

FHC Meeting Summary

Date: December 16, 2025

Location: Online Meeting

Agenda:

- 1. Process to Resolve Framework Questions and Advance Program Rules**
- 2. Timeline for the Second Year of the RFA Project**
- 3. Primary Design Questions (Set 1)**
 - a. Design Principles
 - b. Overall Process Design
 - c. Definitions
- 4. Administrative Items**

Actions

- RFA to schedule next FHC meeting through email
- RFA to circulate meeting summary through email
- Recreational fishing representatives to submit time for 2025 by January 15, 2026.

Participants

Recreational/For-Hire Fishing	States	Developers	Ex-Officio	Project Team
Rick Bellavance	Renee Zobel	Ron Larsen	Doug Christel	Orran Brown, Jr.
Bob Rush		Brian Krevor	Ursula Howson	Deirdre Boelke
Rom Whitaker				Justin Wind
				Charlotte Goeb

1. Process to Resolve Framework Questions and Advance Program Rules

The RFA welcomed the FHC to the meeting and gave an overview of the meeting agenda. The RFA explained that the primary meeting objective was to roll out the schedule and question resolution process for year two of the RFA project.

The RFA presented a question resolution process for framework design to the FHC, consisting of four question sets each with a cycle of DOC/FHC recommendations, cross-caucus meetings, final DOC/FHC feedback, and circulation of draft component rules.

The RFA previewed the four question sets:

Set 1: Overall Process Design; Definitions; and Claimant Eligibility Components
(e.g., design principles, crewmember eligibility, etc.)

Set 2: Remaining Eligibility Components

(e.g., lookback period, “affected area,” level of effort, etc.)

Set 3: Compensation Calculation Framework and Document Requirements

(e.g., two-track process details, compensable claim types, etc.)

Set 4: Program Mechanics

(e.g., how to submit, complete, and pay out claims)

For context on the question resolution process, the RFA mentioned that the DOC fishing caucus has been meeting internally to discuss the question sets. The RFA offered to help facilitate similar meetings for the FHC, which a fishing representative expressed support for.

2. Timeline for the Second Year of the RFA Project

The RFA explained the timeline for the second year of the project in relation to the question resolution process. Once a final draft framework is assembled through the question resolution process, a public comment period will commence in July 2026 before final delivery of a regional framework to NYSERDA on September 30, 2026.

3. Primary Design Questions (Set 1)

The RFA presented Set 1 questions for discussion by the FHC. The RFA requested feedback from the FHC on the program’s design principles and questions on process design including a separate offshore export cable corridor (OECC) program; a two-track compensation program; and whether loss and/or causation should be demonstrated.

The FHC then provided feedback on definitions for the project phases and locations:

a. Construction

The RFA proposed the following definition:

Construction: All installation-related activities, as outlined in a project’s BOEM-approved Construction and Operations Plan. See 30 CFR §§ 585.620, 585.626, and 585.631.

Construction Period: The period when physical installation and commissioning activities occur offshore in a project area, beginning with the first seabed disturbing activity in a project area, following approval of a project’s COP, and continuing until 95% of project capacity is installed and delivering power to the grid. Construction period activities include, but may not be limited to, pre-lay grapnel runs, scour protection installation, cable laying, and wind turbine and offshore substation installation. Construction period activities do not include geophysical, geotechnical, biological, or cultural surveys or environmental monitoring.”

Recreational fishing representatives suggested that construction should be until the OSW project is 100% done with building instead of at 95% project capacity. Fishing representatives also questioned why surveying and monitoring activities are not included in the construction phase definition. A developer representative explained that such pre-construction activities inform the Construction and Operations Plan (COP) before construction on the project begins, meaning they are not factored into the “money-in” for fisheries compensation programs. A fishing representative added that in their experience some surveying/monitoring work was done before a developer had a permit for the project.

b. Operations

The RFA proposed the following definition:

Operations: After construction is complete, and includes all proposed operations and maintenance measures that are described within a project's COP.

Operations Period: The period immediately following the Construction Period and immediately preceding the Decommissioning Period.

A fishing representative asked whether there could be a gap between construction and operations if construction ended at 95% of the project's power capacity. The RFA suggested that the definition might be clearer if "after construction is complete" was removed.

c. Decommissioning

The RFA proposed the following definition:

Decommissioning: Encompasses the removal of BOEM and BSEE approved facilities, projects, cables, pipelines, and obstructions and returning the site of the lease or grant to a condition that meets the requirements under 30 CFR § 285.900 et seq. Unless otherwise authorized under 30 CFR § 285.909, Decommissioning is expected to take place within two years following the termination of a lease or grant, or earlier if BSEE determines a facility is no longer useful for operations.

Decommissioning Period: The period following the submission of decommissioning notice to BSEE, which is at least 60 days before decommissioning activities begin.

d. Offshore Export Cable Corridor (OECC)

The RFA proposed the following definition:

A designated route on the seabed where high-voltage export cables are installed to carry electricity from an offshore wind farm to the onshore grid connection point. Generally, dynamic cabling is only associated with deep-water floating offshore wind energy foundation projects. The "OECC Qualifying Area" is the length of the OECC easement approved by BOEM; and the width of the OECC easement approved by BOEM, multiplied by a factor of three. For example, if the OECC easement is 500 meters, the width of the OECC for the program would be 1.5 kilometers.

A fishing representative questioned if it was correct to assume fishing operations for for-hire fisheries would not be the same between the OECC and Project Area and wondered why the sentence on dynamic cabling needed to be included. The RFA agreed that the dynamic cabling portion could be removed.

e. Project Area

The RFA proposed the following definition:

The portion of the lease area where a project is being installed.

The FHC considered whether a buffer should be applied to the Project Area. Recreational fishing representatives considered how a buffer may account for potential impacts and/or differ in size

according to species/gear type. The size for the buffer zone is still undecided. The RFA and FHC also agreed that the Project Area definition should specify that it is exclusive of the OECC.

f. **Nearby Non-Project Area**

The RFA proposed the following definition:

Nearby non-lease areas may or may not apply in a regional program framework, so a definition of the term is not essential to the program at this stage; however, it should be considered whether those who fish in nearby non-lease areas are potential candidates for compensation or resilience/community fund acknowledgement.

After questions about what kinds of losses the Nearby Non-Project Area would account for, the RFA explained that increased competition due to displacement for fishers *without* history in the Project Area would not be covered by direct compensation. These impacts are typically accounted for in resiliency funds, which is out of the RFA project's scope. A fishing representative suggested that this detail should be clarified in the definition.

4. Administrative Items

The RFA explained to the FHC fishing representatives that the deadline to submit time spent working on behalf of the RFA in 2025 is January 15, 2026.

The RFA will follow up with the FHC through email to circulate a meeting summary and schedule the next FHC meeting.