

***California Offshore Wind and Fisheries Working Group:
Background and Call for Nominations of Fishing Industry Representatives***

Wednesday, July 19, 2023

Through August 11, 2023, the California Coastal Commission (Commission) is accepting nominations for representatives to the California Offshore Wind and Fisheries Working Group (Working Group), also known as the Condition 7c Working Group.¹ The Working Group is charged with developing a strategy to address fisheries impacts from the five Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) lease areas off of Humboldt and San Luis Obispo County, respectively. The Commission seeks individuals committed to serving on and successfully completing the charge of the Working Group, as described below, by September 2025.

Background on Offshore Wind in California

BOEM has issued [five offshore wind energy leases](#) off the coast of California. These lease areas start approximately 20 miles off the coast of Eureka in Northern California, and Cambria in Central California, respectively, and cover a combined total of 582 square miles of federal waters. As part of BOEM's consultation and review process before their lease sale, the California Coastal Commission reviewed the proposed leasing and offshore wind development for potential impacts to California's coastal resources, including the fishing industry.

In its review of the lease sale, the Commission identified many potential impacts to the commercial and recreational fishing industries from offshore wind development, including:

- Exclusion from fishing grounds;
- Displacement of fishermen and fishing effort from exclusion areas to remaining fishing grounds;
- Increased costs and time at sea, including safety risks, to avoid offshore wind development;
- Loss of future fishing grounds; and
- Loss or disruption of harbor space and fishing infrastructure at ports due to increased presence of wind-related port facilities.

To address these and other impacts, the Commission's concurrence with the lease sale was subject to seven conditions, which may be found in the Commission's [concurrence letter](#). Condition seven focused on impacts to fisheries, and calls for the formation of a Working Group to develop a strategy to address impacts to the fishing industry from offshore wind.

California Offshore Wind and Fisheries Working Group Charge

The charge of the California Offshore Wind and Fisheries Working Group, as described by Condition 7c of the Coastal Commission's concurrence with BOEM's lease sale, is to develop a statewide strategy for avoidance, minimization, and mitigation of impacts to fishing and fisheries

¹ The text of Condition 7c can be found in the Commission's concurrence letter here: https://documents.coastal.ca.gov/assets/upcoming-projects/offshore-wind/CD-0004-22_ConcurrenceLetter.pdf

that prioritizes fisheries productivity, viability, and long-term resilience. The strategy is expected to include:

- Protocols for communication;
- Best practices for surveys and data collection;
- A methodology for comprehensive socioeconomic analysis of direct and indirect impacts to fishing;
- A framework for compensatory mitigation for unavoidable impacts; and
- A fishing agreement template that memorializes the elements of the strategy.²

The strategy will also include specific consideration of those fisheries that are disproportionately and/or directly affected by offshore wind development (see list below in the Fishing Industry Representation section).

After the strategy is complete, the Commission will review the strategy for consistency with Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act, modify if necessary, and adopt the strategy. The Commission will perform a second review of individual proposed offshore wind projects in each lease during BOEM's review of each lessee's construction and operations plan. During this second review, the Commission will assess whether the developers have designed their projects and mitigation packages to be consistent with the strategy developed by the Working Group.

Overall Working Group Organization and Membership

Working group members will include up to eight fisheries representatives, five lessee representatives, representatives from California Native American Tribes with affected tribal fisheries³, and up to two fisheries coalition, organization, or alliance representatives with expertise in offshore wind and fisheries impacts. The fisheries coalition, organization or alliance representatives may have a more general knowledge of California fisheries, rather than knowledge or experience in the specific fisheries listed below. The fisheries representatives and California Native American Tribe representatives will receive stipends for their participation, please see below for more details.

State and Federal agencies will also have representatives on the Working Group, but these government representatives will be present in an advisory (non-voting or decision-making) capacity. Government working group members will include staff from the Coastal Commission, BOEM, California State Lands Commission, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Ocean Protection Council, and National Marine Fisheries Service.

The Working Group may have expert advisors from other agencies (such as the Coast Guard, Army Corps of Engineers, etc.), academia, and other industries, but these participants may not participate in all meetings.

Nominations for Fishing Industry Representation

The Commission is seeking fishing representatives that fish in the central coast and north coast, with expertise in the fisheries listed below. We are seeking representatives from both the commercial and recreational sectors that have the support of their communities and fishing

² Please note that several fishing organizations have worked one-on-one with developers to create fishing agreements, we plan to use these agreements as a starting point in this process.

³ The Coastal Commission will conduct outreach to tribes regarding this nomination process.

associations or organizations. The Commission is also seeking a seafood processing industry representative, and up to two fisheries coalition, organization, or alliance representatives, and representatives from California Native American Tribes using the nomination form. Nominees may self-nominate, but they should demonstrate the support of their communities through support letters. The nomination form is attached or may be found on the [Commission's offshore wind webpage](#).

Overall, the Commission is seeking representatives from the fishing industry, with expertise in one or more of the following fisheries and related industries. The list below does not represent seats on the Working Group, but instead represents areas of expertise that the Commission is seeking in Working Group fisheries representatives:

- Trawl
- Salmon
- Crab
- Coastal Pelagic Species
- Groundfish, other gear
- Highly Migratory Species
- Trap (Hagfish and Spot Prawn)
- Recreational/Charter
- Seafood Processing

Finally, in response to early outreach and feedback, we are seeking a fisheries representative to serve as co-chair along with Commission staff. If you are interested in serving as a co-chair, please indicate your interest under question six of the nomination form.

Logistics, Stipends, and Time Commitment

The Working Group is expected to meet for up to two years to develop the strategy. The initial meetings will focus on agreements and best practices needed to address impacts to the fishing industry during site assessment and survey activities. Subsequent meetings will focus on addressing impacts during the construction and operations phase. The Working Group is expected to meet approximately quarterly; most of these meetings will be virtual, and up to two meetings will be in-person. One in-person meeting will be in the north coast and the other will be in the central coast.

Fishing, seafood processing, and tribal representatives are expected to receive a stipend of up to \$100 for each virtual meeting and up to \$500 for each in-person meeting. These stipends may be subject to change based on Senate Bill 286. Please note that the in-person stipend is intended to cover travel expenses as well, no separate travel reimbursement is available. Each virtual meeting is expected to take a day and each in-person meeting is expected to take one and a half to two days.

The total time commitment for Working Group members would be up to 10 days in full Working Group meetings over two years, with additional time outside of meetings for travel to in-person meetings, review of materials, and communication with other Working Group members. There may be a need for additional sub-group meetings in between the full Working Group meetings to complete preparatory work, including drafting strategy sections. Working Group members would volunteer to participate in the sub-group meetings most relevant to them.

The total time commitment for the co-chair would be higher than what is described above, as it would include meeting and process planning in addition to Working Group member duties.

Working Group Selection Criteria and Process

Fishing industry members of the Working Group are expected to have the following attributes:

1. Able to bring first-hand knowledge and experience in one or more of the nine fishing industry sectors listed above.
2. Able to access and use an effective communication network to coordinate with stakeholders being represented by the Working Group.
3. Willing to joint problem solve, express fundamental interests (as opposed to fixed positions), and to clearly convey the interests of one or more of the fishing sectors listed above.
4. Capable of working collaboratively, seeking to integrate the interests of the full range of Working Group member constituencies.
5. Willing to work toward consensus and committed to completing all aspects of the charge of the Working Group.
6. Ability to participate consistently for each of the quarterly meetings, including travel.

Working group nominations should be emailed to osw@coastal.ca.gov by August 11, 2023. Working group nominations will be reviewed by Commission staff and evaluated against the above criteria. Selection of the Working Group members will be made by Commission staff and will take place by September 8, 2023.

It is anticipated that the Working Group membership will be established in September and the first Working Group meeting will take place by October or November 2023.