

## RWSE Annual Work Plan & FY 2022 Actions and Milestones

This Annual Work Plan and Budget for the Regional Wildlife Science Entity (RWSE) are based on assumptions and descriptions expressed in the [RWSE Stakeholder Vision](#) and recently advanced in the [RWSE Governance Structure](#). The Interim Steering Committee provided input on a draft work plan in August 2021. That input has been incorporated in the materials below. The Annual Work Plan and Budget has three parts:

1. **RWSE Annual Work Plan (pp. 1-4)** – a list of tasks that RWSE staff are responsible for, the RWSE components (e.g., Steering Committee, Sector Caucuses, Subcommittees) that will guide and/or assist with those tasks, and the estimated frequency of those activities.
2. **Specific projected actions and milestones for FY 2022 (p. 5)** (July 2021 – June 2022) in addition to or associated with the general tasks described in the Annual Work Plan. A document like this will be produced during each year’s annual planning.

### 1. RWSE Annual Work Plan

The purpose of this Annual Work Plan is to outline the broad bins of responsibilities of NROC, MARCO, and CSSF staff in launching and implementing the RWSE. This Annual Work Plan describes six broad ongoing tasks. More specific actions that will be required within each of these tasks will be projected with each fiscal year budget (for FY 2022 actions, see page 5). The Annual Work Plan is meant to assist RWSE members and stakeholders in tracking the types of activities that RWSE will undertake and the approximate frequency of those activities.

#### Task 1 Manage staff and contractors; coordinate with partners and others

Subtask	Frequency
1. Manage staff and contractors; coordinate with partners (e.g., RWSE member entities, regional IOOS, ROSA) on staffing	Ongoing
2. Staff meetings and regular coordination with other NROC/MARCO contractors including on marine life and regional data portals	Weekly
3. Coordinate with regional IOOS associations, ROSA, and others	Monthly / As needed

#### Task 2 Pursue and maintain funding commitments for operations budget

Subtask	Frequency
1. Maintain, renew, and grow funding agreements with member entities	Ongoing

#### Task 3 Establish and maintain governance structure and functions

The [RWSE Governance Structure](#) follows the initial [Stakeholder Vision](#) developed with the assistance of Cadmus/CBI. Refer to the RWSE Governance Structure (approved by the Interim Steering Committee in July 2021) for charters, frameworks, and terms of reference for the three main components below.

## A. Steering Committee

A group representing the key sectors. Provides guidance and direction for process and procedure of the RWSE overall, including to the Director and Subcommittees. Representatives are selected from Sector Caucuses. Steering Committee members agree to the terms of the Steering Committee Charter.

<b>Subtask</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
1. Convene regular meetings	At least quarterly and as needed
2. Communicate and coordinate with Steering Committee members outside of regular meetings	As needed
3. Review Governance Structure, Conflicts of Interest Policy, Harassment Policy	Annually each July
4. Review pending and ongoing offshore wind/wildlife research funded by RWSE member entities with Steering Committee	Ongoing
5. Review each Sector Caucus's membership with Steering Committee members from each Sector	Annually / As needed
6. Review expert Subcommittee membership with Steering Committee members	Annually / As needed
7. Provide Steering Committee opportunities to review RWSE work products	Ongoing

## B. Sector Caucuses

Sector caucuses will involve standing meetings and listserv discussions within sectors (e.g., offshore wind developers; state government; federal government; and non-governmental environmental organizations). Sector Caucuses will provide input to the Steering Committee to ensure progress on strategic research on offshore wind and wildlife topics. Each sector will develop its own Framework to guide the creation and use of their caucus including a clear definition of membership or participation in that caucus.

<b>Subtask</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
1. Review Sector Caucus charters (with Steering Committee)	Annually / As needed
2. Convene regular Sector Caucus meetings (with Steering Committee)	Biannually
3. Review pending and ongoing research with each Sector	Ongoing

## C. Subcommittees

These are the core entities that identify key gaps and needs, scope initial research concepts initially, and help maintain alignment between ongoing research and the gaps and needs of the RWSE. Subcommittees are convened as needed.

<b>Subtask</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
1. Maintain and review Subcommittee membership lists and invite members based on:	Ongoing / As needed

- Pending and ongoing research
- Participation lists from recent wildlife research/monitoring workshops and meetings
- NROC-MARCO Marine Life Work Groups
- Steering Committee and Sector Caucus input

#### Task 4 Prioritize and support regional research

Subtask	Frequency
1. Catalog existing research frameworks and strategies	Ongoing
2. Convene Subcommittees to address emerging research needs and to develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Data collection strategies that coordinate with ongoing/existing regional-scale research</li> <li>b. Taxa-specific lists of wildlife research priorities based on recent workshops, meetings, working groups, and emerging needs</li> <li>c. Data collection/standardization protocols</li> <li>d. Data storage best practices</li> <li>e. Guidance for research prioritization across taxa</li> <li>f. Scopes for projects that address gaps and needs</li> </ul>	Ongoing
3. Produce and maintain list of research gaps, needs, priorities, methods, and best practices (with Subcommittees)	Annually / Ongoing
4. Facilitate regional research and funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Assist with scoping research projects that address regional gaps and needs with Subcommittees</li> <li>b. Facilitate discussions about implementing funding and funding strategies with Steering Committee</li> <li>c. Coordinate with funders of regional wildlife research with Steering Committee</li> <li>d. Manage research funds and projects</li> </ul>	Ongoing
5. Obtain funding commitments for research and/or support other entities in obtaining research funding	Ongoing

#### Task 5 Maintain sortable database of ongoing pending wildlife research, monitoring efforts, publications, and datasets

Subtask	Frequency
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6.	Develop, maintain, and make available a sortable database for continual review by Steering Committee, Sector Caucuses, and Subcommittees	Ongoing
7.	Coordinate with researchers, research funders, and regional data portals to disseminate spatial data related to research activities (e.g., survey footprints and locations of data collection; eventually results/data products)	Ongoing

**Task 6 Regularly communicate progress and engage stakeholders**

<b>Subtask</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
1. Regular staff attendance at stakeholder and partner meetings (e.g., state offshore wind working groups, ROSA Advisory Committee meetings, industry conferences)	As needed / Ongoing
2. Build an email list and periodically provide updates on RWSE activities	Ongoing
3. Regularly post information and updates on a public website	Ongoing
4. Issue a public Annual Report to communicate progress	Annually
5. Convene Annual Science Meeting	Annually

**2. Specific projected actions and milestones in addition to or associated with the general tasks described in the Annual Work Plan** (Annual Work Plan Task noted in parentheses)

FY 2022 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022)

Timeline	Actions and milestones
<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> Quarter</b> <i>July - September 2021</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steering Committee (Task 3)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Convene monthly meetings until at least December 2021</li> <li>○ Draft and finalize Governance Structure, Conflicts of Interest Policy, Harassment Policy</li> <li>○ Review Sector Caucus membership</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Sector Caucuses (Task 3)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Discuss initial funding agreements with each member entity through Sector Caucus meetings and via one-on-one meetings with Director</li> <li>○ Draft Sector Caucus charters (with Steering Committee)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Subcommittees (Task 3)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Develop plans to convene Subcommittees for Marine Mammals, Birds and Bats, Habitat and Ecosystem, and a Cross-cutting Subcommittee in partnership with NYSERDA E-TWGG</li> <li>○ Develop Subcommittee membership lists with Steering Committee and Sector Caucuses</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Establish use of web-based document sharing platform (Tasks 3, 5)</li> <li>• Develop initial database of pending/ongoing wildlife and offshore wind research (Task 4)</li> <li>• Post RWSE information and public documents to a website (Task 5)</li> </ul>
<p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter</b> <i>October – December 2021</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector Caucuses (Task 3)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Finalize Sector Caucus charters (with Steering Committee)</li> <li>○ Hold initial welcome meeting with each Sector Caucus (with Steering Committee), including review of Subcommittees membership</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Subcommittees (Task 3)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Convene Marine Mammals, Birds and Bats, Habitat and Ecosystem, Cross-cutting Subcommittees</li> <li>○ Secure funding for taxa-based status/gaps/needs assessment for each Subcommittee</li> <li>○ With each Subcommittee, begin drafting list of research gaps/needs/priorities</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Maintain RWSE updates, information, and public documents on a website (Task 5)</li> </ul>
<p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter</b> <i>January – March 2022</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a specific actions, milestones, and funding plan for FY2023 (Tasks 1, 2)</li> <li>• Continue to convene Marine Mammals, Birds and Bats, Habitat and Ecosystem, and Cross-cutting Subcommittees as needed; convene Sea Turtle, Protected Fish Species, and any additional Subcommittees as needed (Task 3)</li> <li>• With each Subcommittee, begin to identify longer-term data gaps and needs to inform the RWSE and state, federal and independent research efforts toward developing a draft regional research framework for offshore wind, wildlife, and ecosystems (Task 3)</li> <li>• Maintain RWSE updates, information, and public documents on a website (Task 5)</li> </ul>
<p><b>4<sup>th</sup> Quarter</b> <i>April - June 2022</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure funding for FY 2023 (Task 2)</li> <li>• Continue to advance the identification longer-term data gaps and needs to inform the RWSE and state, federal and independent research efforts toward developing a draft regional research framework for offshore wind, wildlife, and ecosystems (Task 3)</li> <li>• Maintain RWSE updates, information, and public documents on a website (Task 5)</li> <li>• Begin to coalesce branding, logo, web and social media presence (Task 5)</li> <li>• Issue a brief “annual report,” including the next year’s objectives and outcomes for the RWSE (Task 5)</li> </ul>