



The Watch

Capt. Dave Monti, Chairman



The RISAA Legislative Committee’s mission is to provide, in partnership with the Affiliated Clubs, a forum for improving the knowledge and understanding of fishery-related and government issues that affect recreational anglers. An informed membership encourages involvement and advocacy. The Legislative Committee will strive to advocate responsible fishery decision.

The Committee is comprised of RISAA Members and delegates from the Affiliated Clubs. The Committee meets two or three times a year, depending on the number of fishery and/or legislative issues that develop.

Developer sets high bar for ocean wind farms

The science-based conclusions came one after another last month. The Block Island Wind Farm (BIW) has had no remarkable adverse effects on the environment, fish, mammals, birds and people. Over 50 scientists presented their research findings at the **Southern New England Offshore Wind Energy Science Forum** held at the University of Rhode Island Graduate School of Oceanography.

I served on a social impacts panel at the URI Science Forum and in November served as a panelist at the “Offshore Renewable Energy Development and Fisheries” workshop at UMass Dartmouth. The URI Science Form was sponsored by Deepwater Wind, who developed the Block Island Wind Farm (the first ocean wind farm in the nation) and the UMass workshop was organized by the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine on behalf of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) to garner input on what types of fisheries research might be needed to plan future wind farm projects.

As a fisherman, I try to keep up with the science of fish and fishing. However, much of the wind farm science is new and it is developing quickly. Three firms have secured leases to build wind farms in Federal waters between Block Island and south off Nantucket; they are Deepwater Wind LLC, Bay State Wind LLC and Offshore MW LLC.



The area around the Block Island Wind Farm is bearing fruit

Deepwater Wind has the South Fork Wind Farm in development on Cox Ledge (15 turbines to supply Long Island) and this week proposed a utility-scale renewable energy project with the State of Massachusetts and partners National Grid and FirstLight Power Resources. Ocean wind farms off Rhode Island and Massachusetts are starting to take off.

Ocean wind farms in Europe have been around for many years; however, most were developed and built with little or no research on how they might impact the fish and environment. Any detrimental effects were discovered and mitigated after they were built.

But thanks to Deepwater Wind (DWW) and their Block Island project we have the depth of research to develop a robust protocol for future wind farm development in this nation. DWW facilitated (and in many cases paid for) an army of scientists, engineers, consultants, and universities to study the BIW before, during and after construction.

Insights from the UMass workshop and URI science forum are too numerous to mention, but here are some of the highlights.

Jeffrey Grybowski, CEO of Deepwater Wind said at the URI Science Forum last week, “Starting with a small wind farm (five turbines) at Block Island allowed us to address project challenges effectively. Because small problems on a big project can sink you, but small problems on a small project can likely be solved... we not only produced a source of energy but we helped Block Island solve its energy problem, the wind farm addressed a real world problem.”



Jeff Grybowski

Aileen Kenney, vice president of permitting and environmental affairs for DWW said, “We are closely looking at the cumulative impact and analysis of multiple turbines. After the 15 turbine South Fork Wind Farm we may build a 20 turbine and then possibly a 30 turbine farm adding to the research that we have already done along the way.”

Chris Brown, a commercial fisherman who is president of the Commercial Fisheries Center said, “Fishermen were initially terrorized as to what was going to be built, but last week I made a living towing all around the wind farm.”

Drew Carey, principal scientist/managing partner of Inspire Environmental, Middletown was hired by DWW to do a trawl survey, a lobster survey and other studies before, during and after construction of the windfarm. (to page 28)



Windfarm panelists