



February 13, 2023

**Submitted electronically via ITP.harlacher@noaa.gov.**

Jolie Harrison, Chief  
Permits and Conservation Division  
Office of Protected Resources  
National Marine Fisheries Service

**RE: NOAA-NMFS-2022-0044 - Notice of Intent to Prepare a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Identification of Aquaculture Opportunity Areas in Federal Waters of the Gulf of Mexico - Document 87 FR 33124**

Dear Ms. Harrison:

Friends of Animals submits this comment in response to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) "Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Marine Site Characterization Surveys in the New York Bight," [hereinafter, "Notice"] issued on January 13, 2023. Friends of Animals is a non-profit international advocacy organization incorporated in the state of New York since 1957. Friends of Animals has nearly 200,000 members worldwide. Friends of Animals, and its members, seek to free animals from cruelty and exploitation around the world, and to promote a respectful view of non-human, free-living and domestic animals and wildlife throughout the world.

### **FACTUAL BACKGROUND**

In the Notice, it is stated that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), a division of the NOAA and acting on NOAA's behalf "received a request from Bluepoint Wind, LLC for authorization to take marine mammals incidental to marine site characterization surveys in coastal waters off of New York and New Jersey in the New York Bight."<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the surveys is to study and evaluate the region for future development wind energy facilities and assess for whether an Incidental Harassment Authorization (IHA) should be issued. The surveys will include applied acoustic testing

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<sup>1</sup> National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, *Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals to Marine Site Characterization Surveys in the New York Bight*, 88 FR 2325 (January 13, 2023).

using “booms” and “sparkers.”<sup>2</sup> While wind energy has a positive effect for the environment, it is not without adverse effects.

Since December, 2022, 18 whales have been stranded on the shores of coastal New Jersey.<sup>3</sup> While there have been incidents of stranding in the past, the current number is significantly larger than previously experienced. In January alone, three humpback whales washed ashore in New Jersey, a high number considering only 23 had experienced the same fate in the years before, dating back to 2016.<sup>4</sup> Wind energy proponents point to net entanglement and boat strikes, and do not seek to explore the issue beyond this conclusion. However, the increase in whale deaths that came immediately after offshore wind energy development began in December should not be overlooked.

It is well known that the region is a habitat for multiple populations of whales and other marine mammals. It is also well known that whales and other marine mammals are sentient and highly intelligent creatures, with a complex system of sonography and echolocation used for communication and travel. It has also been documented that use of sonography by humans for human activities, such as military operations and sonographic geography surveys preceding off shore development, can interfere with marine mammals ability to utilize their echolocation and sonographic abilities to travel and communicate. Friends of Animals strongly urges NOAA and NMFS to postpone any IHA for wind energy activities until more in depth studies have been conducted to determine the effect such activities have on the marine mammals in the region and whether additional mitigation measure could be utilized to protect marine mammals.

## DISCUSSION

In the Notice, NMFS notes that the proposed activity falls under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), passed to establish a national policy to prevent the decline of marine mammal species and population stocks caused by human activities. All marine mammals are protected under the MMPA. The goal of the MMPA is to ensure that human activities do not diminish the marine mammal species and populations to a point at which such species and populations are no longer a significant functioning element of the ecosystem in which they exist.<sup>5</sup> A “take” of a marine mammal under the MMPA is defined as conduct that would be to “harass, hunt, capture, or kill, or attempt to harass, hunt, capture

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<sup>2</sup> Notice at p. 2328, Table 1.

<sup>3</sup> “Pleas to pause wind farm plans over whale deaths have fallen on deaf ears,” Kayla Bailey, *Fox News*, published Feb. 3, 2023. at: <https://www.foxnews.com/media/pleas-pause-wind-farms-plans-whaltes-deaths-fallen-deaf-ears-nj-mayo-reeks-hypocrisy>.

<sup>4</sup> “Whale deaths along East Coast prompt 12 NJ Mayors call for offshore wind farm moratorium,” Amanda Oglesby and Dan Radel, *Asbury Park Press*, published Jan. 31, 2023. at: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2023/01/31>.

<sup>5</sup> NOAA Fisheries, *Laws & Policies: Marine Mammal Protection Act*, <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/laws-policies#marine-mammal-protection-act> (viewed on February 10, 2023).

or kill” any marine mammal. Proposed conduct regulated by the MMPA is “any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance, which has the potential to: 1) injure a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild (Level A harassment); or 2) disturb a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild by causing disruption of behavioral patterns, including migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering (Level B harassment).<sup>6</sup> The significant increase in whale deaths shows that issuing the IHA will invariably lead to both Level A and Level B harassment of marine mammals.

While NOAA and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) have not yet attributed whale deaths to wind energy activities, the fact that there is no agreement demands that NMFS not issue an IHA for incidental takes until there is scientific consensus that the whale deaths are not related to wind energy facilities and activities. Ocean noise related to underwater seabed mapping, soil borings, turbine construction, and other wind energy related activities must be considered as contributing factors to the whale deaths. The absence of consensus, and superficial investigation and conclusions, supports that there must be further study to determine if the whale strandings, deaths, entanglements, and boat strikes are related to the ocean noise from wind energy activities.

Friends of Animals strongly opposes the issuing of an IHA permit until there is a consensus of the cause of the multiple whale deaths and the role played by wind energy activities. This includes the role such activities may have on the ability of whales to navigate and communicate in the region and whether it makes it more likely that whales will beach themselves and have difficulty avoiding hazards, such as boats and fishing equipment.

### **CONCLUSION**

Friends of Animals urges NMFS to thoroughly analyze all potential impacts wind energy activities will have on marine mammals in the New York Bight. This is critical given the increase in the number of whale deaths. In the absence of analysis, Friends of Animals urges NMFS to deny the request for an IHA for such activities.

Sincerely,  
Rob Huss  
Senior Attorney  
Friends of Animals  
Wildlife Law Program

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<sup>6</sup> *Id.*



*Responsible Offshore Development Alliance*

February 13, 2023

Jolie Harrison, Chief  
Permits and Conservation Division  
NMFS Office of Protected Resources  
1315 East-West Highway  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
Via email: [ITP.harlacher@noaa.gov](mailto:ITP.harlacher@noaa.gov)

**Re: Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Marine Site Characterization Surveys in the New York Bight**

Dear Ms. Harrison,

The Responsible Offshore Development Alliance (RODA) submits the following comments regarding the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) incidental harassment authorization (IHA) to take marine mammals incidental to site characterization surveys requested by Bluepoint Wind, LLC (BPW).<sup>1</sup> RODA is a national coalition of independent fishing businesses, associations, companies and community members committed to ensuring the compatibility of new offshore development with their businesses. Members of our coalition operate in federal and state waters and shoreside throughout the New England, Mid-Atlantic, and Pacific coasts.

There are two active Unusual Mortality Events for whales in the Atlantic region: the Atlantic Humpback Whale and the North Atlantic right whale (NARW).<sup>2</sup> Since Dec 1, 2022 there have been 18 reports of large whale strandings on the East Coast, with a concentration of deaths off the coasts of, or on the beaches of, New York and New Jersey.<sup>3</sup> While there is no conclusive evidence that recent whale deaths off NY and NJ are related to activities supporting offshore

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<sup>1</sup> 88 FR 2325 (January 13, 2023).

<sup>2</sup> See <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-life-distress/active-and-closed-unusual-mortality-events> (Accessed Feb. 7, 2023).

<sup>3</sup> See <https://www.npr.org/2023/02/05/1153922137/dead-whale-strandings> (Accessed Feb. 10, 2023)

wind (OSW) development,<sup>4</sup> NMFS must diligently consider if authorization of additional harassment activities should be allowed, given the recent mortalities and active UMEs.

Local elected officials have called for an immediate moratorium on activities in support of OSW development until scientists can assure the public that OSW activities do not pose threats to whales.<sup>5</sup> Environmental groups are calling for similar federal action for a federal probe to better understand the recent whale deaths in the region.<sup>6</sup> This necessarily requires full necropsies on any marine mammals which strand in the area and the release of those findings to the public. With increases in strandings coinciding with activities in support of OSW development, the public is rightfully concerned and asking questions. At a minimum, NMFS should soberly consider if additional authorization for Level B harassment should be permissible given the current circumstances.

Fishermen are extremely concerned about potential impacts to protected resources arising from the development of OSW facilities. We have submitted comments expressing the fishing industry's concerns regarding the process for authorization of marine mammal takes in OSW activities, particularly: (1) in contrast to the strict regulations for marine mammal harassment and takes applied to the fishing industry; and (2) authorizations that are segmented throughout OSW project phases without a cumulative, holistic analytical approach. As you know, many Atlantic fisheries are severely constrained by regulations designed to minimize North Atlantic right whale (NARW) and other protected resource interactions, and any increase in take or harassment of these species will very likely result in further impacts to fishing operations.

### **Lack of Cumulative Effects Analysis and Segmented Process**

Every phase of the OSW development process has the potential to impact marine mammals and other protected species. Each of the activities associated with pre-construction surveys, construction, operations, monitoring surveys, and decommissioning will require some type of

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<sup>4</sup> See -

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/marine-life-distress/frequent-questions-offshore-wind-and-whales#what-is-the-cause-of-recent-whale-deaths-off-new-york-and-new-jersey?-is-it-related-to-offshore-wind-development?> (Accessed Feb 10, 2023)

<sup>5</sup> See Congressman Christopher Smith (NJ-4) -

[https://chrissmith.house.gov/uploadedfiles/2023-01-30\\_letter\\_to\\_secretary\\_raimondo.pdf](https://chrissmith.house.gov/uploadedfiles/2023-01-30_letter_to_secretary_raimondo.pdf); (Accessed Feb 10, 2023)

Congressman Jefferson Van Drew (NJ-2) -

<https://vandrew.house.gov/media/press-releases/congressman-van-drew-demands-all-offshore-wind-activity-end-immediately-until> (Accessed Feb 10, 2023)

Twelve Jersey Shore mayors -

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/12-jersey-shore-mayors-call-for-moratorium-on-offshore-wind-following-whale-deaths/ar-AA16UMg9> (Accessed Feb 10, 2023)

<sup>6</sup> See -

[https://cleanoceanaction.org/fileadmin/editor\\_group1/Issues/Wind/Updated\\_Biden\\_Letter\\_and\\_IHA\\_Factsheet\\_Demanding\\_investigation\\_of\\_dead\\_whales.pdf](https://cleanoceanaction.org/fileadmin/editor_group1/Issues/Wind/Updated_Biden_Letter_and_IHA_Factsheet_Demanding_investigation_of_dead_whales.pdf) (Accessed Feb 10, 2023)

permit or authorization for interaction with protected species. To our knowledge, there are no resources easily accessible to the public to understand what authorizations are required for each of these activities. This is detrimental not only to having a well-informed public who are then asked to provide comment and input, but suggests a lack of cumulative perspective of OSW development activities from numerous projects to our protected resources. We recommend that NMFS improve the transparency of this process and move away from a segmented phase-by-phase and project-by-project approach to IHAs.

The request submitted by BPW is for one of the six lease sites in the New York Bight auctioned in February of 2022. BPW is requesting to take, by Level B Harassment, a total of 11,918 marine mammals. It is not unreasonable to assume the other five leaseholders will seek authorizations to take a similar number,<sup>7</sup> thus totaling roughly 60,000 for the six leases in the New York Bight alone.

### **Increased Uncertainty for Marine Mammal Surveys**

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) has previously determined that the effects on aerial survey coverage for marine mammals, including the North Atlantic Right Whale (NARW), will substantially impact NMFS' ability to continue using current methods to fulfill its mission of precisely and accurately assessing protected species stock status. This will result in an unacceptable level of uncertainty in protected resource management. It will also potentially result in an event that may otherwise be a "harassment" becoming a mortality event, if entanglement response is delayed, hampered, or made impossible and injured whales cannot be successfully disentangled. So too is the cessation of NMFS protected resource surveys a threat to climate science itself; assessment of protected resources and fish stocks over long time series is a key factor in understanding ecosystem health, function and shifts and responses to climate change.

### **Concerns Regarding Treatment of Whales in OSW Permitting**

A major concern is the high amount of increased vessel traffic associated with the lease sites and WEAs throughout the region in areas transited or utilized by certain protected resources. BOEM has also estimated that construction of each future OSW project would require an additional 25-46 vessels per project operating in the proximal geographic area at any given time, and that up to four projects would be under construction at the same time in the next few years.<sup>8</sup> This large increase in traffic would greatly increase the risk of ship strikes to protected and endangered species, including the critically endangered NARW. NMFS has stated that slowing down vessel traffic and reducing ocean noise, as well as reducing risks of entanglements are key

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<sup>7</sup> Given BPW's lease site represents 14.6% of the total acreage auctioned on February 23, 2022 it is not illogical to conclude that lease holders with more acreage will seek authorization to take more than 11,918 mammals.

<sup>8</sup> Vineyard Wind SEIS, p. 3-111.

to regulation and management plans. However, vessel speed restrictions are not fully mandated or enforced for OSW vessels.

While this federal notice is for site characterization activities, it is important to point out that associated increases in vessel noise could contribute to the suite of ongoing stressors impacting the NARW population. Noise has been found to interfere with right whale communication and increase their stress levels. In turn, “females that undergo energetic stress from reproduction may be more susceptible than males to dying from chronic injuries such as those from entanglement or vessel strikes.”<sup>9</sup> Noise from human activities, such as that which would occur with activities associated with wind energy surveys, installation and operation of the proposed project, can disrupt normal behavior of NARWs and may further reduce their ability to identify physical surroundings, find food, navigate, and find mates. In a letter to BOEM dated May 13, 2022, the Chief of Protected Species of NOAA’s Northeast Fisheries Science Center noted “[t]he development of offshore wind poses risks to” the NARW.<sup>10</sup>

The Marine Mammal Commission (MMC) has raised several concerns on other proposed IHAs for OSW development. As they are more knowledgeable on impacts of pile driving and acoustics to marine mammals, we defer to their expertise and recommend NMFS fully review the concerns identified in their public comments.<sup>11</sup> In particular, MMC cites poor analyses such as underestimation of harassment takes from impact and vibratory pile driving, noise, insufficient and incomplete monitoring measures and reporting requirements. As identified, those issues may result in costly closures or strict management restrictions for fisheries. We urge NMFS to use the best available science including the most comprehensive models for estimating marine mammal take and developing robust mitigation measures.

On September 9, 2020, seventeen environmental NGOs submitted a public comment letter outlining several concerns and recommendations related to the IHA for site characterization surveys required for OSW projects. Again, we defer to their expertise but echo their concerns regarding: a) the lack of sufficient data and observations of NARWs and other protected species in the WEAs and associated cable routes that are not sufficiently described by the models used by NMFS, b) the failure to take a cumulative look at take and harassment as there are numerous areas to be developed and each project will submit an IHA, c) the untested proposed mitigation and insufficient monitoring measures intended to minimize impacts to protected species, and d) no long term monitoring plans for marine mammals and protected species. This coalition provided concrete recommendations for improving mitigation measures for surveys, including: (1) to incorporate additional data sources including real-world observational data into calculations of marine mammal density and take; (2) not adjust take numbers downward for large

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<sup>9</sup> See <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species/north-atlantic-right-whale>. (Accessed Feb 10, 2023)

<sup>10</sup> See - [https://newbedfordlight.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/UR1-2023-000009\\_10\\_17\\_2022.pdf](https://newbedfordlight.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/UR1-2023-000009_10_17_2022.pdf). (Accessed Feb 10, 2023)

<sup>11</sup> RODA has cited these comments in previous comment letters.

whales based on unproven mitigation measures; (3) require mitigation measures that meet the least practicable adverse impact standard; and (4) strengthen its vessel speed restrictions. We urge NMFS to ensure that each of these important topics raised by whale experts are fully addressed.

### **Fishermen Will be Affected by Any Protected Resource Take**

Negative impacts to local fishermen and coastal communities as a result of a potentially adverse impacts to marine mammals (e.g. vessel strike resulting in death or severe injury) are not mentioned nor evaluated in the IHA request for this project, and should be included in a comprehensive analysis. The lack of an adequate analysis of individual and cumulative impacts to these protected mammal species is concerning, given that fishermen are already highly restricted in their ability to harvest due to NARWs protections.

The entire fishing industry pays the price to protect highly migratory NARWs, not just those closest to the project area. An impact to NARWs off the South Atlantic will result in impacts to fisheries in Maine, impacts in Cape Cod Bay, impact fishermen in Southern New England, and so on. These reverberating impacts are not addressed in this request.

### **Robust Mitigation and Clarified Accountability Measures**

RODA is appreciative of the efforts OSW developers, NMFS, and others have conducted to develop and adopt mitigation measures to minimize construction impacts to marine mammals. However, the adequacy of these measures, as all information provided to the government by interested private parties, requires robust independent review. For example, multiple studies exist suggesting that Passive Acoustic Monitoring (PAM) has limited success in detecting NARWs due to their infrequent vocalization. The effectiveness of visual observation in detecting NARW is similarly uncertain, particularly since at-sea conditions rarely meet ideal standards (i.e. crew breaks, rough seas, location of spotter vessels, low light, or other factors that limit visual detection). We encourage NMFS to evaluate the proposed IHA with utmost care utilizing the best available science.

Mitigation measures in this IHA request include marine mammal shutdown zones, specific to the activity and marine mammal present in the survey area. For the NARW, the shutdown zone of 500 meters. Even in the most favorable weather conditions, it can be difficult to spot a whale when it is roughly a third-of-a-mile away. In inclement weather, this can be much more so. Because observations will determine if survey activity may commence and/or continue in these zones, further clarification should be included in the IHA that explicitly states if weather or other conditions that limit the range of observation will initiate a shutdown zone.

Fundamental questions still remain regarding what happens if harm exceeds the threshold under the proposed IHA: what can be done if take or harassment surpasses expected levels? Can a



project realistically stop after taxpayers have spent billions of dollars on its development? Fisheries are subject to accountability measures by law – up to and including cessation of all activity – if scientifically-based catch limits are exceeded. What accountability measures will apply to ensure that OSW developers are likewise responsible for their own impacts, and the burdens of those are not also assigned to fishermen, should they occur?

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The fishing industry wants to see the protection of marine mammals and protected species and thus asks that NMFS consideration of IHAs and LOAs for offshore wind developers be applied fairly. First and foremost to protect the marine ecosystems upon which we all rely. Secondly, the OSW industry must be accountable for incidental takes from construction and operations separately from the take authorizations for managed commercial fish stocks. Lastly, there must be a clear IHA threshold for OSW activities regionally and across project phases. With dozens of projects conducting surveys, construction, operation, and decommissioning now and in the next 30+ years, there appears to be no forward-looking plan to address all this new activity that poses a threat to marine mammals and protected species.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



Mike Conroy, West Coast Director



Lane Johnston, Programs Manager

*Responsible Offshore Development Alliance*



ITP Harlacher - NOAA Service Account <itp.harlacher@noaa.gov>

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## Whales

1 message

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**Danielle DeBouter** <dani.debouter@gmail.com>  
To: ITP.harlacher@noaa.gov

Sun, Jan 15, 2023 at 6:27 PM

Please advocate for the stopping of the pre construction and building of wind turbines, as it appears to be harming our sea life. Please put a halt to any further developments until a formal assessment can ensure our ocean life is safe.

Thank you

Danielle DeBouter

Concerned citizen

Sent from my iPhone



ITP Harlacher - NOAA Service Account &lt;itp.harlacher@noaa.gov&gt;

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## IHA and LOA applications

1 message

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**Christine Christopoul** <cchristopoul@bestversionmedia.com>

Mon, Feb 13, 2023 at 6:53 AM

To: ITP.harlacher@noaa.gov

Dear Ms. Harrison.

Good morning.

I am writing regarding the current consideration of future IHA and/or LOA applications for offshore wind.

While I completely understand that the recent, unusually high number of whale deaths may or may not be linked off shore wind surveying and construction, I can not understand how NOAA would not want to take the time to study these activities and the effects they will have on ALL marine life and the ocean's ecosystem in general.

Your mission as indicated on your website says exactly that: To understand and predict changes in climate, weather, ocean, and coast, to share that knowledge and information with others, and to conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems and resources.

Continuing the work of off shore wind projects, without further study, is the exact opposite of your mission. What happens if our country allows construction of thousands of turbines and THEN we realize the ocean ecosystem and marine life - or worse humans - are being harmed? Once billions of dollars are sunk into these projects, there is no going back. Vibration, sound, emissions, oil leaks, changes to the ocean floor, disruption of the seabed, and other factors are all actions that might irreversibly damage our oceans, and therefore have the opposite effect of conserving our resources. Not to mention the oil needed to keep the turbines running and the challenge of disposing of turbines that have outlived their lifespan, both concepts that are not at all "green."

Perhaps the recent whale deaths are not related to off shore wind activity - but what if they are? What if they are the first sign that putting wind turbines in the middle of the ocean is not the answer to our climate woes? Not only would whales be in jeopardy, but potentially thousands of other marine species. And when the balance of the ocean ecosystem is upset, the ripple effect will harm our atmosphere, and in turn, the human population. NOAA should be on the right side of this argument and stay true to its mission. Please refuse any future IHA or LOA applications/issuances until the proper studies can be performed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Christine Christopoul  
Content Coordinator  
Franklin Lakes Living Magazine  
201-259-2687



ITP Harlacher - NOAA Service Account &lt;itp.harlacher@noaa.gov&gt;

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**Blue point IHA comments**

1 message

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**Bonnie Brady** <greenfluke@optonline.net>  
To: ITP.harlacher@noaa.gov

Mon, Feb 13, 2023 at 8:36 PM

Jolie Harrison, Chief,  
Permits and Conservation Division,  
Office of Protected Resources,  
National Marine Fisheries Service

Dear Ms Harrison:

In lieu of multiple recent whale deaths across multiple states where OSW survey work has been permitted, we would like to request that NMFS should refuse any future IHA or LOA applications/issuances until theyl agency completes a cumulative marine mammal noise profile assessment for all present and future OSW survey and construction work in the Atlantic Ocean, to determine whether the cumulative noise/sound effects regionally of survey and construction are more detrimental to marine mammal populations requiring reclassifications of harassment, harm and or injury.

In light of over 21 marine mammal deaths from Massachusetts to North Carolina since November 30 more than half of which have been determined to no human interaction whatsoever, and considering the level of all offshore wind survey work with 12 present IHA's, and additional 2+ surveys plus approximately 10 construction projects, there is very little time left to rule out the possibility that these whales are somehow being affected more so than the science and the modeling would show.

We beseech you to delay this IHA and review and publish the cumulative effects of offshore wind survey work upon marine mammals stocks throughout the Atlantic ocean.

Sincerely,  
Bonnie Brady  
LICFA



ITP Harlacher - NOAA Service Account &lt;itp.harlacher@noaa.gov&gt;

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## Comments on OSW authorizations

1 message

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**muddog@midmaine.com** <muddog@midmaine.com>

Mon, Feb 13, 2023 at 8:00 PM

Reply-To: muddog@midmaine.com

To: ITP.harlacher@noaa.gov

To whom it may concern,

Please do NOT renew or initiate any permits for offshore wind turbines. The ones approved already need to cease while it is investigated about what is killing 2 dozen whales (that we know of). The surveying, pile driving, laying electric cables and the turbines itself is detrimental to marine mammals and our ocean's ecosystem. Today, in fact 2 whales washed up dead. An endangered right whale in VA and a humpback in NJ. Please cease and desist this slaughter until we determine what is killing our precious whales. Do NOT fast track these projects. Please stop them. Expensive, intermittent energy is not a fair trade to cause extinction of endangered right whales and any other species of whales.

Thank you,

Mary Beth de Poutiloff

Po Box 196

Montello, 89830

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Sent from Outlook Email App for Android



ITP Harlacher - NOAA Service Account <itp.harlacher@noaa.gov>

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## Please stop killing the whales

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Miss Montauk <captjamie@missmontauk.com>  
To: ITP.harlacher@noaa.gov

Mon, Feb 13, 2023 at 6:48 PM

**To : Jölle Harrison, Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service,**

I am fed up watching dead whales wash up! In lieu of multiple recent whale deaths across multiple states where OSW survey work has been permitted, NMFS should refuse any future IHA or LOA applications/issuances until they complete a cumulative marine mammal noise profile assessment for **all present and future** OSW survey and construction work in the Atlantic Ocean, to determine whether the cumulative noise/sound effects regionally of survey and construction are more detrimental to marine mammal populations requiring reclassifications of harassment, harm and or injury.

- Sharon Quaresimo

40 Pinetree Drive, Montauk, NY 11954