



For Immediate Release

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Recreational Anglers and Offshore Wind Developers Discuss Future Projects Off NY-NJ Coast

Toms River, Ocean County, NJ - Recreational anglers and fishing liaisons representing several wind energy developers came together last night to discuss future wind development projects off the coast of New Jersey and in the New York Bight.

The event was organized by the American Littoral Society and Anglers for Offshore Wind Power. Both organizations are actively engaged with recreational fisherman from New Jersey and the Mid-Atlantic region. Anglers for Offshore Wind Power is a project of the National Wildlife Federation.

The evening included conversations about the benefits or possible detriments of wind farms on fishing in the ocean waters off our Atlantic coast. Attendees asked questions of the developer panel on topics such as the Block Island wind farm as a model for access moving forward; distance between turbines and turbine wake effect; types and installation of foundations and sea life impacts; cable routes and radar interference; decommissioning terms; and how fisherman can work with developers on scientific studies throughout the development process.

The panel included recreational fishing liaisons from companies seeking offshore wind leases, including [Equinor](#), [Orsted](#), [EDF Renewables North America](#), and [Shell New Energies US LLC](#).

"The acceptance of offshore wind farms in the Mid-Atlantic region hinges on where they are sited and the support of all parties that use these waters," said Helen Henderson of the American Littoral Society. "Having recreational anglers talk with wind developers, state agencies, and the federal government is critical to balancing renewable energy projects with the need to protect ocean habitat and wildlife, avoid disrupting ecologically special places, and preserve prime recreational fishing areas."

"It's great to see more and more folks coming out and getting involved," said Paul Eidman of Anglers for Offshore Wind Power. "It's vital that NJ recreational anglers are engaged early in the

planning process to provide input on access, siting and other issues. This will help to avoid conflicts later."

The event included a live, hands-on station for viewing offshore areas on the [Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal](#). The portal is an online mapping and resource center that consolidates available data and enables state, federal, and local users to visualize and analyze ocean resources and human use information such as fishing grounds, habitat areas, and energy sites.

A recent report, "Fisheries Economics of the United States, 2016" released by NOAA in 2018, covered a 10-year time period and provides statistics about **recreational fisheries in New Jersey, including** recreational fishing effort, participation rates, expenditure information.

The report found the state's recreational fishing industry brought in \$2.4 billion in sales and income in 2016. More specifically, New Jersey fishermen spent approximately \$300 million on tackle and \$700 million on boat expenses and roughly 15,000 people were employed in New Jersey's recreational fishing industry.

The groups say that the economic numbers of the report support the necessity to provide opportunities for fisherman to provide their input about wind farm development project.

The only offshore wind farm along the US Atlantic coast is in Rhode Island's coastal waters. However, dozens of projects are in some stage of planning. Those projects would cover large swaths of ocean from Maine to the Carolinas, and could create thousands of jobs, as well as 24 gigawatts of electricity annually.

"We knew that there were a lot of questions and valuable input to be heard from the New Jersey recreational fishing community about windfarm development," said Henderson. "With so many projects moving forward at a very fast pace we wanted to provide an opportunity to start this important dialogue."

While offshore wind energy provides can provide a much needed source for clean, renewable energy, such projects must be carefully planned and sited to avoid harm to the animals and people who rely on our ocean. That is the primary reason for bring anglers and wind developers together.

"The ocean is held in public trust and anglers want to know that our interests aren't ignored as important fishing grounds and fish habitat areas are considered by wind farm developers," said Jeff Dement, Fish Tagging Program Director at the American Littoral Society. "We are an integral component of NJ's economy and we want to ensure we can continue to fish our favorite spots for generations to come."

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Leaders in coastal conservation since 1961, the American Littoral Society, a 501 (c)3 non-profit organization, promotes the study and conservation of marine life and habitat, protects the coast from harm, and empowers others to do the same.

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