

Northeast Regional Planning Body Work Session | October 4, 2013

On October 4, members of the Northeast Regional Planning Body discussed the following topics:

1. Progress to date – review of previous discussion leading to objectives and actions
2. Overview and discussion of Draft Objectives and Actions document
3. Overview of Draft Work Plan components
4. Review of Draft November RPB meeting agenda
5. Next steps leading to Nov 12-13 RPB meeting

1. Progress to date

RPB members were reminded that public comment to date had generally expressed support for the three goals as drafted and the principles discussed at the April RPB meeting and the public meetings in May and June. Over the summer, the RPB had discussed an approach to building on these goals and principles by adding objectives for each goal and actions to implement those objectives - leading to development of a specific work plan.

2. Overview and discussion of Draft Objectives and Actions

RPB members discussed draft Objectives and Actions. Staff development of this draft had included consideration of:

- Executive Order
- RPB decisions and previous discussion
- Stakeholder input and discussion
- Practicality
- Regional nature of effort
- Ongoing related efforts/opportunities to leverage

Discussion of draft Objectives and Actions included the following points:

Goal 1: “Effective Decision Making”

- Under Objective 1, Action 1-1: clarify/explain the clause “...and potential future uses.”
- Under Objective 1, Action 1-2: ensure that Construction and Operations Plan (COP) requirements are included to ensure all appropriate avenues of coordination with BOEM are considered; note that initial efforts to engage BOEM on this topic were underway prior to the federal shutdown. Additionally, draft language to address tribal aspect of the need to enhance coordination with BOEM wind energy siting as well.
- NEPA processes may be an important avenue for enhancing inter-agency coordination. Under Objective 1, consider adding a NEPA-specific action to address this point.
- Under Objective 2, Action 2-2, clarify the term “others”.
- Important that this objective also includes a specific focus on improving/demonstrating how public input is incorporated into decision-making processes.
- Objective 3, Action 3-3 was identified as an important longer-term discussion that may be difficult to resolve and thus needs to be discussed starting now.
- Objective 4 was identified as a placeholder for further tribal input.

Goal 2: “Healthy Ocean and Coastal Ecosystems”

- Objective 1:
 - Action 1-3. Terms such as ecological areas of “importance” and measures of “health” need further definition and refinement, and many public comments weighed in on this subject.
 - Action 1-4. Elevate role of industry to develop science and data. Also consider adding these concepts to Objective 3.
 - Action 1-5. Need to better define scope of this action in the work plan.
 - Actions 1-4 and 1-5. Need to ensure intrinsic link between economic and environmental aspects of ecosystem is incorporated into these actions and the overall goal. May require additional RPB discussion. Staff noted that the work plan will help improve understanding and better characterize economic/environmental connections.

- Objective 3:
 - Reflect existing related efforts (e.g., Gulf of Maine and NY Bight-focused efforts)
 - Focus on gaps in baseline science and information, recognizing that constraints in baseline funding may increase gaps in future.

Goal 3: “Compatibility Among Past, Current and Future Ocean Uses”

No specific comments goal’s objectives and actions.

3. Overview and discussion of Draft Work Plan

The work plan provides the detailed description of how objectives and actions will be achieved. It will be a living document as RPB decisions are made and progress occurs. The approach to the work plan is to:

- Link each task to relevant objective
- Describe process and products to complete objectives and achieve desired outcomes
- Identify responsibilities/roles for completing tasks
- Describe stakeholder engagement aspects of individual tasks
- Provide budget and timeline

Overall, RPB members felt the work plan is on the right track.

4. Review of Draft November RPB meeting agenda

Laura Cantral provided a brief overview of the November meeting objectives:

- Provide update on RPB activities
- Approve the regional ocean planning framework: principles, goals, objectives, and actions
- Review, discuss, and determine next steps for the 2014-2015 RPB work plan
- Provide formal and informal opportunities for public input

The general focus of day 1 is intended to be on updates and principals, goals, objectives, and actions; the day 2 focus is the draft work plan. Public comment sessions will be in the middle of RPB discussion on a particular topic so RPB members can consider input in their deliberations.

5. Next steps leading to Nov 12-13 RPB meeting

Due to the federal government shutdown the federal co-lead will caucus with federal members of the RPB to: 1) communicate outcomes from this call and 2) get input from federal RPB

members on both the objectives and actions and work plan documents. Based on uncertainty related to the federal shutdown, the timeline of the November RPB meeting and additional state-specific meetings may be adjusted.

RPB members in attendance:

Kathleen Leyden and Meredith Mendelson (Maine)
Tom Burack, Glenn Normandeau (New Hampshire)
Grover Fugate (Rhode Island)
Susan Whalen, David Blatt (Connecticut)
Doug Grout (NEFMC)
Jean McInnis (Mohegan Tribe)
Rick Getchel (Micmac Tribe)
Chuckie Green (Mashpee Wompanoag Tribe)
Chris Tompsett (Department of Defense/Navy)
Meghan Massaua (Department of Energy)

Staff on the call:

Chris Williams, Ted Diers (NH), Jen McCann, Bob Ballou (RI),
Greg Capobianco (NY), Ingrid Irigoyen, Laura Cantral
(Meridian), Katie Lund, John Weber, Nick Napoli (NE regional
ocean planning staff)