

## Draft Northeast Ocean Plan Public Release Webinar

Northeast Regional Planning Body  
May 25, 2016



## Objectives

- Announce the availability of the draft Northeast Ocean Plan
- Provide an overview of the draft Northeast Ocean Plan
- Describe the public comment process and upcoming opportunities to discuss the draft Plan
- Answer clarifying questions from the public on both the draft Northeast Ocean Plan and public engagement process



## Agenda

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| 12:00 PM | Welcome, introductions, agenda review      |
| 12:10 PM | Overview of the draft Northeast Ocean Plan |
| 12:40 PM | Perspectives from NE RPB Members           |
| 1:00 PM  | Facilitated public Q&A and comments        |
| 1:50 PM  | Wrap up and next steps                     |



## Submitting Questions and Comments

- Submit your questions and comments via the webinar Q&A function
- Questions can be submitted anytime throughout the webinar for discussion during the Q&A session
- All questions will be included in the webinar record, even those we do not have time to answer





### Why do we need this plan?

- Ocean is a busy place
- Need to manage for new uses
- Understand changing ecosystems and economies
- Need for government to work together better
- Focused regional discussion on future of the ocean

### What does the Northeast Ocean Plan do?

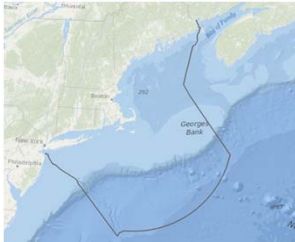
### What Does the Northeast Ocean Plan Do?

- Enables regional characterization of marine life, habitat and human activities using unprecedented online library of peer-reviewed regional data
- Sets expectation for federal government to use this information to guide and inform regulatory and management decisions within existing authorities
- Supports identification of potential conflicts and compatibility, and affected resources
- Employs best practices for regulatory/management processes through interagency coordination, stakeholder engagement, use of data
- Identifies future priority science and research needs

## Northeast Regional Planning Body



- Six New England states
- Six federally-recognized tribes
- Nine federal agencies
- New England Fishery Management Council
- Two ex-officio members: NY and Canada



## Northeast Ocean Plan goals

1. Healthy ocean and coastal ecosystems
2. Effective decision-making
3. Compatibility among past, current and future ocean uses



How was the Northeast Ocean Plan developed?



## OUTREACH + ENGAGEMENT

### Regional Stakeholder forums + workshops

3-6 weeks before each RPB meeting  
Focus on upcoming RPB decisions

### Subject specific projects + targeted outreach + work groups

Cumulatively reached thousands of people across many issue areas  
Expert/scientific review of methods, products

### State public meetings + advisory groups

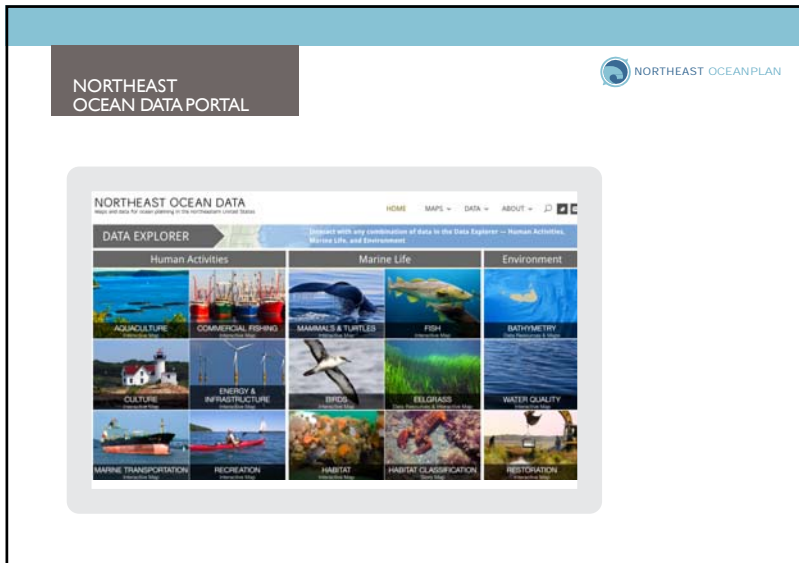
Interactive and informal  
Throughout New England

### Website + social media + eblasts

Calendar and RPB updates  
Project reports, meeting summaries, other products

### Existing meetings + events

Leveraged existing opportunities to reach stakeholders  
Various topics, throughout New England



## USING PLAN DATA TO INFORM DECISIONS

Federal agency actions to update and use Plan data and information in regulatory and management decisions within existing authorities.



## Plan Describes Top Ten Primary Ocean Resources and Activities

1. Overview of **importance** of each ocean resource or activity to ocean management
2. **Regulatory and management landscape** of that resource/activity
3. Peer-reviewed **maps and data** available on portal
4. Regulatory and management **actions** identified by RPB agencies
  - ✓ Maintain, update and develop additional data for the Portal
  - ✓ Inform regulatory/environmental review and management decisions
  - ✓ Identify potentially affected stakeholders and resources
  - ✓ Enhance interagency coordination



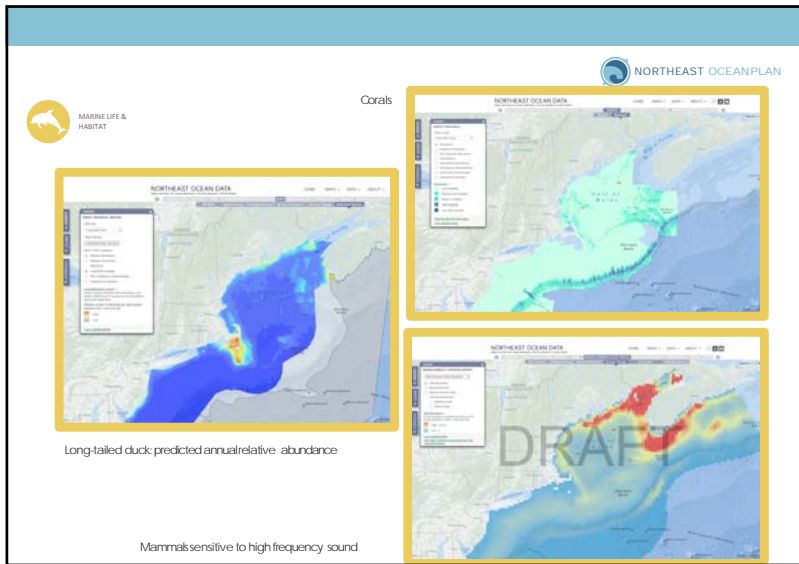
## MARINE LIFE & HABITAT



## Marine Life & Habitat

This section of the plan describes the process for developing and the status of an unprecedented library of regional data products characterizing marine life and habitat including:

- Maps of species
- Maps of habitat types
- Draft maps of species groupings developed to assist decision-making



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MARINE LIFE & HABITAT

### Marine Life & Habitat

Defines Important Ecological Areas as habitat areas and species, guilds, or communities critical to ecosystem function, recovery, and resilience. They are further divided by five components:

- Areas of high productivity
- Areas of high biodiversity
- Areas of high species abundance
- Areas of vulnerable marine resources
- Areas of rare marine resources

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MARINE LIFE & HABITAT

### OVERVIEW ACTIONS

ML-1 Update marine life data

ML-2 Update habitat data

ML-3 Identify opportunities to update marine life and habitat data every five years

ML-4 Advance the mapping of Important Ecological Areas

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MARINE LIFE & HABITAT

### OVERVIEW ACTIONS


ML-5 Use marine life and habitat data as key inputs to monitor ecosystem health

ML-6 Use marine life and habitat data to inform applicable review processes under federal environmental and regulatory laws

ML-7 Use marine life and habitat data to inform responsibilities within managed areas

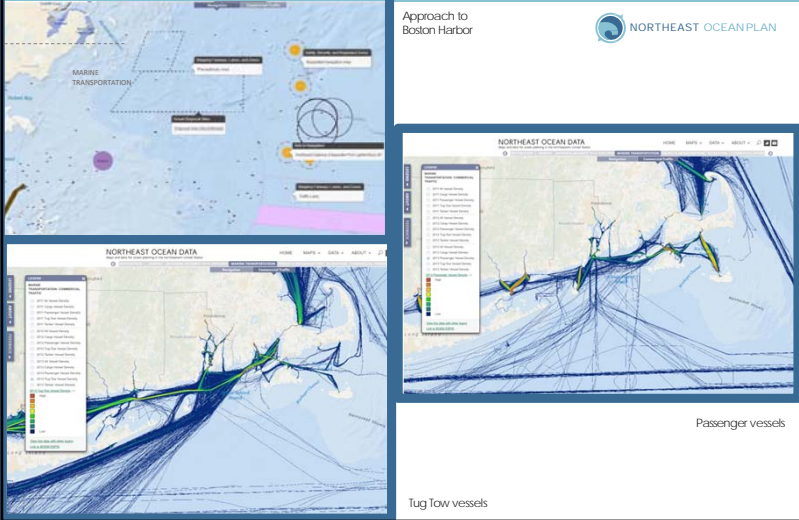
ML-8 Use marine life and habitat data to inform other management activities

MARINE TRANSPORTATION



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Approach to Boston Harbor



Passenger vessels

Tug Tow vessels


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MARINE TRANSPORTATION OVERVIEW ACTIONS

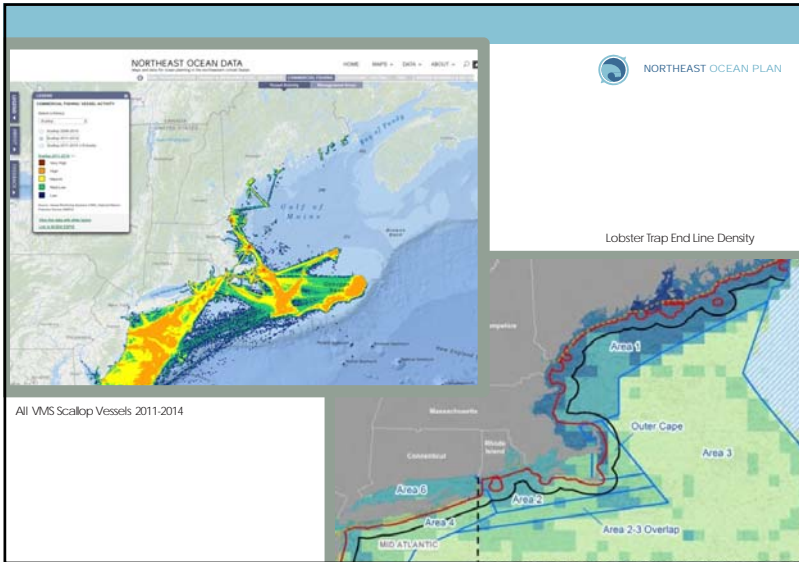
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- MT-1 Maintain existing maps and data on the Portal
- MT-2 Provide additional data through new analyses
- MT-3 Use the Portal and Plan to inform regular operations and management of the MTS
- MT-4 Use the Portal and Plan to identify potential conflicts, impacts and potentially affected maritime stakeholders during permitting and leasing for new proposed activities
- MT-5 Use the Plan to inform dredging and federal navigation projects
- MT-6 Continue outreach to maritime stakeholders to understand current trends and the potential effects of new activities to the MTS

COMMERCIAL & RECREATIONAL FISHING



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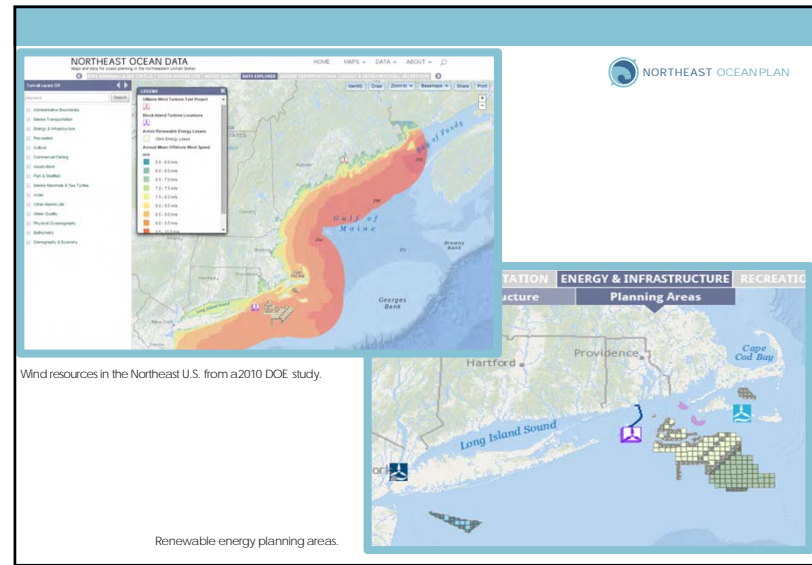
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COMMERCIAL & RECREATIONAL FISHING

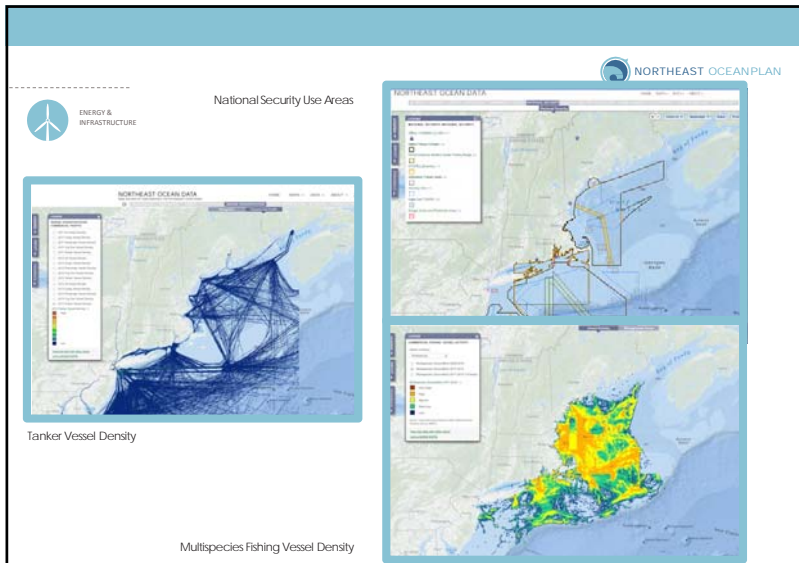
OVERVIEW ACTIONS

- CF-1 Maintain existing maps and data on the portal
- CF-2 Develop additional regional maps and data of commercial and recreational fisheries
- CF-3 Inform regulatory and environmental reviews of agency actions for their potential impacts to commercial and recreational fisheries
- CF-4 Identify potentially affected commercial fishing stakeholders

This slide is titled 'OVERVIEW ACTIONS' under the 'COMMERCIAL & RECREATIONAL FISHING' category. It lists four action items (CF-1 to CF-4) related to maintaining data, developing maps, informing reviews, and identifying stakeholders.







ENERGY & INFRASTRUCTURE

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### OVERVIEW ACTIONS

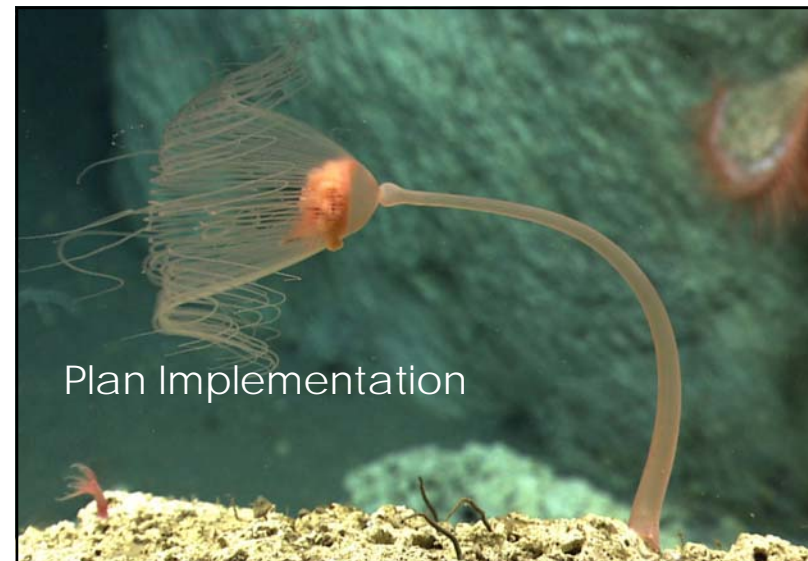
- EI-1 Maintain existing maps and data on the Portal
- EI-2 Provide additional regional data related to energy and infrastructure permitting when available
- EI-3 Inform commercial leasing for offshore renewable energy development

ENERGY & INFRASTRUCTURE

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### OVERVIEW ACTIONS

- EI-4 Incorporate Plan maps and data into environmental reviews associated with new offshore energy or submarine cable proposals
- EI-5 Identify and notify potentially affected stakeholders
- EI-6 Improve outreach to industry and stakeholders related to renewable energy development
- EI-7 Ensure the plan and portal are used by agencies and project proponents
- EI-8 Inform research and development
- EI-9 Enhance intergovernmental coordination related to offshore energy development



## PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

1. Intergovernmental Coordination
2. Plan Administration
  - Portal Maintenance
3. Monitoring and Evaluation

## EARLY AGENCY COORDINATION

Entities that participate in early agency coordination in the Northeast typically include (or should include) some combination of the following:

- |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DOI (including BOEM, USFWS, NPS, USGS)</li> <li>• FERC</li> <li>• USACE</li> <li>• NOAA (including NMFS)</li> <li>• USEPA</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DHS (including USCG and FEMA)</li> <li>• Navy</li> <li>• DOT (MARAD)</li> <li>• NEFMC and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (depending on location)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State agencies (permitting, wildlife, and fisheries agencies, CZM programs, SHPO). Fisheries agencies may also coordinate through NEFMC, MAFMC, or ASMFC.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission</li> <li>• Federally-recognized tribes</li> </ul> |
|---|---|---|--|

## PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

**Best practices provide flexible but consistent guidance to help enhance value of agency coordination by supporting:**

- Broad understanding across agencies of early use of relevant info from portal, stakeholders, other sources,
- Clear and efficient direction for the applicant,
- Initial understanding of proposed project among and between agencies and initial broad understanding of issues,
- Informed stakeholders engagement,
- Coordinated federal, state, tribal review as appropriate.

### Plan administration and oversight

- Data Portal

### Monitoring and evaluation

## SCIENCE AND RESEARCH PRIORITIES

1. Improve understanding of marine life and habitats
2. Improve understanding of tribal cultural resources
3. Improve understanding of human activities, coastal communities, socioeconomics, and interactions between uses
4. Characterize the vulnerability of marine resources to specific stressors
5. Characterize changing environmental conditions, particularly resulting from climate change, and characterize resulting impacts to existing resources and uses
6. Advance ecosystem-based management (EBM) by building on the previous priorities and also including cumulative impacts and ecosystem services



How does the plan address the goals?

### 1. Healthy ocean and coastal ecosystems

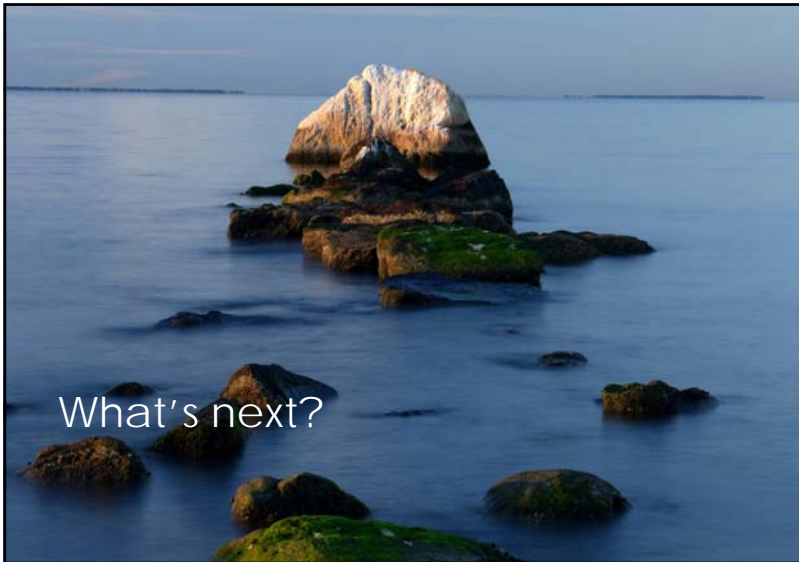
- Agency commitments to use an unprecedented, scientifically- and expert-developed amount of marine life, habitat, and human use data
- Development of an IEA Framework and commitments to advance it
- Commitment to develop indicators of ecosystem health, including the OHI
- Identification of potential restoration projects that could advance a healthy ecosystem
- Identification of six science and research priorities


### 2. Effective decision-making

- Commitments to using the Portal in regulatory and management decision-making
- Commitments to maintain and advance the Portal
- Best practices to enhance intergovernmental coordination
- Identify and engage stakeholders
- Continuation of the RPB as a regional forum for continued coordination

### 3. Compatibility among past, current and future ocean uses


- Commitment to continuing work groups
- Commitment to use best practices and regional data to identify potentially affected stakeholders to further understand compatibility issues
- Pursue science and research priorities to advance compatibility, including better understanding resource vulnerability, use conflicts, important socioeconomic connections, cumulative impacts, and ecosystem services





## PUBLIC COMMENT

- Public comment period begins May 25th and will conclude on July 25th at 5pm
- Public comment will be collected via:
  - Public listening sessions
  - Comments submitted online at [neocceanplanning.org/plan](http://neocceanplanning.org/plan)
  - Via email: [comment@neocceanplanning.org](mailto:comment@neocceanplanning.org)
  - Comments submitted in writing to:
    - Betsy Nicholson, Northeast Regional Planning Body, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930
- The RPB will submit revised plan to National Ocean Council for review and certification, at which point the plan will be in effect



## PUBLIC COMMENT

Monday, June 6 – Rockland, ME: 5PM to 8PM  
Wednesday, June 8 – Old Lyme, CT: 7PM – 9PM  
Monday, June 13 – Gloucester, MA: 6PM-8:30PM  
Tuesday, June 14 – Boston, MA: 2PM – 4:30PM  
Wednesday, June 15 – New Bedford, MA: 6PM – 8:30PM  
Monday, June 20 – Ellsworth, ME: 5PM – 8PM  
Monday, June 27 – Portsmouth, NH: 6PM – 8:30PM  
Wednesday, June 29 – Narragansett, RI: 6PM – 8:30PM  
Thursday, June 30 – Portland, ME: 5PM – 8PM

Go to [neocceanplanning.org](http://neocceanplanning.org) for details



## Perspectives from NE RPB Members



## Benefits to States

- ✓ Access to a library of marine life products to provide a regional perspective and a framework for advancing the use of data
- ✓ Regional maps for federally managed fisheries and shipping density using high resolution and verifiable data
- ✓ Commitments from federal partners to refresh data as available/on a schedule
- ✓ Early notification and coordination with federal agencies (e.g. NEPA and CZMA opportunities)
- ✓ Regional research agenda to support planning



## Ocean Plan Tribal Content

### Chapter 3: Cultural Resources

- Regulation and Management
  - Describes federal statutes relevant to cultural resources (NHPA - Section 106, NEPA)
  - Describes role of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers and consultation
- Maps and Data
  - Used to identify potential impacts to cultural resources and affected tribes
  - Tools for ecosystem based management
  - Data cited by tribes with particular relevance include:
    - Marine life characterization for species distribution and abundance
    - Restoration sites to highlight importance of habitats for species of sustenance
    - Climate change data to cite changing conditions on habitats and resources with tribal importance (e.g. fisheries, shellfish, eelgrass, erosion to cultural sites)



## Ocean Plan Tribal Content

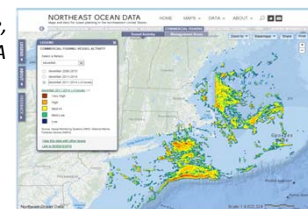
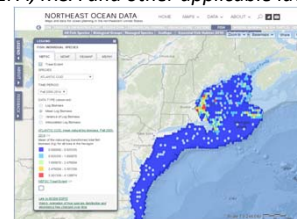
### Chapter 4: Federal-Tribal Coordination Best Practices

- Early coordination for federal management and regulatory actions
- Transfer protocols to reconstruct submerged paleocultural landscapes - identifying ancient Native American marine archeological sites
- Use existing partnerships and forums to improve:
  - Tribal capacity and technical skills - Portal and other spatial data training
  - Engagement on habitat and/or water quality restoration projects through Restoration Subcommittee activities
  - Coordination with Mid-Atlantic tribal ocean planning activities
  - NE RPB and EPA RTOC are examples of partnerships to continue



## New England Fishery Management Council

*"The NEFMC will use the plan data, as appropriate, to supplement traditional internal, state and NOAA data sources to conduct analyses related to FMP development, and to satisfy the requirements of NEPA, MSA and other applicable laws."*

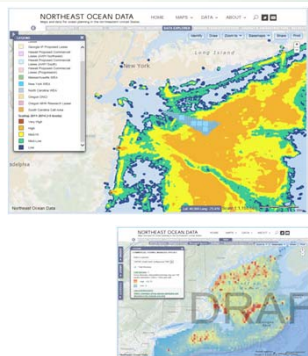


*"The Portal may also inform NEFMC when considering climate change impacts to fisheries, developing and implementing ecosystem-based fisheries management, and resolving use conflicts."*



## New England Fishery Management Council

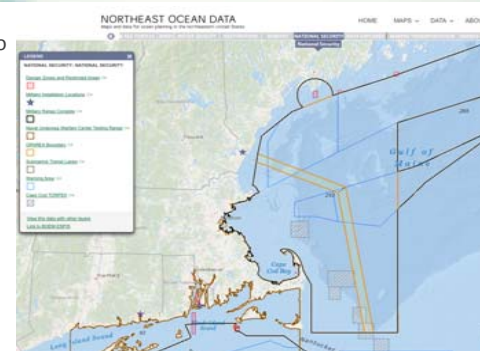
- Chapter 3 – Data Portal
  - Data portal provides a high degree of visibility for fishing interests and fishery resources
  - Prescribed “Actions” ensure active use, maintenance and enhancement of the portal
- Chapter 4 – Best Practices
  - Early interagency coordination
  - Fishing industry/community engagement
  - Plan & ecosystem monitoring and evaluation
- Chapter 5 – Science & Research Priorities



## National Security Example

Navy and USCG worked closely to draft Ch 3 National Security:

- Describes regional military presence and concerns
- Management programs & regulatory coordination
- Maps and data updates, maintenance, and use – development of a National Security Portal theme



## Federal Perspective

- Unified approach to developing and using Plan content
- RPB engagement over 4 years with many stakeholders through public meetings, workshops, forums, and industry-specific projects to gather information and input
- Federal agency commitments to use of data:
  - Natural resource conditions
  - Ocean use activities and trends
  - Supports identification of potential conflicts/compatibility
- Early engagement and coordination on proposed projects



## Questions? Comments?

Please submit your questions or comments via the webinar Q&A function



## Wrap Up and Next Steps



## Webinar Recap Materials

The following will be posted on the RPB website (<http://neoceanplanning.org/news/draft-plan-and-rpb-webinar-may-25/>) after the webinar:

- A recording of the webinar
- A transcript of the webinar
- The full slide presentation
- A record of all chat questions and comments from the public
- A list of webinar participants



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## Thank you!

