



Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
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MEMORANDUM

Date: September 21, 2023
To: Council
From: Jessica Coakley, Staff
Subject: Habitat Activities Update

The Council will receive a presentation from the NOAA Fisheries Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO) Habitat and Ecosystem Services Division (HESD) on activities of interest in the region.

Back in December 2015, when the Council initially adopted its habitat policies on fishing and non-fishing activities (<https://www.mafmc.org/habitat>), the Council also asked GARFO HESD to provide the Council with updates on projects of concern that are occurring throughout the region. Since there are numerous projects in the region each year, the Council identified its projects of concern to include: 1) All offshore projects (e.g., energy projects, cables, sand mining, etc.), and 2) Only large scale nearshore/estuarine projects (i.e., includes any large transportation and port development projects). In addition, the Council requested periodic written and/or verbal updates on projects of concern including other habitat activities of interest occurring at least biannually, if possible.

During this October presentation, GARFO HESD staff will highlight offshore wind activities and several US Army Corps of Engineers' coastal storm risk management studies underway in the Greater Atlantic Region. They will also provide a brief update on several port development projects proposed in the region as well as NOAA Fisheries' recently approved national guidance on incorporating climate change into essential fish habitat consultations.