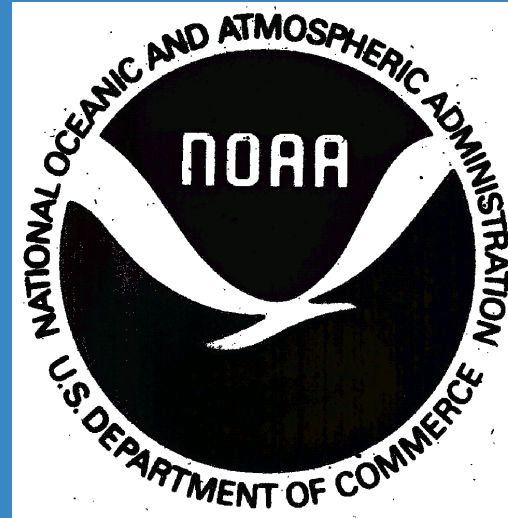


Habitat Conservation Division's Role in Offshore Wind Development in the Greater Atlantic Region



Sue Tuxbury

Habitat Conservation Division

SNE Science Forum

December 12, 2017

Habitat Conservation Division Role

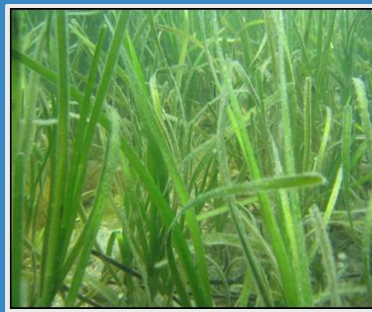
- BOEM Task Force Representative
- Coordinate with...
 - BOEM
 - State agencies
 - Protected Resources
 - Sustainable Fisheries
 - Port Agents
 - NEFSC
 - FMC staff
 - Developers
- Advocate coordination with the industry and FMC
- Active stakeholder in planning for monitoring/science needs
- Provide comments and feedback throughout process
- EFH consultations



What is EFH?

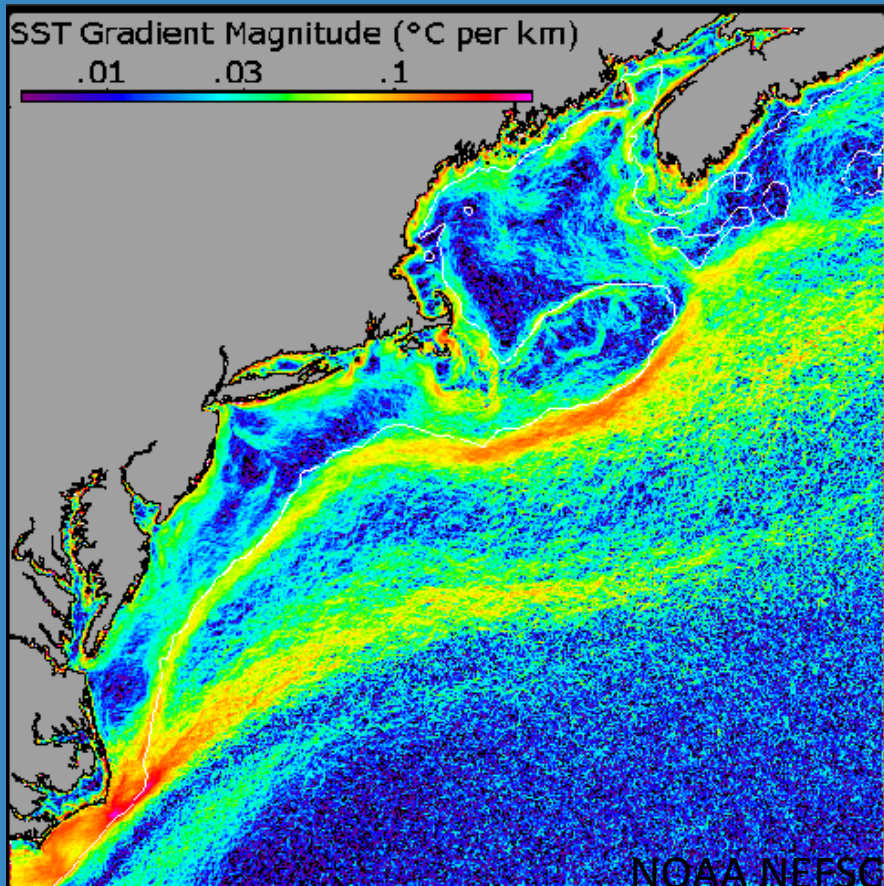
MSA PL 104-297
Sec. 3. Definitions

“essential fish habitat” means those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding or growth to maturity.



EFH Final Rules

NMFS Consultation Guidance
50 CFR Part 600



“Waters” include aquatic areas and their associated physical, chemical, and biological properties that are used by fish and *aquatic areas historically used by fish* (e.g. potential utilization areas)

EFH Final Rules

NMFS Consultation Guidance
50 CFR Part 600

Conservation recommendations

intended to sequentially avoid, minimize, and offset or compensate adverse impacts

Adverse Impact

“...any impact which reduces quality and/or quantity of EFH.”

Direct (e.g. contamination or physical disruption)

Indirect (e.g. loss of prey, reduction in fecundity)

Individual, cumulative, or synergistic

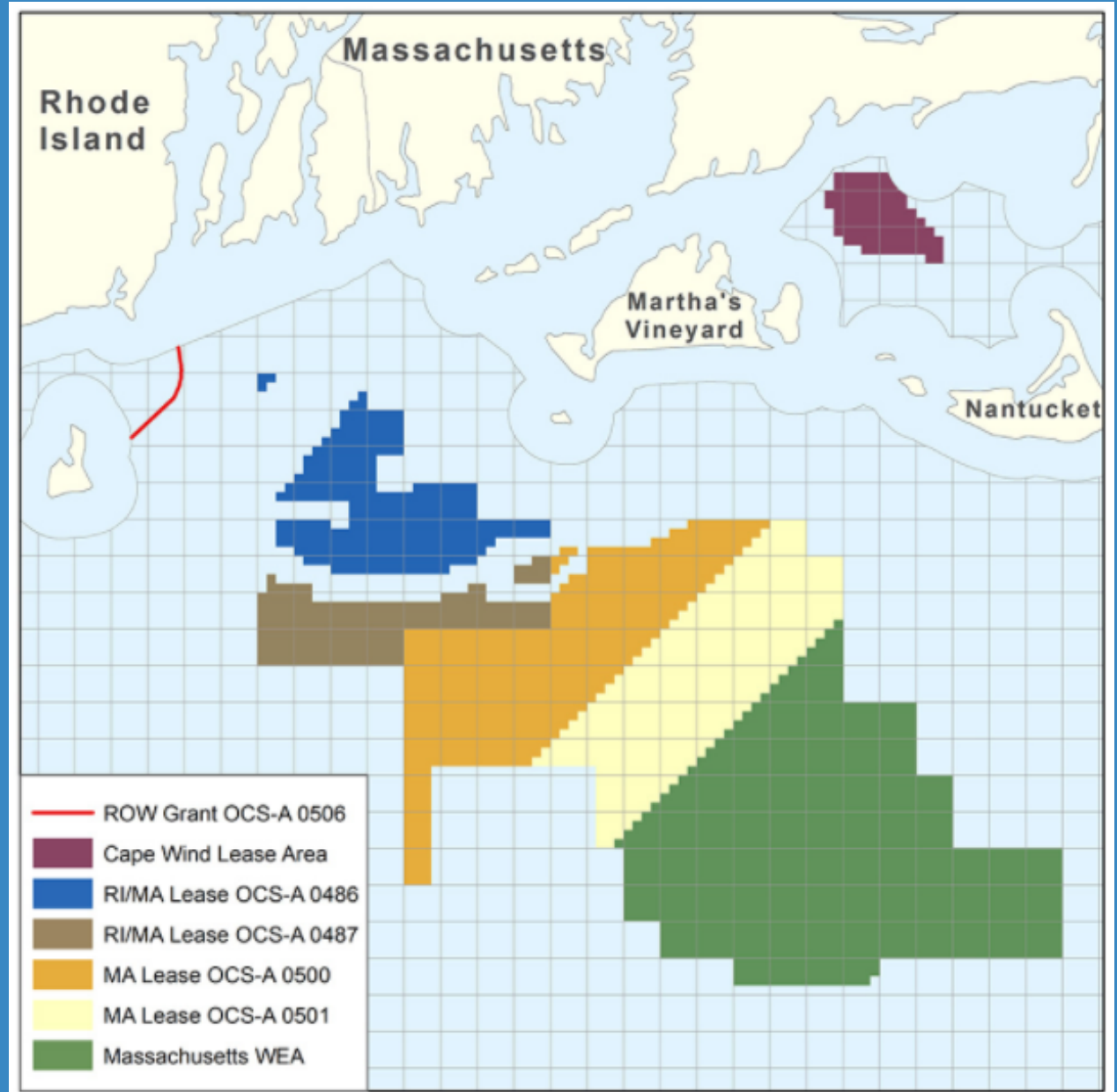
Block Island Wind Farm

- Benthic Habitat
- Noise
- Community Structure
- Monitoring
 - Fisheries
 - Hard bottom habitat
 - Noise
 - Cable installation





Source: BOEM



Source: BOEM

Lessons Learned

- Coordinate early and often throughout the process
- Avoidance of sensitive habitats is possible
- Identify information needs for planning/siting and share data early in the process
- Establish monitoring program, which incorporates more than just regulatory stakeholders and includes regional studies
- Apply information gained from the Block Island experience but consider cumulative impacts and scale

Thank You!

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