

Dear Member:

We write from the undersigned organizations to bring the enclosed reports to your attention. These reports feature peer-reviewed research showing that offshore wind energy facilities pose a range of challenges and unintended consequences for the marine environment.

The first enclosed document is the New England Fishermen's Stewardship Association's (NEFSA) concise "Offshore Wind Research Summary" (Research Summary) which highlights some of the latest findings about wind turbines and ocean ecosystems, specifically as they may relate to the Gulf of Maine (GOM).

Studies canvassed in the Research Summary show:

- Development of offshore wind energy could have population-scale effects on marine species such as haddock, a staple seafood product;
- Underwater electric cables, such as those running to shore from offshore turbines, can produce defects and deformities in juvenile lobster; and
- Turbine fields themselves may raise ocean surface temperatures, among many other eventualities.

These and other consequences are not fully understood. Expert researchers have identified numerous lines of further study. The conclusions presented in the Research Summary correspond with our lifetime hands-on experience and knowledge of the ocean and its ecosystems.

The second enclosed document, "[Fisheries and Offshore Wind Interactions: Synthesis of Science](#)" ("Synthesis"), was led by the Responsible Offshore Development Alliance (RODA), working with a large multi-sectoral team of authors including those from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM). The Synthesis documents in exhaustive detail what is known and not known about the interactions between offshore wind and the ocean.

The state of Maine is developing a floating offshore wind [research array](#) at a 15-square-mile site in the GOM. In October 2022, the [National Marine Fisheries Service \(NMFS\) recommended](#) development of the research lease and a robust research and monitoring program prior to engaging the commercial leasing process in the GOM. Citing the unique ocean environments, habitats, and marine resources of the GOM, the new and untested nature of floating turbine technology, and overlap with Critical Habitat of the endangered North Atlantic right whale, NMFS - the agency charged with managing our nation's marine resources – stated that there is not sufficient information to identify suitable areas for commercial offshore wind energy development.

For years, the fishing industry has asked for [regional programmatic environmental reviews](#) (PEIS) prior to siting wind energy areas to understand and sufficiently mitigate the full extent of impacts of offshore wind development. Members of the [conservation community have also echoed this request](#) as it is the only responsible way to account for the cumulative ecological impacts of large-scale ocean habitat conversation.

NEFSA and RODA are asking state and federal authorities to:

- 1) Rescind the existing Gulf of Maine Call Area;**

- 2) Inform commercial scale leasing by the Maine Research Array and only proceed after sufficient research and monitoring has been conducted; and
- 3) Conduct a PEIS for the Gulf of Maine prior to identifying any commercial wind energy areas.

A more robust and thorough evaluation of environmental concerns must be at the forefront of any buildout of our oceans. We cannot keep deferring the science.

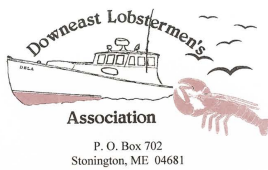
We hope you will support us by pursuing these modest steps. In so doing, you will be supporting New England’s maritime heritage, its working people, and coastal communities. As wild harvesters and true marine stewards, we are proud to maintain a resilient, sustainable ocean ecosystem because our livelihoods and the future of our communities depend on it.

Fishermen have implemented sustainable catch practices for decades based on extensive research programs and a strong stewardship ethic. Representative examples, among many, include weak link devices deployed with lobster traps to mitigate against whale entanglements or haddock separators trawlers use to reduce bycatch. Our commitment to all of our fisheries and our workplace, the ocean, compels us to speak out against its irreversible industrialization in a manner unsupported by scientific evidence.

We thank you for your attention to the enclosed materials.

Signatories:

Downeast Lobstermen’s
Association



Long Island Commercial
Fishing Association



Maine Coast
Fishermen’s Association



Maine Lobstering
Union



Maine Lobstermen’s
Association



New England Fishermen’s
Stewardship Association



New England Young
Fishermen’s Alliance



New Hampshire
Commercial
Fishing Association

Responsible Offshore
Development Alliance

