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Habitat and Ecosystem Services Division Greater Atlantic Region Updates



Mid-Atlantic Fishery
Management Council
April 2023

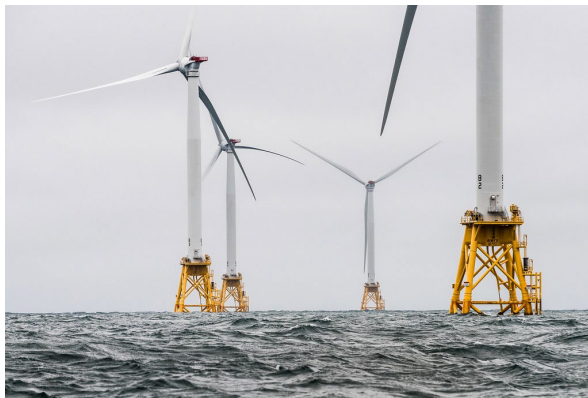
<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/habitat-conservation/habitat-conservation-and-stewardship-greater-atlantic>

Habitat and Ecosystem Services Division (HESD) Updates

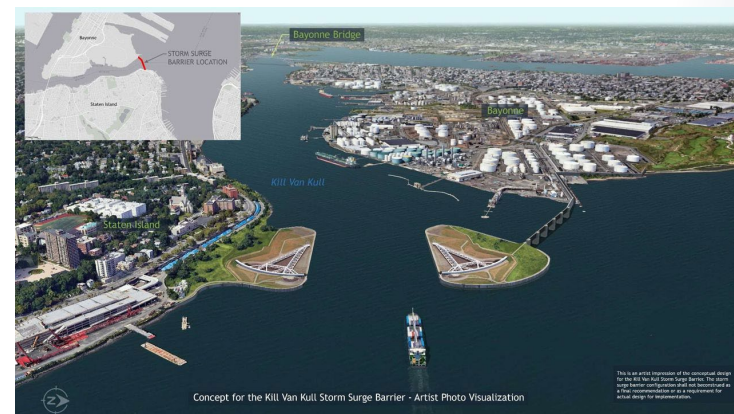
- Aquaculture
- Infrastructure/Habitat
 - Coastal Storm Risk Management
 - Scenario Planning
 - BIL Funding
- Offshore Wind



Source: Wikimedia Commons



Block Island Wind Farm
credit: Dennis Schroeder / NREL



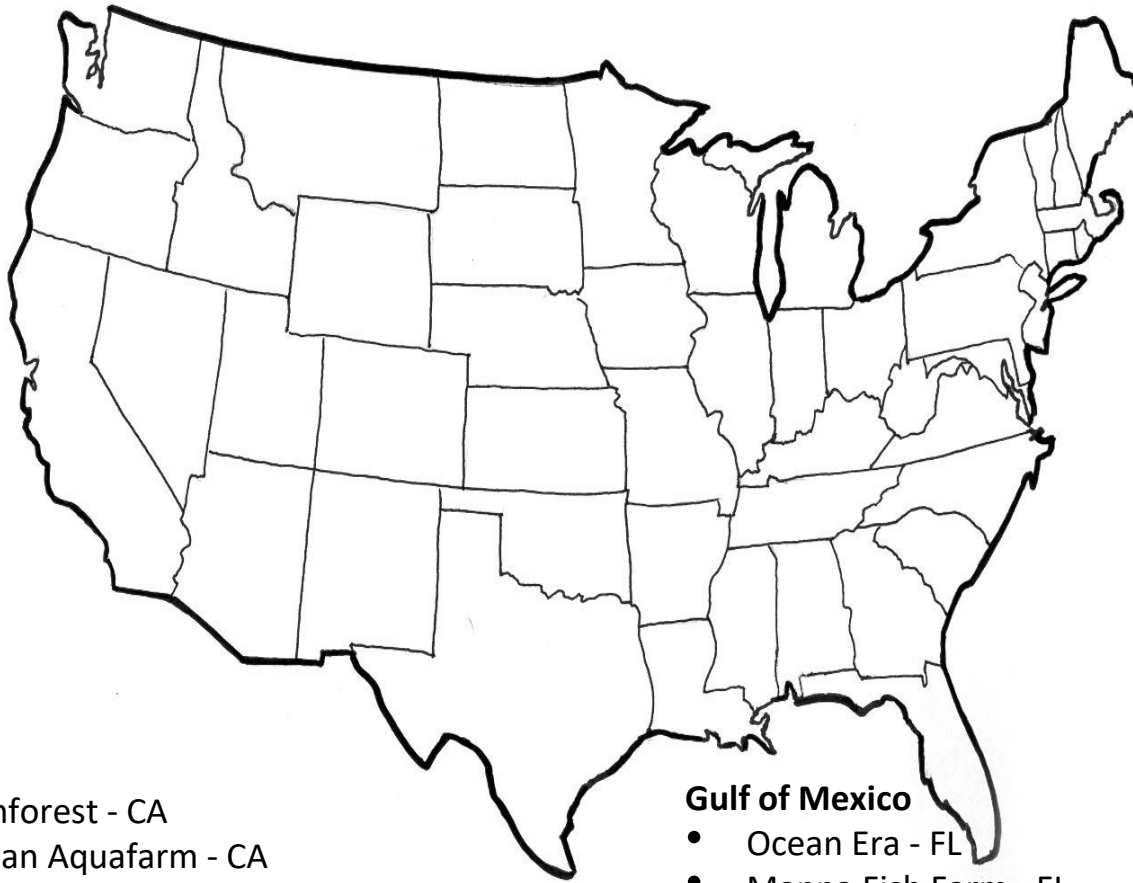
Source: US. Army Corps of Engineers

Regional Aquaculture Update



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Status of Aquaculture Projects in Federal Waters



Pacific Ocean

- Ocean Rainforest - CA
- Pacific Ocean Aquafarm - CA

Gulf of Mexico

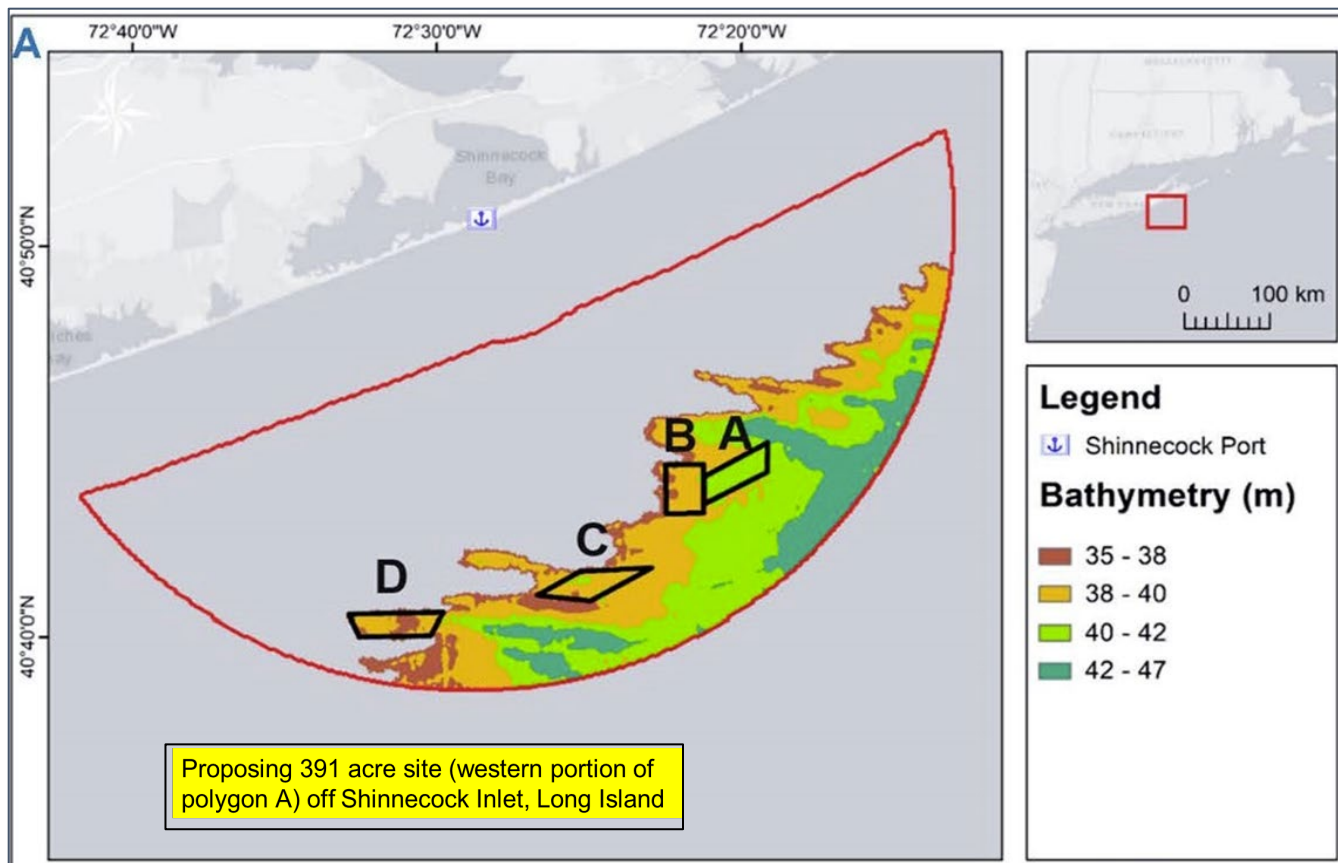
- Ocean Era - FL
- Manna Fish Farm - FL

Northern Atlantic

- Blue Water Fisheries - MA
- Salem State University - MA
- Rutgers Surf Clam - NJ
- Manna Fish Farm - NY

Manna Fish Farms LLC (MFF)

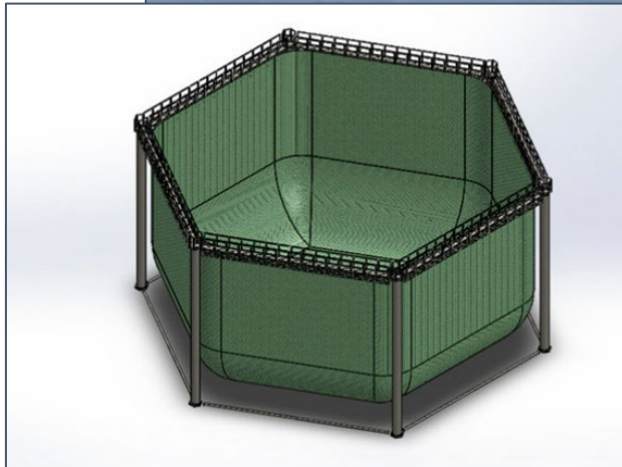
MFF proposes to construct a commercial-scale marine finfish aquaculture facility within federal waters ~ 9 miles SE of Shinnecock Inlet, NY in water depths ~40m.



As proposed, the facility would occupy a 400-acre site. The site would hold 12-18 StormSafe® Submersible Net Pens at full build out. MFF plans to initially deploy and operate two pens.

Manna Fish Farms LLC (MFF)

1. At full build out MFF would operate 12 to 18 pens that would produce up to 9 million pounds of fish, annually.
1. Operations would occur continuously throughout the year. The pens will remain submerged below the surface except when being actively serviced.



Manna Fish Farms LLC (MFF)

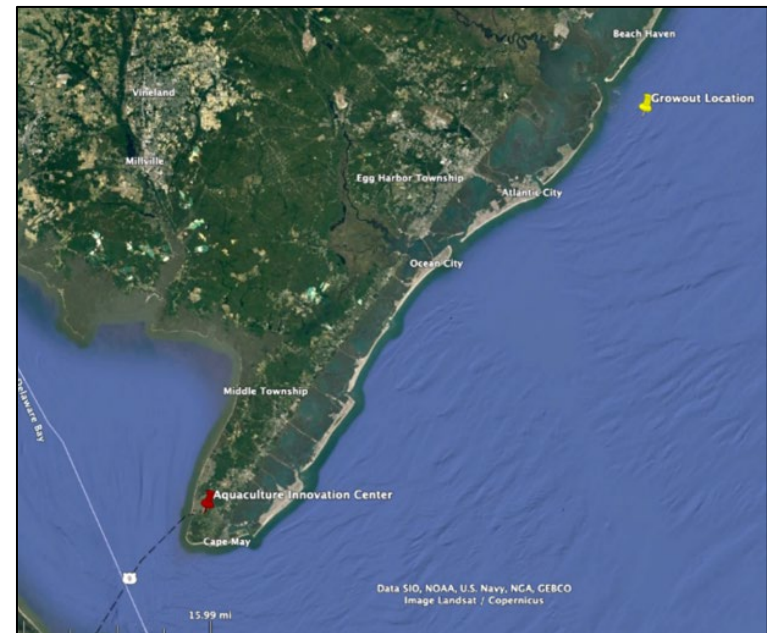
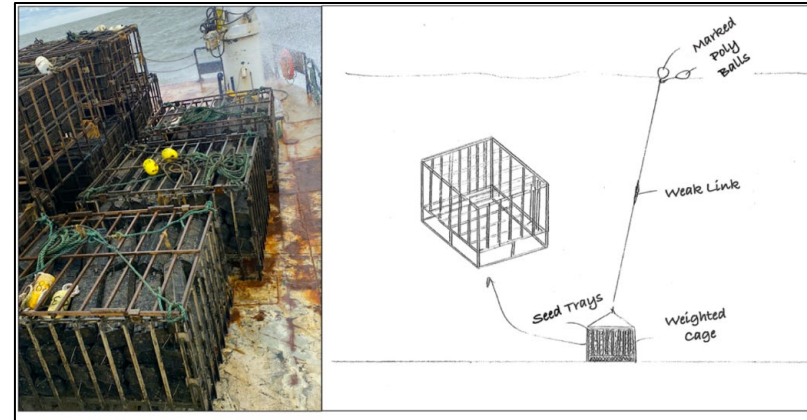
1. Proposed culture fish (in order of MFF preference):
 - a. Striped Bass (*Morone saxatilis*)
 - b. Black Sea Bass (*Centropristis striata*)
 - c. Steelhead Trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*)

The fisheries mgmt. agencies will need to coordinate on potential authorizations required for each of these species.

1. MFF is preparing to conduct surveys of the proposed fish farm site(s) as early as spring 2023. Survey results would be included in future permit applications.
 - a. GARFO will advise MFF to follow best management practices to update mariners of intended survey activities, including Notice to Mariners through the USCG.

Rutgers Surf Clam Pilot Project

- Rutgers/Surfside/Seawatch/ACF project funded by Sea Grant.
- Permitted by USACE under NWP 48.
- Summer 2023 deployment of cages with pH and temp tolerant surf clam seed ~3 miles off Atlantic City NJ.
- Main goal is to evaluate feasibility of offshore surf clam culture. Secondary goal is to inform feasibility of stock enhancement.
- Seed will be placed in bags housed within 10-6' 9" x 6' 9" (3' high) metal cages constructed of 1" galvanized steel square box tubing.
- Cages would rest on the bottom in depths approximately 10 to 15 m with a minimum spacing of at least 30 feet between cages.



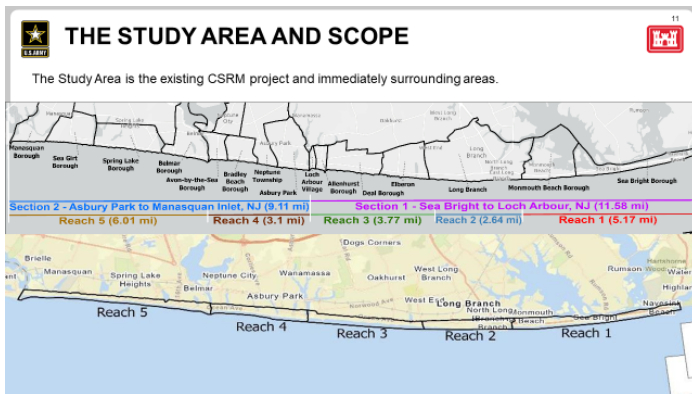
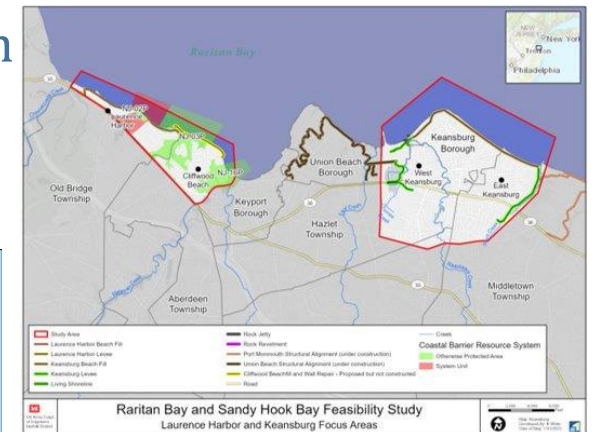
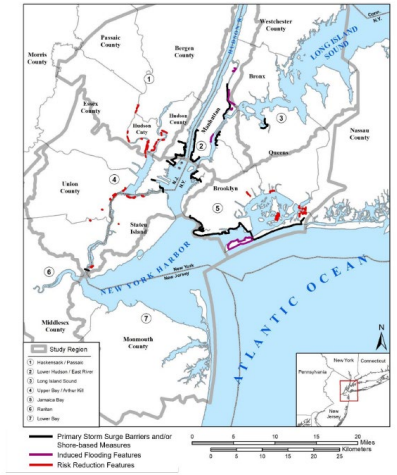
Habitat/Infrastructure Updates



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USACE Coastal Storm Risk Management Studies

- New York-New Jersey Harbor and Tributaries Study - <https://www.nan.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Projects-in-New-York/New-York-New-Jersey-Harbor-Tributaries-Focus-Area-Feasibility-Study/>
- Delaware Inland Bay and Delaware Bay Coastal (DIBDBC) Study <https://www.nap.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Delaware-Inland-Bays-Study/>
- Raritan Bay and Sandy Hook Bay, NJ Coastal Storm Risk Management(CSRM) Feasibility Study.
- Sea Bright to Manasquan General Reevaluation Report



Susquehanna River Scenario Planning

Balancing Invasive Species Management and Anadromous Fish Restoration Goals in the Lower Susquehanna River



Facilitated meeting of the Susquehanna River Anadromous Fish Restoration Cooperative to identify opportunities to balance the passage of anadromous fish over the four dams on the Susquehanna River while preventing the passage of invasive species.

- FWS, NMFS, MD, PA, NY, and SRBC
- SRAFRFC goal: Restore self-sustaining, robust, and productive stocks of migratory fish capable of producing sustainable fisheries, to the Susquehanna River Basin throughout their historic ranges in MD, PA, & NY
- Increasing populations of aquatic invasive species - northern snakehead, blue catfish downstream of lowermost dam
- Hydropower relicensing considerations



NOAA Funding in 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

- **General Considerations:**
 - Five years of funding, with equal amounts for fiscal years 2022 through 2026
- **National Ocean Service/Office for Coastal Management**
 - \$492,000,000 for National Oceans and Coastal Security Fund grants (aka National Coastal Resilience Fund)
 - \$207,000,000 for Coastal Zone Management habitat restoration projects
 - \$77,000,000 for habitat restoration projects through the National Estuarine Research Reserve System
- **National Marine Fisheries Service/Office of Habitat Conservation**
 - \$491,000,000 for contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements for habitat restoration or protecting ecological features that protect coastal communities from flooding or coastal storms;
 - \$400,000,000 for restoring fish passage by removing in-stream barriers, of which up to 15 percent shall be reserved for Indian Tribes or partnerships of Indian



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BIL Funding So Far

NOAA is recommending nearly \$105 million in funding for 36 fish passage projects this year and \$61 million in future funding under the Biden-Harris Administration's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. With this historic level of funding, our partners will reopen migratory pathways and restore access to healthy habitat for fish across the country.

- NOAA is recommending more than \$16 million in funding for 13 projects selected through the *Restoring Tribal Priority Fish Passage through Barrier Removal* funding opportunity.
- NOAA is recommending more than \$87 million in funding for 23 projects selected through the *Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal* funding opportunity.
- Additional announcements on awarded funding are expected some time this spring.
- Announcements of funding opportunities are also expected in the coming months.



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Offshore Wind Update



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OSW EFH Consultations



- Federal Agencies must consult with NMFS on any action or proposed action that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)
- Consult with BOEM and the USACE
- BOEM, as lead agency, prepares the EFH assessment
- NMFS provides comments and identifies missing information on draft EFH assessments
- Once NMFS deems the assessment complete, EFH conservation recommendations are provided within 90 days
- BOEM or the USACE are not obligated to adopt our recommendations



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Essential Fish Habitat Consultations

EFH Consultation Complete

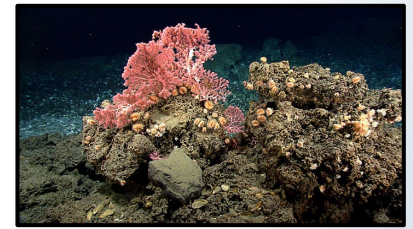
- Ocean Wind 1

Consultation Initiated and Under Review

- Revolution Wind

Expected to initiate this spring/summer

- CVOW
- Empire Wind
- South Coast Wind
- New England Wind
- Sunrise Wind
- Atlantic Shores South



Expected to initiate this Fall

- US Wind Maryland



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Additional OSW Updates

Central Atlantic

- Expect Wind Energy Areas to be identified this spring
- Proposed Sale Notice Publication is the next opportunity for public comment

New York Bight

- BOEM is preparing Programmatic EIS
- BOEM is preparing a Programmatic EFH assessment focused on NYB leases and other Mid-Atlantic projects
- Beginning early coordination with some developers



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Additional OSW Updates

US Wind Maryland

- Working with BOEM on scoping habitat impact minimization alternatives, focused on avoiding sensitive habitats, prime fishing areas and estuarine environments

Kitty Hawk North

- Working with BOEM and Avangrid on EFH assessment
- Working with BOEM on scoping habitat impact minimization alternative, focused on cable routing, cable burial and scour protection

Kitty Hawk South

- Met with Avangrid to discuss export cable corridors

Carolina Long Bay

- Met with Duke Energy and TotalEnergies to discuss environmental surveys planned for the summer



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New Publications Available

Jacobson et al. 2023

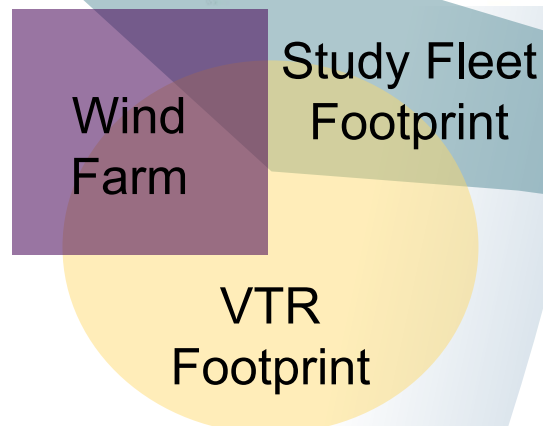
- Compared longfin squid study fleet data to VTR fishing footprint data

Hogan et al. 2023

1. Ecosystem effects
2. Fisheries socioeconomics
3. Fisheries management and data collection
4. Methods and approaches
5. Regional science planning

AFS Marine and Coastal Fisheries Progress Series

- Offshore Wind Interactions with Fish and Fisheries Publications
- In progress series with several publications available



Thank you



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