

Resident Perceptions of Wind Energy Development Offshore the Oregon Coast Frequently Asked Questions

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Description: Researchers with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS) are conducting this study to better understand how social factors, place-based values, and geographic location influence community support for or opposition to offshore wind energy development. To achieve this research goal, NCCOS will conduct a household survey of residents to collect information about their attitudes, beliefs, and values related to marine and coastal landscapes and offshore wind energy development. Additionally, information will be collected about residents' level of support for or opposition to offshore wind energy development. The study will document the importance of coastal areas to residents. It will also assess community perception of how offshore wind energy development may benefit or detract from the region. The study focuses on the Oregon coast, where the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) has identified Call Areas for offshore wind energy development.

Who is conducting this study?

NCCOS is conducting this study on behalf of BOEM. NOAA conducts science on the nation's oceans, coasts, and atmosphere, and provides citizens and decision-makers with information on how to manage their natural resources. The mission of NCCOS is to conduct science to inform coastal management.

Why is NCCOS conducting this study?

NCCOS has significant experience conducting research to inform coastal and marine spatial planning efforts throughout the U.S. and its territories, including the development of quantitative assessments to evaluate people's opinions, values, attitudes, and behaviors from a spatial perspective. This study will inform planning for use of the marine environment to achieve important national goals.

Who is funding this study and why?

BOEM is funding this study through its Environmental Studies Program (ESP). The ESP was established by the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, as amended in 1978 to provide information for sound decision-making and management. BOEM oversees development of offshore renewable energy projects on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) (<http://www.boem.gov/Renewable-Energy/>). BOEM's responsibilities include determining and evaluating the effects of OCS activities on natural, historical, and human resources, and the appropriate monitoring and mitigation of those effects. Efforts to develop offshore wind energy on the West Coast require an assessment of potential environmental, human, and social impacts. BOEM is partnering with other federal agencies, including NOAA, and working closely with the Oregon Renewable Energy Intergovernmental Task Force to acquire the information needed to meet this mandate.

Is anyone else involved in the implementation of this survey?

NOAA will be working with a third-party vendor who has experience conducting social surveys. The study team of NCCOS social scientists is responsible for the survey design and guides decisions related to survey implementation.

Why is this study being conducted in Oregon?

This study area was chosen because BOEM has identified two Call Areas for potential wind energy development offshore the Oregon coast.

How will you collect the data?

The data will be collected using a survey mailed to a randomly selected sample of households within the study area.

Who will be asked to take the survey?

The study area (depicted in the map below) consists of the coastal counties of Oregon: Curry, Coos, Lincoln, Tillamook, Clatsop, and part of Lane and Douglas Counties. Households in this region will be randomly selected to participate.



Are Tribal communities included in the randomly selected households to be surveyed?

Yes, all households within the study area that are served by the US Postal Service have a chance to be selected for the survey.

Is participation in the survey mandatory?

No, participation in the survey is voluntary.

What types of questions will you ask?

The survey will consist of questions designed to assess residents' opinions, values, attitudes, and behaviors about the importance of the Oregon coast and wind energy development. Questions about residents' level of support for or opposition to offshore wind energy development and its potential influences will also be asked. Finally, information will be collected on the demographic characteristics of the survey participants.

Do I have to know about offshore wind energy to take this survey?

No. As residents of communities near proposed wind energy development areas, your opinions are important regardless of whether you are or are not familiar with wind energy.

Are responses confidential?

Yes, responses to the survey will remain confidential. For analysis and reporting purposes, all answers provided will be aggregated with the responses of others who participate in the study.

Can I take the survey?

Due to the random sampling design, only those who are selected through the sampling process will be invited to take the survey. All households within the study area are eligible for random selection. Selected households will receive an invitation in the mail to complete the survey. If you receive a survey in the mail, we encourage you to complete it and return it to us.

How long will the survey take?

The survey will take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

When will data collection take place?

The survey will take place over a three to four month period in 2024.

What is the timeline for this study?

The study began in September 2022 and will last three years.

Will a copy of the survey questions and survey data be made available to the public online?

Yes, both the survey questions and survey data will be made available to the public online. Weblinks will be provided as soon as they are available.

How much does this study cost?

This study is funded by BOEM for a total cost of approximately \$400,000 with approximately \$275,000 budgeted for the survey. For more details about the study, see BOEM's study profile at <https://www.boem.gov/PC-22-06>.

What product will be derived from this study?

Findings from this study will be compiled into a final report that NCOOS will provide to BOEM and will be available to the public. The report will include data tables, maps, and other information. Data from this study may also be used to contribute to the scientific literature and present and conferences.

Will the final report be posted on the BOEM website?

Yes. The final report will be posted on the BOEM website. A weblink will be provided as soon as it is available.

Is this related to the NCCOS Modeling study?

No. The Oregon Offshore Wind Suitability Modeling and Cluster Analysis is an ongoing study focused on short-term planning for wind leasing offshore Oregon. The study is being conducted for BOEM by the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS). Read more about that effort at <https://www.boem.gov/Selected-BOEM-Research-Renewable-OR/>

How will BOEM and NOAA use the information collected in this study?

BOEM will use the results of this study to better understand social values associated with offshore wind leasing in a representative manner. BOEM has developed similar efforts in North Carolina and seeks to continue its understanding of social values associated with offshore wind leasing across the nation's coastal communities. The Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPAAct) authorized BOEM to issue leases, easements, and rights of way to allow for renewable energy development on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). BOEM's decision-making process is subject to thorough environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act. This study may contribute to the information available to complete the Environmental Impact Statement or Environmental Assessment. The information generated from this study will also contribute to the scientific community's understanding of social perceptions of offshore wind energy, and will inform marine spatial planning efforts. This will inform marine spatial planning efforts in jurisdictional waters and to help constituents understand offshore wind development in these areas.

How will findings from this study help my community?

The data collected through this research will help BOEM assess the potential human and social impacts from offshore wind energy development in your region.

Will this study allow coastal residents to share opinions, regardless of whether they are for or against offshore wind development in Oregon?

Yes. The goal of this survey is to measure opinions related to offshore wind from all of Oregon's coastal residents, so all opinions are welcome.

Who can I contact with questions about this study?

For questions about this study, please contact the study principal investigator, Sarah Gonyo at sarah.gonyo@noaa.gov. Questions about other BOEM-funded social science studies in Pacific states can be directed to BOEM's Pacific socioeconomist, Karen Villatoro, at karen.villatoro@boem.gov.

Who can I contact to provide comments on offshore wind energy development?

To share comments on wind energy development offshore Oregon, please contact BOEM's Oregon State Renewable Energy Coordinator, Jean Thurston-Keller, at jean.thurston-keller@boem.gov or Pacific Region Tribal Liaison, David Ball, at david.ball@boem.gov.