

New York Environmental Technical Working Group (E-TWG)
Meeting Summary – 5 December 2024

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>
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Disclaimer: While all efforts were made to accurately represent E-TWG discussions, the views expressed in this summary may not represent the views of all E-TWG members.

Background

As part of New York State's efforts to responsibly develop offshore wind (OSW) energy, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) convened the Environmental Technical Working Group (E-TWG) in 2018 to provide input to the state¹. On December 5, 2024, the E-TWG held an in-person meeting at the Building Energy Exchange Building at 31 Chambers St, Manhattan, New York and via video conference. All participants who attended in person or virtually are listed in Appendix A.

This summary is intended to capture the key points of discussion and action items identified during the meeting and is loosely organized according to the structure of the meeting agenda (Appendix B). Opinions are not attributed to specific E-TWG members unless there is a clear reason to do so. For topics where there were differences of opinion among E-TWG members, this summary identifies areas of agreement as well as the different perspectives offered during meeting discussions.

Action Items

- E-TWG members are encouraged to provide feedback on the Cooling Water Use at Offshore Converter Stations study to Morgan Brunbauer (Morgan.Brunbauer@nyserda.ny.gov) by December 20, 2024.
- E-TWG members interested in providing feedback on revisions to the E-TWG charter should submit comments to support staff at the Biodiversity Research Institute by January 15, 2025.

Welcome and Introductions

Bennett Brooks (Consensus Building Institute, or CBI) provided a brief introduction and invited all meeting participants, both in person and online via zoom, to provide introductions about their respective organizations. He indicated that the focus of the meeting was to 1) continue the prioritization process for E-TWG efforts in 2025-2027, 2) discuss the 2024 State of the Science Workshop, 3) provide an update on Environmental Mitigation Plans for New York projects, and 4) discuss other recent E-TWG and NYSEDA activities.

New York State Offshore Wind

Kate McClellan Press (NYSEDA) provided an update on OSW development in New York State (NYS), acknowledging the potential for changes given the outcome of the presidential election. NYS has a mandate to develop at least 9,000 megawatts of OSW energy by 2035. NYSEDA continues to meet this goal via the legislation in NYS's Climate Act and currently has two contracted projects (Empire Wind 1 and Sunrise Wind) that total 1,734 megawatts. Meeting climate goals remains a priority for NYS and Governor Hochul has expressed her commitment to NYS's plan for a net-zero future.

NYSEDA will continue to strive to maintain its role as a trusted resource for New Yorkers, primarily through the TWGs, maintaining relationships with stakeholders, and staying informed on current events related to OSW. NYSEDA is preparing for several potential impacts under the new administration, including the slowing down of the permitting process, potential implications for tax credits, and the impacts of potential tariffs on project costs. NYSEDA has been preparing to request new lease areas

¹For meeting agendas, summaries, and presentations, see: <http://nyetwg.com/e-twg-meeting-archive>

from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) for some time, but there are enough current lease areas to meet the State's 9,000-megawatt goal. NYSERDA will continue to develop OSW in a responsible manner over the next several years.

Discussion

- **Has NYSERDA thought about changes that might happen at the governor level and how that could affect the mandate?** Kate indicated that the mandate is codified in NYS's Climate Act, so it would take an act of the governor and the state legislature to change it.

Prioritization of E-TWG Efforts 2025 through 2027

Kate Williams (Biodiversity Research Institute, or BRI) and Julia Gulka (BRI) provided an overview of the goals of the prioritization process for E-TWG efforts in 2025-2027. The E-TWG undergoes a prioritization process every few years to identify potential high-priority topic areas for the TWG to focus on in future years.

Prior to discussing potential future priorities, the group reviewed the topics identified during the last prioritization process (2020-2021), including 1) improvement of coordination between states, 2) review and synthesis of data to inform stakeholder groups, 3) State of the Science workshops, 4) guidance for regional monitoring and research, 5) guidance for pre- and post- construction monitoring and research, and 6) technology advancement for mitigation and monitoring.

Additionally, the group reviewed the following ongoing E-TWG efforts:

- **Whale Communications Committee** – A range of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) have been published. Efforts are expected to wrap up in the spring of 2025.
- **Bird Communications Committee** – Efforts are expected to kick off this December and will follow a similar process to the Whale Communications Committee.
- **State of the Science workshop** – Preliminary planning efforts have begun for the 2026 workshop.
- **Mitigation Practices Database Tool** – E-TWG and F-TWG support staff are working on an update to the tool.

Prioritization Survey Results

Kate Williams (BRI) provided an overview of the results of the prioritization survey, which were shared with the E-TWG prior to the meeting. The online survey was developed based on 1) initial prioritization discussions during the [May 2024 E-TWG meeting](#) and 2) follow up discussions with the Regional Wildlife Science Collaborative for Offshore Wind (RWSC) to discuss potential areas of collaboration. Survey questions asked TWG members to rank four priority themes: Transparency and Data Sharing, External Communications, Research and Monitoring, and Net Positive Impacts (NPI). Participants could also rank specific topic areas within each overarching theme. A detailed breakdown of survey responses, as well as examples of other potential priority topics submitted by TWG members, may be found in the [meeting slides](#). The survey results were mixed and there was no single theme or topic that was clearly identified as a top priority.

In addition to ranking topics within their respective themes, E-TWG members were also asked to identify what they felt the highest priorities were across all four themes. The results of this portion of the survey are as follows, ordered by the number of votes received (theme indicated in parentheses):

- Develop communications materials to support sound science and respond to concerns and the political climate (External Communications)
- Encourage data sharing between developers and the public (Transparency and Data Sharing)
- Conduct research to develop and test the effectiveness of new monitoring and mitigation technologies (Research and Monitoring)
- Develop and share lessons learned and impacts from early OSW projects to inform future mitigation and monitoring (External Communications)
- Develop recommendations for NPI data collection and sharing (Net Positive Impacts)
- Identify voluntary minimum standards for community relations and communications for OSW developers (Transparency and Data Sharing)
- Identify variation in monitoring and mitigation across projects (Research and Monitoring)
- Develop regional monitoring networks (Research and Monitoring)

Collaboration Opportunities with RWSC

Emily Shumchenia (RWSC) shared an overview of potential areas of collaboration between RWSC and the E-TWG. In terms of prioritizing efforts, the RWSC takes direction from its participating stakeholders and its steering committee. The RWSC is currently working on activities related to two of the four priority themes identified for future E-TWG efforts: Transparency and Data Sharing and Research and Monitoring. Ongoing efforts include the following:

- Making recommendations via the expert subcommittees
- Recently released RWSC Data Policy
- Sharing suggested contract language
- Developing guidance on data portals and repositories
- Tracking federal requirements for individual OSW projects
- Developing recommendations for different data collection methods
- Providing guidance on post-construction monitoring, focused on ensuring that all data is interoperable and standardized to the extent possible

The RWSC is not currently advancing products related to 1) NPI, 2) external communications, 3) identifying voluntary minimum standards for community relations and communications for OSW developers, or 4) supporting near-real time communications and data sharing from OSW developers to environmental non-governmental organizations (eNGOs) and the public.

Emily identified NPI impacts and external communications as potential opportunities for collaboration with the E-TWG. The topic of external communications has been discussed in RWSC's eNGO Caucus and there may be an opportunity to assess and compile existing resources. For such an effort, the following questions should be considered:

- Is redundancy among existing resources beneficial or confusing?
- What is the best way to dispel misinformation?
- Is assistance from professional communications strategists needed to address this priority?

Emily also provided additional information on RWSC's ongoing work regarding tracking and synthesis of wildlife monitoring and mitigation requirements, as well as resources for staying up to date with RWSC activities.

Possible Priority Topics

Using the survey responses and discussion points from the May E-TWG meeting, E-TWG support staff compiled a refined "strawdog" list of potential priorities and associated mechanisms. The strawdog also identified potential areas of overlap with ongoing RWSC efforts, as well as where these ideas may need to be refined further.

Within the four themes, seven topics were identified as top priorities. Some topics might be better addressed elsewhere (e.g., at the state level) and E-TWG support staff will continue to coordinate with RWSC to ensure efforts are not duplicated. The goal of today's discussion was to identify two to three of these topic areas as ones the E-TWG can pursue and make an impact with.

Topic #1: Develop a website or dashboard for the coordinated sharing of OSW activities

This may involve creating a Specialist Committee to help inform dashboard development and could be housed on the E-TWG website or in another location.

Discussion

- **Does the term "activities" have a specific definition? Activities pertaining to the E-TWG?** Kate Williams (BRI) clarified that E-TWG support staff received several recommendations for what could be included as OSW activities (e.g., on-the-water activities, research efforts).
- Notices to mariners go out monthly and can be difficult for stakeholders to track. It would be useful and valuable to have a centralized location where all this information can be easily accessed and is readily available for any stakeholders that may be impacted by an activity.
- Although there are existing dashboards, these should not be a reason to not pursue the development of a one-stop-shop dashboard. It would be beneficial to have an individual location to compile this information. Another member added that OSW developers would utilize a one-stop-shop dashboard, even if it just included links to specific project dashboards.
- A query could be sent out to developers asking for relevant information (e.g., project updates, project dashboards, LinkedIn pages). This would need to be done in a way that does not unintentionally encourage competition between developers.

Topic #2: Develop communication materials to respond to OSW and environmental issues as they arise.

In contrast to the ongoing Whale Communications Committee and Bird Communications Committee efforts, this topic could be focused around developing a process that is better suited for quickly responding to topics as they arise. This could also include the development of a directory of existing communications resources, potentially in collaboration with RWSC.

Discussion

- There is a need for real-time communications that come from trusted sources.

Topic #3: Develop and share lessons learned from past projects and recommendations for improvement

There are multiple mechanisms for this topic, including informal sharing as a standing agenda item for future E-TWG meetings, or the E-TWG could hold a separate workshop on this topic.

Discussion

- OSW developers have an opportunity to collect a lot of data in a standardized manner to help determine OSW impacts. There is a need for standardized data across OSW developers to better enable post-hoc analyses.
 - Kate McClellan Press added that this need for data standardization could be a potential opportunity for collaboration with the RWSC. Emily Shumchenia agreed that there are lessons learned related to data collection that can be shared with developers and their subcontractors.
 - Kate Williams asked what the RWSC's process is for addressing topics that come up as needs in multiple subcommittees. Emily Shumchenia clarified that anyone may suggest cross-subcommittee conversations to advance some of these overarching needs.

Topic #4: Develop regionally administered/managed wildlife monitoring networks

There may be an opportunity to support the RWSC with the development of wildlife monitoring networks like POWERON. This could include supporting the RWSC with staff time or helping to develop a framework of monitoring methods for a specific taxonomic group.

Discussion

- The ability of an OSW project to successfully provide energy to its end users relies heavily on permitting. Helping to identify ways in which industry can address their monitoring and research needs and permitting needs for regulatory compliance should be prioritized. This could involve developing guidance for mitigation efforts and potentially developing a regional research and monitoring network.

Topic #5: Develop guidance/recommendations for specific data types or taxa

This could involve creating a Specialist Committee to develop additional guidance documents (e.g., monitoring/mitigation guidance for a specific species or taxa of interest).

Topic #6: Support research to test the effectiveness of new technologies for monitoring and mitigation

This topic might not be one that the E-TWG has the capacity to address directly but could help refer the topic to other groups who may be better suited to take it on.

Discussion

- Many fisheries monitoring plans are starting to use underwater cameras that generate hours of underwater footage. There is artificial intelligence (AI) software available that can go through the footage, but the software must be trained and there is not a single project with enough hours of footage to do so. If multiple projects shared their video footage to train the AI software, a tool could be developed for everyone to use. The E-TWG might not be the best entity to take the lead in such an effort but could potentially partner with other groups like the Responsible Offshore Science Alliance (ROSA). This could also be relevant to Topic #3.

Topic #7: Develop recommendations to inform NPI/mitigation efforts

This could involve creating a Specialist Committee, possibly in collaboration with the RWSC.

Discussion

- It is critical to make the distinction between compensatory mitigation and NPI efforts. A crucial difference is that compensatory mitigation must be done in specific ways to receive credit for the resulting offsets, as regulated by the federal agencies. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and BOEM are doing a lot of work on compensatory mitigation that is not being widely shared with the public at this time.
- Because NPI is mentioned as an example in NYSEDA's Environmental Mitigation Plans, this might be an opportune time to proactively develop guidance.

Breakout Groups

E-TWG members were split into six breakout groups to identify their top three priority topics for the E-TWG to address. Online participants had separate virtual breakout discussions and were invited to fill out an online form with their ranked priorities.

The bullets below summarize topics/themes that emerged during the breakout group discussions and should not be interpreted to represent the opinions of the full E-TWG.

External Communications

- Strong communications will be especially important as development and construction activities start in the New York Bight. Effective communication will also be essential to sustaining public support for OSW activity under the new administration.
- Combating misinformation is a challenge. There is a need to identify trusted voices that can effectively communicate with stakeholders.
- There is a need to identify a mechanism that allows for faster, more flexible responses to topics as they arise. Preparing for topics and questions that may come up in the future will be important for staying ahead of misinformation.

Sharing Lessons Learned

- Investing in collecting and sharing lessons learned from early projects is critical. There is a need for a standardized, central location that houses this information.
- Convening conversations around lessons learned could aid in streamlining data standardization and help foster a common understanding of the value of the data being collected.

Regional Monitoring Networks

- Supporting a regionally administered or managed wildlife monitoring network could provide opportunities to engage with the fisheries side of OSW.
- Regionally consolidating studies could be a more efficient and effective use of funding.

Guidance Development

- Developing additional guidance and recommendations could help simplify the processes of applying for bids and submitting proposals.
- There is a need for a stronger set of guidelines on what NPI is and how it can be measured.
- The lack of existing guidance on avian mitigation measures is a challenge for developers.

Full Group Discussion

E-TWG members as a group further discussed the four potential priorities that were ranked highest during breakout group discussions. These included (1) develop communication materials to respond to OSW and environmental issues as they arise, (2) develop regionally administered/managed wildlife monitoring networks, (3) develop and share lessons learned from past projects and recommendations for improvement, and (4) develop recommendations to inform NPI/mitigation efforts. The bullets below summarize comments from the discussion but should not be interpreted to represent opinions of the full E-TWG.

Develop communication materials to respond to OSW and environmental issues as they arise

E-TWG support staff posed the following questions to the group:

- What would a mechanism to address this topic look like that allows for near-real time response to issues as they arise?
- Who is the intended audience for this information?
- Is additional work needed to ensure that communications materials are reaching the people interested in this information?
- How can the E-TWG create materials that are useful for others to use and post (noting that the E-TWG does not have a social media presence and does not intend to change this)?

Discussion

- With construction starting in NYS next year, what role is NYSDORA going to have in terms of frequent media questions? Kate McClellan Press noted that both projects and NYSDORA receive requests for information and NYSDORA strives to ensure that their communications team has relevant information at their disposal when answering questions from the public.
- Infographics are useful to have on hand when conversing with or answering questions from the public. Having that information on hand to point to is helpful.
- A developer member noted that their company has developed several fact sheets that can be shared with interested E-TWG members.
- Information not being easily consumable or available is often a barrier to reaching its intended audience. Posting and sharing communications materials in relevant locations (e.g., whale tours, popular fishing locations) could be one solution.
- How can developers best communicate project updates and activities? The member who posed this question noted that developers will put out notices to mariners and make other efforts to communicate, but developers are not always perceived as being trusted entities.
 - Kate McClellan Press added that the E-TWG could work on effectively identifying a network of trusted communicators.
 - Kate Williams noted that a list of resources is available on the Whale Communications Committee website. The E-TWG can host additional materials on the website, but it would be beneficial to implement some sort of process for deciding on reliable, trusted sources to include on the list.
- A mechanism to address real-time issues could potentially involve identifying experts on specific topics that can strategize responses to hot topics.

- Communications with reporters and the public have become more difficult as OSW activity becomes more politically charged. Proactive efforts to spread truthful information could help alleviate some of these challenges.
- How can we remove some of the hesitancy around advocating for OSW? Developers are often on the front lines of dispelling misinformation, but advocacy across sectors will be crucial for continuing to build and advance the OSW industry.
- There is a need for more sophisticated coordination between states, federal agencies, eNGOs, and developers in terms of communications. Focusing on disseminating information on the positive impacts of OSW may be more effective than trying to constantly combat misinformation as it arises.
- Engaging a wide range of organizations in regular conversations about communications could result in more aligned messaging across the industry. The E-TWG could potentially serve as the convener for such discussions between environmental organizations.

Develop regionally administered/managed wildlife monitoring networks

Kate Williams (BRI) acknowledged the interest in pursuing additional regional wildlife monitoring frameworks like POWERON and noted the need for further discussion with RWSC about how the E-TWG can best support their efforts. She encouraged members to provide feedback on any specific topics or taxonomic groups of interest that the E-TWG could prioritize supporting.

Discussion

- One potential focus area could be coordinating the calibration of all the existing Motus stations. Kate Williams added that this topic is being discussed within the Bird and Bat Tracking workgroup within RWSC's Bird and Bat Subcommittee.
- There is a need for an acoustic receiver network, as many locations without long-term receivers are often missed. Supporting such an effort with a pooled resource could enable information sharing and benefit many stakeholders.

Develop and share lessons learned from past projects and recommendations for improvement

E-TWG support staff shared the following ideas for addressing this priority:

- Integrate sharing of lessons learned into the 2026 State of the Science workshop or hold a series of smaller meetings leading up to the workshop.
- Make "lessons learned" a standing agenda item for future E-TWG meetings.
- Develop a smaller, short-term Specialist Committee to continue fleshing out how the E-TWG could address this priority.

Discussion

- Enabling an open space to regularly share lessons learned could help facilitate knowledge sharing between developers and make pre-construction processes such as permitting more efficient for future projects. There is more opportunity and willingness to share information between developers now than there has been historically.
- There is a need for additional peer-reviewed literature documenting lessons learned from early projects.

- Collecting lessons learned from pre- and post-project monitoring could make these data collection efforts more efficient and effective.
- A first step could be a focus group with just one category of stakeholders in the room (e.g., federal agencies). As a convener of several different stakeholders, the E-TWG is in a great position to collect lessons learned from smaller groups of stakeholders and share them.
- Developers were required to submit a data availability plan as part of NYS's fifth OSW solicitation. There is an opportunity to develop guidance for the future around the data that should be included in these plans. A template could also be developed that lays out the required information (e.g., data type, collection method) and relates it back to the research question(s) being addressed.

Develop recommendations to inform NPI/mitigation efforts

Discussion

- When in the process is it established that industry makes an NPI commitment? How are those commitments being captured? What species or needs are being identified? How is the potential ecological uplift identified? The federal member who posed these questions added that when NPI commitments are made on the front end, it limits the federal agencies' ability to have conversations with industry that are productive to permitting. A developer member shared that NPI commitments are often part of global goals set by companies at the highest level. NPI commitments can then be used as a metric to show investors that companies are meeting their goals. Thus, developers may view NPI and compensatory mitigation as being part of two different worlds (financial investors and permitting, respectively).
- What is the end goal for industry? Relating back to the communications and lessons learned priorities, how do we message here in the US that NPI is benefiting other species and not just ESA-listed species? Several developer members shared that their companies approach NPI on a project-by-project basis.
- Because developers are already working on this through global commitments, the E-TWG or RWSC could potentially develop a menu of NPI options that might be priorities for NYS (e.g., wetland restoration around cables). Developers considering pursuing NPI could then look through this list and know which NPI activities will be approved. Kate McClellan Press clarified that NPI is encouraged, not required. There is no associated plan that must be approved by NYSERDA.
- One challenge for developers is that NPI commitments are made at the beginning of the solicitation process, whereas mitigation and Article 7 consultations with USFWS are at the end of the process. Balancing these financial commitments can be an obstacle for European firms striving to meet their NPI goals while also navigating the US regulatory environment.
 - A federal member expressed their concern about developers not making financial commitments to pursue NPI efforts because they are worried about meeting their mitigation needs at the end of the solicitation process. This member offered to discuss potential mitigation with interested developer members to help alleviate these concerns.

2024 State of the Science Workshop

Julia Gulka (BRI) shared an update on the 2024 State of the Science Workshop. This year's workshop was held July 16-19 at Stony Brook University in Long Island, New York and was the first to include a fisheries track. It also included a new Student Equity Fund that supported the participation of five students. NYSERDA plans to continue incorporating, and potentially expanding, this fund for future workshops. The workshop consisted of fourteen symposia sessions, thirteen oral presentation and discussion sessions, fifty-seven posters, and seven side meetings and had the highest attendance of any State of the Science event to date, including options for both in-person and virtual participation. All sessions were recorded and are posted to the [E-TWG website](#). Aside from some minor logistical challenges (e.g., issues with shuttles to and from the university), the State of the Science planning committee has received positive feedback on the event.

Discussion

- An E-TWG member shared that the logistical challenges were not noticeable to attendees. Stony Brook University was not difficult to get to and attendees enjoyed the set up at this venue. Attendees that stayed further away from campus did not think that traveling back and forth to the venue was a significant concern.
- A developer member thanked USFWS for the side meeting the agency hosted before the workshop. This member felt the meeting did a great job building off topics discussed during E-TWG meetings and that it led to greater understanding of processes and opportunities.

2026 State of the Science Workshop Planning

Venue Options

Following the success of the 2024 Workshop, E-TWG support staff have begun preliminary planning efforts for the next workshop, to be held in 2026. The first decision to be made for the 2026 workshop is to choose a venue. The State of the Science planning committee intends to continue holding workshops at universities, as they are equipped to handle the high turnout and encourage student participation.

E-TWG members were invited to provide feedback on the following venue options for the 2026 workshop:

Option 1: Stony Brook University:

- Large ballrooms and auditoriums are available for the sessions, but posters can only remain up during the poster receptions.
- The on-campus hotel cannot accommodate all attendees and dorm rooms are not a viable option.
- Shuttles would be needed for attendees staying at hotels further away from campus.
- Long Island can be challenging to access in the summer and there are limited food options nearby.
- The university is near OSW activities, so there may be opportunities for field trips to OSW sites or to tour university laboratories.

Option 2: University at Albany:

- Large ballrooms are available for the sessions and posters can remain up throughout the workshop.
- Dorm rooms are available for attendees at a low cost and there are several hotels within walking distance from campus. There are also more food options available on or near the campus.
- Transportation to Albany may be more difficult or expensive for attendees.
- The university is not located near any ongoing OSW activity, but there may be other potential options for field trips (e.g., weather stations).

Discussion

E-TWG members provided the following suggestions for the 2026 workshop:

- Sunrise Wind will be completely out of Long Island by 2026, so there will not be much activity to see during a potential field trip.
- Stony Brook University has a lot of laboratories working on OSW-related research, which could be an onsite activity for attendees and may also increase student engagement. University at Albany may also have ongoing OSW-related research efforts.
- Finding food was a challenge during the 2024 workshop, as local options were limited and some attendees struggled to find vegetarian options. Developing a food recommendation list may help to alleviate this. Pending venue approval, hosting food trucks on campus throughout the workshop may also be a viable option.
- Has there been any serious discussion with other states who might be willing to host the workshop? Answer from NYSERDA: Because of the way the workshop is funded, NYSERDA must keep the workshop within the state. NYSERDA has explored options for co-funding and sponsorships but legally cannot move forward with either.
- Did the 2024 workshop meet the maximum attendance capacity at Stony Brook University? Stony Brook University has a capacity of 430. The planning committee oversold registration for the 2024 workshop, anticipating that not all those who registered would attend. There is adequate space at both universities if the workshop continues to grow.
- Are there any viable venues in the Great Lakes region? Would hosting the workshop in the Great Lakes align with NYS's Great Lakes OSW Plan? Answer from NYSERDA: The Great Lakes Assessment found that it is not the best time to pursue OSW in the Great Lakes, so the optics of hosting the workshop in this region would not make the most sense.

Workshop Theme and Format

The State of the Science planning committee is also seeking E-TWG input on the theme and format of the 2026 workshop. Prior to the 2024 workshop, the State of the Science planning committee discussed alternating between the traditional conference structure and a workshop primarily comprised of working sessions, or a combination of the two formats. The 2020 workshop was mainly structured around these working sessions.

Discussion

E-TWG members provided the following suggestions for the 2026 workshop:

- Several members expressed support for a working group-focused format.
- Attendees found themselves wanting to get together and discuss topics further but found it difficult to do so during the 2024 workshop.

- There are many commonalities between this workshop and the State of the Science for the Pacific. The group in the Pacific is likely not able to host a workshop in 2025, but it would be a great opportunity if the two groups could host workshops in alternate years. Kate McClellan Press noted that she shared NYSERDA's planning materials with the group in the Pacific and agreed that alternating between the coasts each year would be a great idea.
- A member expressed support for integrating lessons learned into the workshop theme.
- Working sessions on different taxonomic groups could be a good opportunity for attendees to discuss not only what they are seeing, but also how they can develop deliverables that will help decisionmakers, regulators, and developers do something with this information.
- A member expressed appreciation for the indigenous perspectives session during the 2024 workshop and noted that they would like to keep seeing this perspective in future workshops. The 2026 workshop might also be an opportunity to hear about the Environmental Justice (EJ)-TWG's Empowering Potential study. Kate McClellan Press added that NYSERDA is actively working on better incorporating the tribal nations into the planning process for future meetings.
- Federal agencies will likely experience funding and staff cuts under the new administration, so strong virtual participation options will be key. Kate McClellan Press noted that the live streaming during the 2024 workshop was successful. The planning committee will look into additional options for remote participation, as well as cutting costs for in-person attendance.
- Is there an opportunity to learn more about what kinds of international monitoring is ongoing for birds and bats, and if anything is being incorporated here in the U.S.? Kate Williams noted that the Conference on Wind Energy and Wildlife Impacts (CWW) will be held in Montpellier, France next September. This conference typically hosts a primarily international audience and has a virtual attendance option.

Update on Environmental Mitigation Plans

Kate McClellan Press (NYSERDA) shared that with the proposed New York transmission solution ("Public Policy Transmission Need", or PPTN), there is a possibility that generation will be separate from transmission in the next NYS OSW solicitation. This allows NYSERDA the opportunity to re-evaluate the entire process and further determine what information is still important to ask for in mitigation plans and what can be removed. The RWSC plans to hold meetings focused on solicitation requirements between states and industry and states and federal agencies in early 2025; these meetings will serve as a starting point for NYSERDA's re-evaluation process. NYSERDA wants the State's sixth solicitation to be informed by what they know about the PPTN and thus do not yet have a timeline for the solicitation.

Discussion

- Does this apply to current mitigation plans? Kate Press indicated that no, existing contracts would stay the same. This would be a change to what NYSERDA is asking for in future solicitations.

Other E-TWG and NYSERDA Activities

E-TWG Charter Update

Kate Williams (BRI) provided an overview of the proposed updates to the E-TWG charter. The charter has not been updated since it was initially drafted in 2018 to outline the scope and structure of the E-TWG.

Proposed changes to the charter include the following:

- Expand the geographic scope of the E-TWG to span the Atlantic coast from Maine to North Carolina.
- Clearly define the intersection between the E-TWG and RWSC.
- Expand the mechanisms by which the E-TWG identifies and pursues priorities, beyond the creation of Specialist Committees and the continuation of biennial State of the Science Workshops.
- No longer require equal numbers of E-TWG members by sector.
- Clarify the E-TWG's relationship with other NYS agencies.
- Add an RWSC representative and an F-TWG liaison as official members of the E-TWG.

Most of the proposed changes relate to codifying items that have been discussed with the E-TWG in the past. Members are encouraged to share additional feedback on the charter with E-TWG support staff.

Discussion

- Several members voiced their support for inviting representatives from RWSC and the F-TWG liaison to be official E-TWG members.
- With Canada moving forward on OSW efforts, is there any interest in adding them as E-TWG members? Kate Williams noted that there are several Canadian members of RWSC's Birds and Bats subcommittee. NYSERDA indicated that they would consider inviting Canadian representatives in the future.
- Has there been any discussion around adding a representative from ROSA as a new E-TWG member, or having them sit in at meetings? Kate Williams noted that ROSA participates in the F-TWG. Kate McClellan Press added that she and Morgan Brunbauer (NYSERDA) try to attend F-TWG and E-TWG meetings, respectively, to share both perspectives. She indicated that she and Morgan could discuss where it might be most appropriate to bring ROSA into the E-TWG.
- Should the E-TWG expect Morgan Brunbauer (NYSERDA) to provide brief updates on F-TWG activities at future E-TWG meetings, and vice versa for future F-TWG meetings (i.e., Kate McClellan Press share updates on E-TWG activities at future F-TWG meetings)? Kate Press noted that she and Morgan have done this in the past and can provide more of these brief updates in future meetings if there is interest from the TWGs. She added that F-TWG meetings are structured differently than E-TWG meetings (e.g., more topic-focused) and she does not know when the F-TWG plans to update its charter.
- Is there an interest in having representation from BOEM or the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSSE) in the E-TWG? An E-TWG member added that it could be beneficial to have BSSE staff attend E-TWG meetings from a stakeholder management perspective. Kate Williams indicated that representatives from BOEM are on the E-TWG and have attended some E-TWG meetings. NYSERDA indicated a willingness to pursue inviting

representatives from BSSE to join the E-TWG. E-TWG members should reach out to E-TWG support staff with any recommendations for individuals from BOEM and/or BSSE that may be interested in joining the E-TWG.

Master Plan 2.0 Studies

Kate McClellan Press (NYSERDA) provided an update on the Master Plan 2.0 environmental and fisheries studies that were completed in October 2023. Because NYSERDA no longer has a need to ask BOEM for new lease areas, they plan to revisit Master Plan 2.0. NYSERDA will likely publish the completed Master Plan 2.0 studies, but they might be framed differently because the state will be asking for different things than originally anticipated. The oceanographic study is currently under final review; NYSERDA hopes to make it available for E-TWG review in late Q1 or early Q2 of 2025.

Kate also noted that NYSERDA is downloading data from federal websites that might be removed next year under the new administration. E-TWG members that have suggestions for high priority data sets to download should reach out to Kate via email.

Discussion

- An E-TWG member noted that all citations included in Construction and Operations Plans are required to be available to BOEM, so BOEM may be able to easily transfer this data to NYSERDA.

New York Transmission Solicitation

Kate McClellan Press (NYSERDA) shared that the New York Independent System Operator (NYISO) recently put out a solicitation for Public Policy Transmission Projects to deliver at least 4,770 megawatts of OSW generation into New York City by 2033. NYISO is currently reviewing the twenty-eight proposals received.

In support of this process, NYSERDA convened a working group of New York State, local, and federal agencies to address constraints to transmission cable routes, identify potential permitting requirements, and look at potential timelines. This group meets approximately monthly. Additionally, NYSERDA released a Request for Information (RFI) to identify opportunities for further efficiencies in OSW transmission development (e.g., pre-development activities that can inform permitting, reduce costs, and/or shorten timelines). Comments are due by December 20, 2024; E-TWG members can submit any additional comments after the deadline to Kate Press via email.

Whale Communications Committee

Kate Williams provided an update on Whales Communications Specialist Committee activities. To date, sixteen FAQ responses have been published in several iterations of the committee's FAQ document. An additional seventeen FAQ responses are currently either under development or review. The Committee plans to end this effort with one final round of topics to be developed, continuing to revise and publish updates responses over the next several months. Committee efforts are expected to wrap up in the spring of 2025. E-TWG members are encouraged to share suggestions for final FAQ topics with E-TWG support staff as soon as possible.

Wrap Up

Bennett Brooks and Kate McClellan Press wrapped up the meeting by thanking all attendees for participating in today's meeting. Both also provided reminders on the following:

- E-TWG members are encouraged to provide feedback on the Cooling Water Use study by December 20, 2024.
- E-TWG members interested in providing feedback on the E-TWG charter should submit comments to support staff by January 15, 2025.
- Support staff will follow up with the E-TWG regarding next steps for the prioritization process.

Appendix A: List of Participants

Point of Contact	Organization	Stakeholder Type	Role
Kate McClellan Press	NYSERDA	State Government	Convener/chair
Carmen Bernett	Invenergy	Developer	Advisor
Isabella Betancourt	New York Department of State	State Government	Observer
Koen Broker	Shell Renewables	Developer	Advisor
Colleen Brust	New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection	State Government	Observer
Candice Cook-Ohryn	Shell Renewable Power and Energy Solutions	Developer	Advisor
David Cox	North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission	State Government	Observer
Kira Dacanay	National Marine Fisheries Service	Federal Government	Observer
Ross Diamond	Invenergy	Developer	Observer
Jennifer Dupont	Equinor	Developer	Advisor
Hollie Emery	Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management	State Government	Observer
Mike Evans	Orsted	Developer	Advisor
Catherine Fede	NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation	State Government	Observer
J Christopher Haney	National Audubon Society	eNGO	Advisor
Megan Hayes	Atlantic Shores	Developer	Advisor
Amber Hewett	National Wildlife Federation	eNGO	Advisor
Jennifer Holmes	DNREC	State Government	Observer
Scott Johnston	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Federal Government	Observer
Francine Kershaw	Natural Resources Defense Council	eNGO	Advisor
Atma Khalsa	Avangrid Renewables	Developer	Advisor
Jesse Kolodin	NJBPU	State Government	Observer
Scott Lawton	Dominion Energy	Developer	Advisor
Kristi Lieske	DE Dept. of Natural Resources and Environmental Control	State Government	Observer
Carl Lobue	The Nature Conservancy	eNGO	Advisor
Becca Loomis	Natural Resources Defense Council	eNGO	Observer
Elizabeth Marsjanik	Vineyard Offshore	Developer	Advisor
Caitlin McGarigal	New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection	State Government	Observer
Darrell Oakley	Equinor	Developer	Advisor
Kimberly Peters	Ørsted	Developer	Advisor
Meghan Rickard	NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation	State Government	Observer
Nick Sisson	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	Federal Government	Observer
Autumn Smith	Invenergy	Developer	Observer
Joel Southall	RWE Renewable Americas	Developer	Advisor
Shayna Steingard	National Wildlife Federation	eNGO	Advisor
Allyn Sullivan	Attentive Energy	Developer	Advisor
Sarah Trabue	Wildlife Conservation Society	eNGO	Advisor
Sebastian Valez	Total Energies Renewables	Developer	Advisor
Stephanie Vail Muse	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Federal Government	Observer
Sharon Whitesell	Ørsted	Developer	Advisor
Bailey Wild	NJBPU	State Government	Observer

Support Staff

Bennett Brooks (Consensus Building Institute)
Eleanor Eckel (Biodiversity Research Institute)
Julia Gulka (Biodiversity Research Institute)
Erin Maloney (The Cadmus Group)
Mary McElroy (Biodiversity Research Institute)
Kate Williams (Biodiversity Research Institute)

NYSERDA Staff

Morgan Brunbauer (NYSERDA)
Kristin France (NYSERDA)

Other Attendees

Emily Shumchenia (Regional Wildlife Science Collaborative)

Appendix B: Meeting Agenda

New York Environmental Technical Working Group (E-TWG)

Meeting Agenda - 5 December 2024

9:30 am - 4:30 pm EDT

Building Energy Exchange, 31 Chambers St, New York, New York

Meeting Objectives

Identify E-TWG priorities for 2025-2027; obtain feedback on a range of other E-TWG and NYSERDA activities.

<u>Time</u>	<u>Agenda Item</u>
9:30 - 10:00 am	<i>Breakfast Social (coffee and light refreshments provided)</i>
10:00 - 10:20 am	Welcome
10:20 - 10:50 am	New York State Offshore Wind
10:50 am - 12:15 pm	Prioritization of E-TWG Efforts 2025-2027 – Part 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Goals and Recap of Prioritization Activities to Date• Survey Results• Collaboration Opportunities with RWSC• Group Discussion
12:15 - 1:15 pm	<i>Lunch (provided on site)</i>
1:15 - 2:00 pm	Prioritization of E-TWG Efforts 2025-2027 – Part 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group Discussion and Next Steps
2:00 - 2:30 pm	2024 State of the Science Workshop Debrief
2:30 - 3:00 pm	<i>Coffee Break</i>
3:00 - 3:30 pm	Update on Environmental Mitigation Plans
3:30 - 4:15 pm	Other E-TWG and NYSERDA Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cooling Converter Study• E-TWG Charter Update• Masterplan 2.0 Oceanographic Study• New York Transmission Solicitation
4:10 - 4:30 pm	Wrap Up & Next Steps