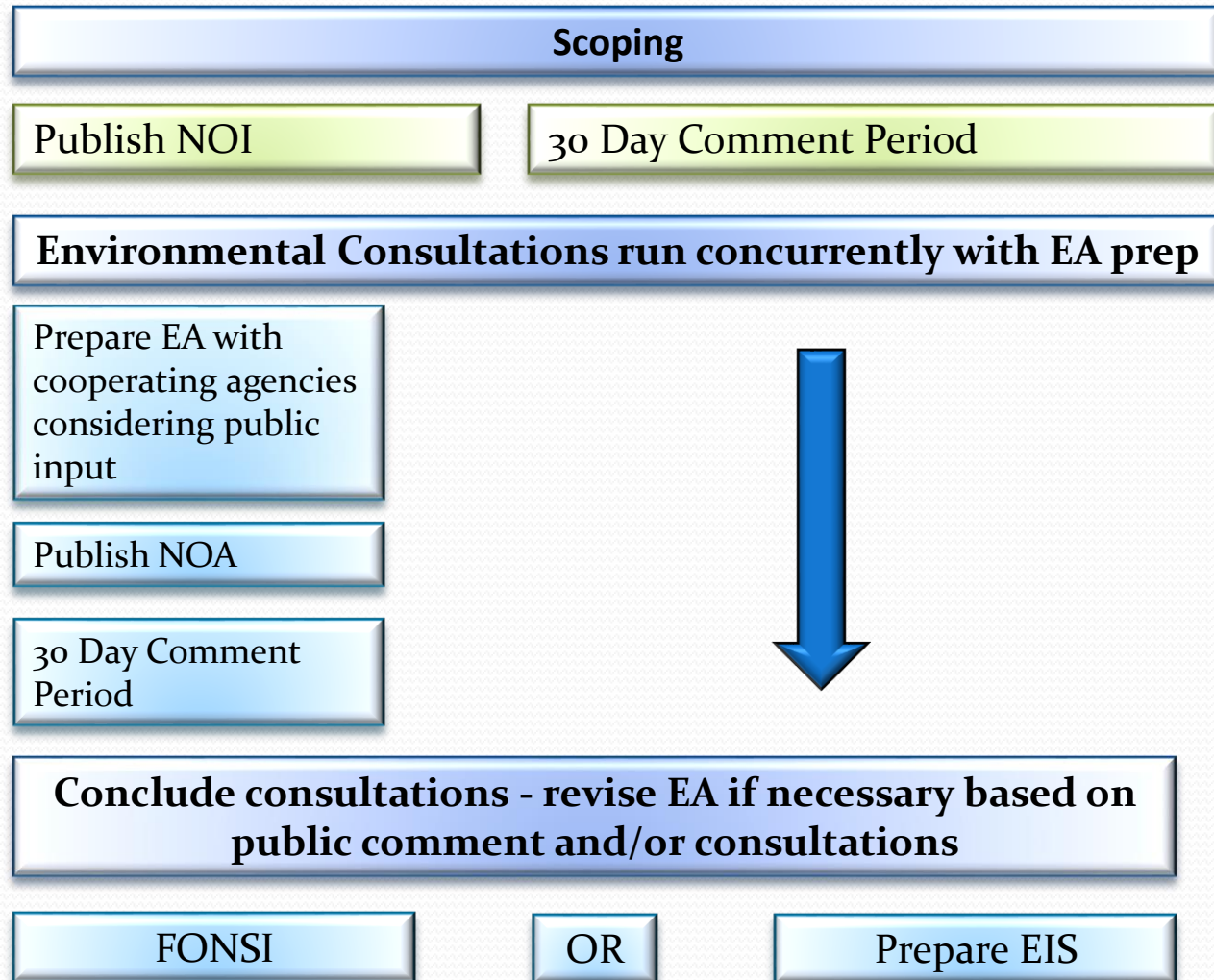
Additional Studies of Interest

- **Fish Telemetry in the Mid-Atlantic.** BOEM has partnered with four different researchers to set up fish telemetry in the mid-Atlantic. WEAs include NY, DE, MD, and VA.
- **Identifying Research Needs and Approaches for Assessing Potential Impacts of Offshore Wind Farm Development on Fisheries Resources in the Northeast Region.** This project solicited and summarized input from the northeast fisheries community on how to best evaluate the potential impacts of offshore wind farm development on commercial fisheries resources located in, adjacent to, or migrating through wind farm sites off the coasts of Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and New York. Emphasis was placed on identifying the key research and monitoring needs, and summarizing suggested data collection protocols. **Status:** This project is complete with final review occurring within BOEM.
- **Collaborative Planning for Fishing & Offshore Wind Energy.** The goal of this project is to: 1) develop and vet fine scale maps of recreational and commercial fishing in and around Virginia's WEA; 2) identify recommendations to mitigate potential use conflicts between fishermen and wind energy developers; and 3) create a plan for communicating wind development activities to fishermen.

New York WEA Environmental Assessment

- BOEM prepared an EA, published on June 6th, which assessed the **proposed action**:
 - **Lease issuance** - site characterization activities (i.e. surveys)
 - **Site assessment activities** - (e.g., construction and operation of a meteorological tower and/or buoys)
- BOEM is soliciting public comments on the EA through July 6th, 2016.

Overview: Standard NEPA Process



Alternatives Analyzed

- Alternative A (Preferred Alternative) – Offer for lease the entire WEA, restricting site assessment structure placement within 1 nm (1.9 km) of the TSS.
- Alternative B – Offer for lease the entire WEA restricting site assessment structure placement within 2 nm (3.7 km) of the TSSs.
- Alternative C – No Action.
- Alternatives considered but not analyzed (selected):
 - Measures to protect squid from potential injurious sound.
 - Exclusion of meteorological tower placement areas for potential impacts to the Atlantic sea scallop resource
 - Exclusion of areas from leasing due to conflicts between commercial scale wind facility and fishing.

Impact Producing Factors

- Vessel Traffic
- Noise (Pile Driving, Surveys)
- Vessel Collisions/Allisions
- Bottom Disturbance
- Emissions and Discharges
- Lighting
- Visual Impacts



Environmental and Socioeconomic Resources Considered

- **Physical**

- Air Quality
- Water Quality

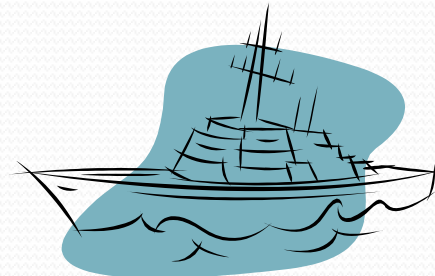


- **Biological**

- Marine Mammals
- Sea Turtles
- Fish and Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)
- Coastal Habitats
- Benthic Resources
- Avian and Bat Species

- **Socioeconomic**

- Commercial and Recreational Fishing Activities
- Aesthetics and Visual Impacts
- Cultural Resources
- Military Uses
- Environmental Justice
- Land Use and Coastal Infrastructure
- Tourism and Recreation
- Demographics and Employment



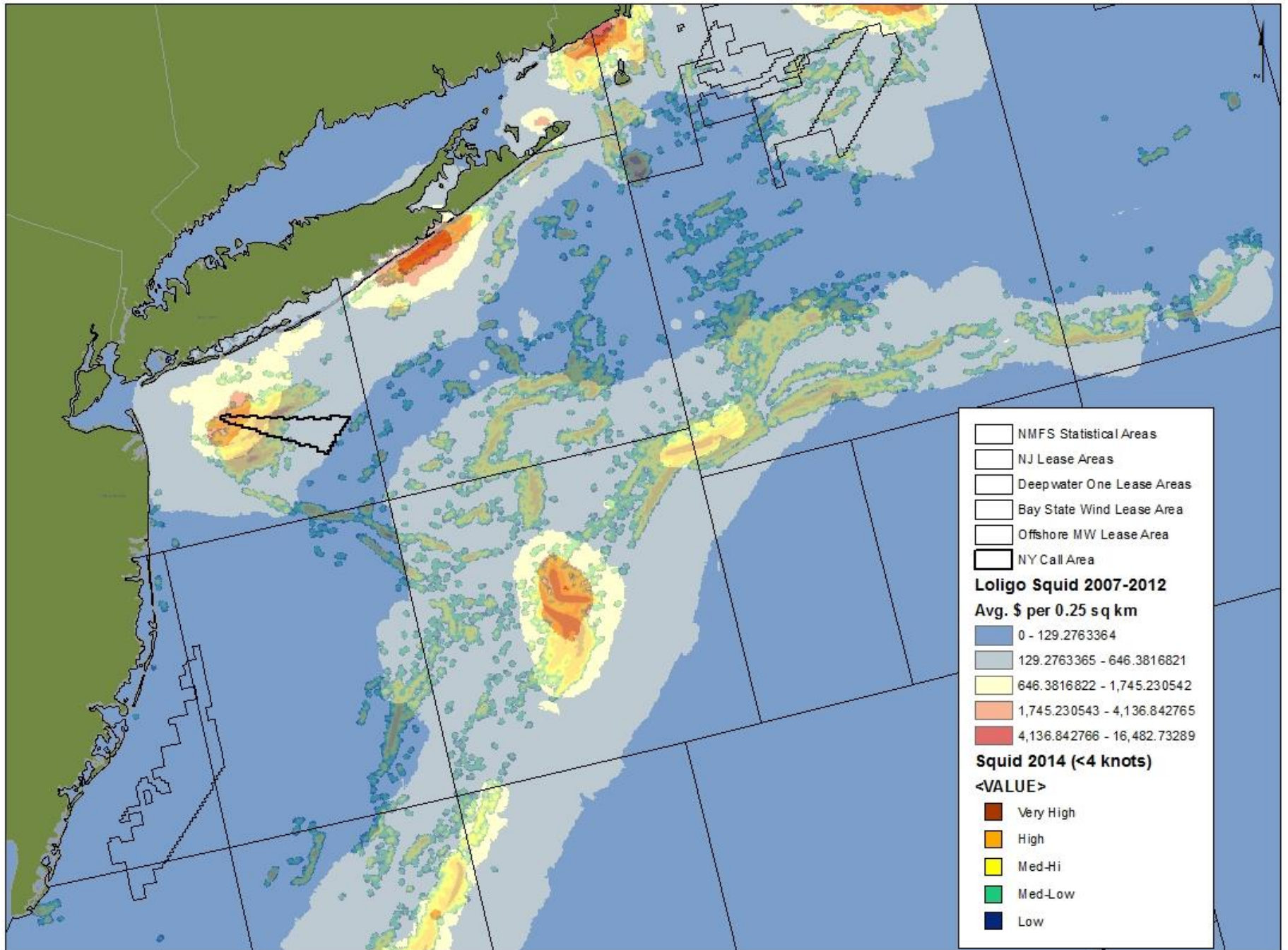
Fish and Fish Habitat

- Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)
 - The EA assesses impacts to EFH (Section 4.4.2.7)
 - BOEM has initiated consultation with NMFS regarding impacts to EFH.
 - The EA concludes that impacts to fish and EFH from site characterization and site assessment would be minor, and that the proposed action is not expected to significantly affect the quality and quantity of EFH and the fish that are present.

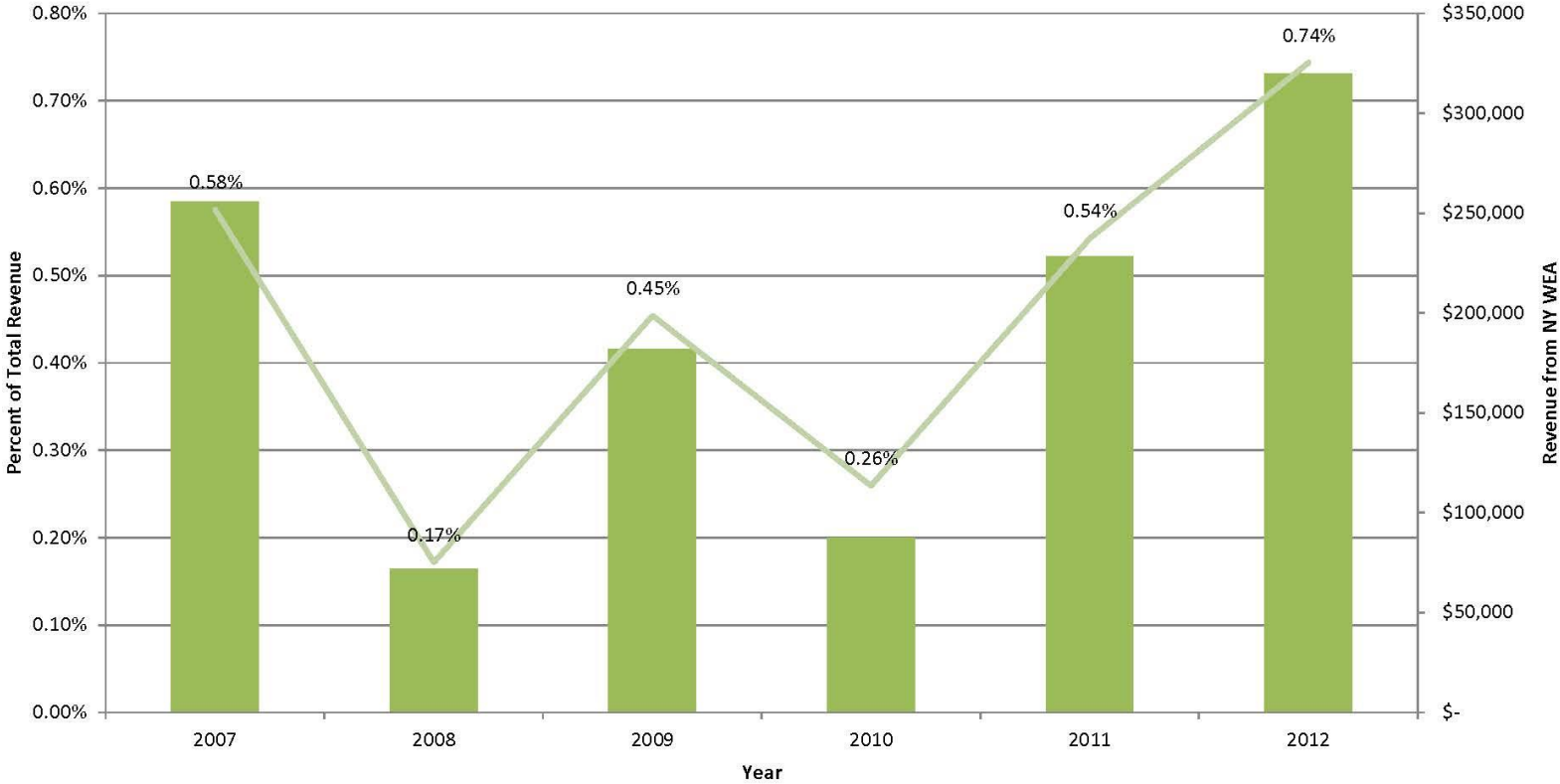
Commercial and Recreational Fisheries

- The EA uses fisheries revenue data from 2007-2012 to estimate exposure of fishing revenue and spatial extent of federally-managed fishing activity in the proposed lease area.
- The EA concludes that impacts to commercial and recreational fisheries is minor. This takes into account impacts to fish, fish habitat, and vessel operations.

Comparison of Squid VMS 2014 and Squid Avg. Value 2007-2012



Squid Fishing Revenue from New York Wind Energy Area 2007- 2012



Comments may be submitted by one of two methods:

- Electronically at <http://www.regulations.gov>. In the entry entitled, “Enter Keyword or ID,” enter **BOEM-2016-0038**, then click “search.” Follow the instructions to submit public comments.
- Mail or deliver in an envelope labeled "Comments on New York EA" to:
BOEM Office of Renewable Energy Programs
45600 Woodland Road, VAM-OREP
Sterling, Virginia, 20166
- BOEM will hold public meetings in June to provide an overview of the EA findings and offer additional opportunities for public comments. BOEM's public meetings will be held at the following locations: [Long Branch, NJ](#) (June 20, 2016), [Hempstead, NY](#) (June 21, 2016), [Westhampton Beach, NY](#) (June 22, 2016), and [Narragansett, RI](#) (June 23, 2016), and [New Bedford, MA](#) (June 27, 2016).

Thank You!



<http://www.boem.gov/Atlantic-Fishing-Industry-Communication-and-Engagement/>

Council Action/Questions

- Does the Council want to submit comments on the NY Wind Energy Proposed Lease Area?
- Use the Council Policy on Wind Energy to draft letter
- The policy is comprehensive

Council Action/Questions

- Best management practices (references wind workshop)
- Avoid conflicts with user groups, rec. and comm. fisheries
- Developers should engage early with fishing industry, fed. and state agencies
- Safety and navigation threats should be addressed
- Plus other issues in policy....
- Staff include relevant details about fisheries and economic values