



NROC Meeting November 18-19, 2025

**Innovate Newport
513 Broadway, Newport, RI 02840**

Briefing Book

Virtual Access Details, p. 9-10

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Participant Agenda

Northeast Regional Ocean Council (NROC) – DAY 1
Meeting Agenda | Tuesday, November 18, 2025
Innovate Newport, Newport, RI
11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

The first day of NROC's meeting on November 18 will feature a series of topics related to the identification of data and mapping priorities, improving ocean data management, and using data in coastal and ocean management and planning. Lunch will be provided.

Objectives:

Increase participation in regional initiatives to prioritize data acquisition and to improve data management related to specific maps and products used to inform decisions.

Emphasize the importance of improved ocean data management and increased data accessibility for ocean management and business decisions.

Participation:

Throughout the NROC meeting, participants can provide feedback and share information verbally (either via the virtual platform or in-person). [The purpose of this form](#) is to collect additional information that participants wish to share (e.g., comments, links, resources). Please enter the information you wish to share under the corresponding agenda heading - this will help NROC staff follow up if needed.

11:00 am **Arrive**

11:15 am **Introductory Presentation by NROC**

Welcome, objectives for the day, and overview of the meeting agenda.

NROC members and staff provide a summary of:

- the fundamental linkage between ocean management decisions and our increasing need to access current information, data, and knowledge to inform those decisions;
- recent case studies demonstrating the need for improved ocean data management; and
- opportunities for NROC and partners to vastly improve the effectiveness of data used in management and business decisions.

Speakers:

- Ted Diers (NH DES) and Lou Chiarella (NOAA Fisheries)
NROC Ocean Planning Committee (OPC) Co-Chairs
- Amy Trice, Emily Shumchenia, and Nick Napoli
NROC Staff

11:45 am	Regional Seafloor Mapping Priorities Update on previously identified seafloor mapping priorities, introducing a revised process for expanding outreach and regularly updating regional seafloor mapping priorities, and a summary of efforts to document and update seafloor maps and products (e.g., SeaScapes, sediment maps) Todd Callaghan (MA CZM), Dan Sampson (MA CZM), Jesse Minor (ME DMR), Matt Dornback (NOAA) <i>Habitat Classification and Ocean Mapping (HCOM) Subcommittee Co-Chairs</i> <u>Speakers:</u> Amy Trice (NROC), Connor Capizzano (Inspire Environmental/Venterra Group), and Marisa Guarinello (Inspire Environmental/Venterra Group)
12:30 pm	Lunch (provided)
1:15 pm	Submerged Archaeological and Cultural Resources Presentation of the literature review of archaeological and cultural resource studies in the Northeast and related geospatial resources for understanding where studies have been conducted. <u>Speakers:</u> Amy Trice (NROC) and Cynthia Fadem (Gray and Pape)
1:45 pm	Redesigned Northeast Ocean Data Portal Presentation of the recently upgraded NE Ocean Data Portal including participant feedback about functionality enhancement and improvements. <u>Speaker:</u> Emily Shumchenia (NROC)
2:15 pm	Break
2:30 pm	Research Coordination and Improving Ocean Data Management – Session 1 Brief presentations followed by panelists answering questions and hearing feedback from virtual participants. In-person participants will then be encouraged to interact with the panelists individually at stations around the room for thirty minutes. <u>Topics and Speakers:</u> • <i>Coordination of marine life research and data collection in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic</i> Julia Dombroski (Regional Wildlife Science Collaborative) • <i>Assessing seafloor data management related to bathymetry, geomorphology, sediment, and habitat products used in decision-making</i> Marisa Guarinello (Inspire Environmental/Venterra Group)

	• <i>Improving marine mammal, sea turtle, and avian data management through OBIS-SEAMAP</i> Jesse Cleary and Sarah DeLand (Duke Marine Geospatial Ecology Lab) • <i>Assessing and improving marine life and habitat data repositories</i> Kate Wing and Rachael Blake (Intertidal Agency)
3:45 pm	Research Coordination and Improving Ocean Data Management – Session 2 Brief presentations followed by panelists answering questions and hearing feedback from virtual participants. In-person participants will then be encouraged to interact with the panelists individually at stations around the room for thirty minutes. <u>Topics and Speakers:</u> • <i>Improving access to USCG marine safety and navigation data and information products</i> R. David Lewald (USCG) • <i>Integrating commercial fisheries dependent data sources to inform decision-making</i> Doug Christel (NOAA Fisheries) • <i>Data governance for fisheries monitoring - benthic imaging and fishing gear methods</i> Mike Pol and Tricia Perez (Responsible Offshore Science Alliance) • <i>Summary of potential methods for collecting or integrating data on recreational boating and fishing patterns</i> Amy Trice (NROC) • <i>Improving access to data on ocean acidification and understanding management and business data needs</i> Nikelene Mclean (NROC)
5:00 pm	End

Northeast Regional Ocean Council (NROC) – DAY 2
Meeting Agenda | Wednesday, November 19, 2025
Innovate Newport, Newport, RI
9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

The second day of NROC’s meeting on November 19 will feature a series of topics related to the use of data in specific coastal and ocean management priorities, emerging ocean technologies, and coastal resilience. Lunch will be provided.

Objectives:

Follow up on day one by considering the regulatory process and data needs for specific current and emerging ocean management issues.

Learn about emerging ocean technologies and businesses in New England that might require coastal and ocean space for support infrastructure and testing or that could be used for monitoring and data collection.

Learn about and provide input on NROC’s and regional partners’ coastal resilience initiatives.

Participation:

Throughout the NROC meeting, participants can provide feedback and share information verbally (either via the virtual platform or in-person). [The purpose of this form](#) is to collect additional information that participants wish to share (e.g., comments, links, resources). Please enter the information you wish to share under the corresponding agenda heading - this will help NROC staff follow up if needed.

9:00 AM	Arrive
9:30 AM	Welcome and Overview of Meeting Agenda <u>Speakers:</u> Brian Thompson (Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection - CT DEEP) and Regina Lyons (Environmental Protection Agency - EPA) <i>NROC State and Federal Co-Chairs</i>
9:45 AM	Updates from the NROC Executive Committee and Federal, State, and Tribal Partners • NROC Co-Chairs and Executive Committee Updates • Key highlights from NROC federal partners • Key highlights from NROC state partners • Key highlights from NROC Tribal partners and the NROC Tribal Caucus

	<u>Speakers:</u> Brian Thompson (CT DEEP), Regina Lyons (EPA), and NROC state, federal, and Tribal partners
10:30 AM	NROC Partner Updates and Opportunities for Collaboration Brief updates from NROC's partners via Memorandum of Understanding <u>Speakers:</u> - Northeast Sea Grant Consortium, <i>Speaker TBD</i> - Northeast Regional Association of Coastal and Ocean Observing Systems (NERACOOS), <i>Speaker TBD</i> - Gulf of Maine Council, <i>Speaker TBD</i>
10:45 AM	Break
11:00 AM	Current and Emerging Ocean Management and Planning Issues The regulatory and policy context for current and emerging ocean management and planning issues, including recent legislation and policy directives related to improvements in the standardization, transparency, and accessibility of ocean data and information for use in decision-making. <u>Speakers:</u> - Ted Diers (NH DES) and Lou Chiarella (NOAA Fisheries) <i>NROC Ocean Planning Committee (OPC) Co-Chairs</i> - Amy Trice and Nick Napoli <i>NROC Staff</i> - Deerin Babb-Brott <i>Consultant</i>
12:00 PM	Lunch Break (provided)
1:00 PM	Emerging Ocean Technologies in New England Emerging ocean technologies in New England and their coastal and ocean planning, infrastructure, and data considerations. <u>Topics and Speakers:</u> <i>The Port of Davisville Master Plan</i> Greg Coren (Director of Engineering and Construction, Quonset Development Corporation) and Joe Riccio (Port Director, Port of Davisville, Quonset Development Corporation)

	• <i>MA Clean Energy Center Investments in Ocean Technology</i> Lisa Engler (MA Clean Energy Center)
2:15 PM	Break
2:30 PM	Regional Coastal Resilience Initiatives NROC's Coastal Hazards Resilience Committee and partners will highlight regional coastal resilience initiatives. Julia Knisel (MA CZM), Dani Boudreau (NOAA), and Gavin Jackson (CT DEEP) <i>NROC Coastal Hazards Resilience (CHR) Co-Chairs</i> <u>Topics and Speakers:</u> • <i>Advancing Living Shorelines in New England</i> Joan LeBlanc (NROC) and Adam Finkle (Woods Hole Group) • <i>Rhode Island Resilience: Resilient Rhody 2025, Regional Resilience Coordinators, and What's Next</i> Kimberly Koriath (Chief Resilience Officer, State of Rhode Island Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management) • <i>Growing Regional Resilience Coordination on Aquidneck Island</i> Paige Myatt (Director of Climate Resilience, Aquidneck Island Land Trust)
4:30 PM	End

Virtual Access Information – Tuesday, November 18

Please see the meeting password and code

Join from the meeting link

<https://innovatenewport.webex.com/innovatenewport/j.php?MTID=m7ee24c30a7797a3f9380209a790c6b6b>

Join by meeting number

Meeting number (access code): 2317 124 9267

Meeting password: Workshop (96757467 when dialing from a phone or video system)

Tap to join from a mobile device (attendees only)

[+1-650-479-3208,23171249267#96757467#](tel:+1-650-479-3208,23171249267#96757467#) United States Toll

Some mobile devices may ask attendees to enter a numeric password.

Join by phone

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[Global call-in numbers](#)

Join from a video system or application

Dial 23171249267@innovatenewport.webex.com

You can also dial 173.243.2.68 and enter your meeting number.

Virtual Access Information – Wednesday, November 19

Please see the meeting password and code

Join from the meeting link

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Meeting number (access code): 2307 529 1131

Meeting password: Workshop (96757467 when dialing from a phone or video system)

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Join by phone

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[Global call-in numbers](#)

Join from a video system or application

Dial [23075291131@innovatenewport.webex.com](tel:23075291131@innovatenewport.webex.com)

You can also dial 173.243.2.68 and enter your meeting number.

Parking Information

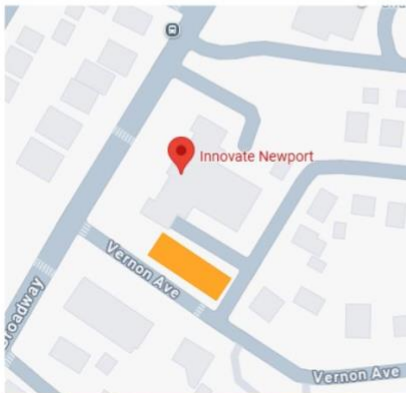
The street address for Innovate Newport is 513 Broadway, Newport, RI 02840.

Parking is available onsite, preferably in the lot on Vernon Avenue. Street parking is also available in the neighborhood. Please use the rear entrance on Vernon Avenue to access the conference room. The front entrance is available if accessibility accommodations are required. Please see the following images for parking, entrance, and accessibility.



Innovate Newport

Conference Hall Entry



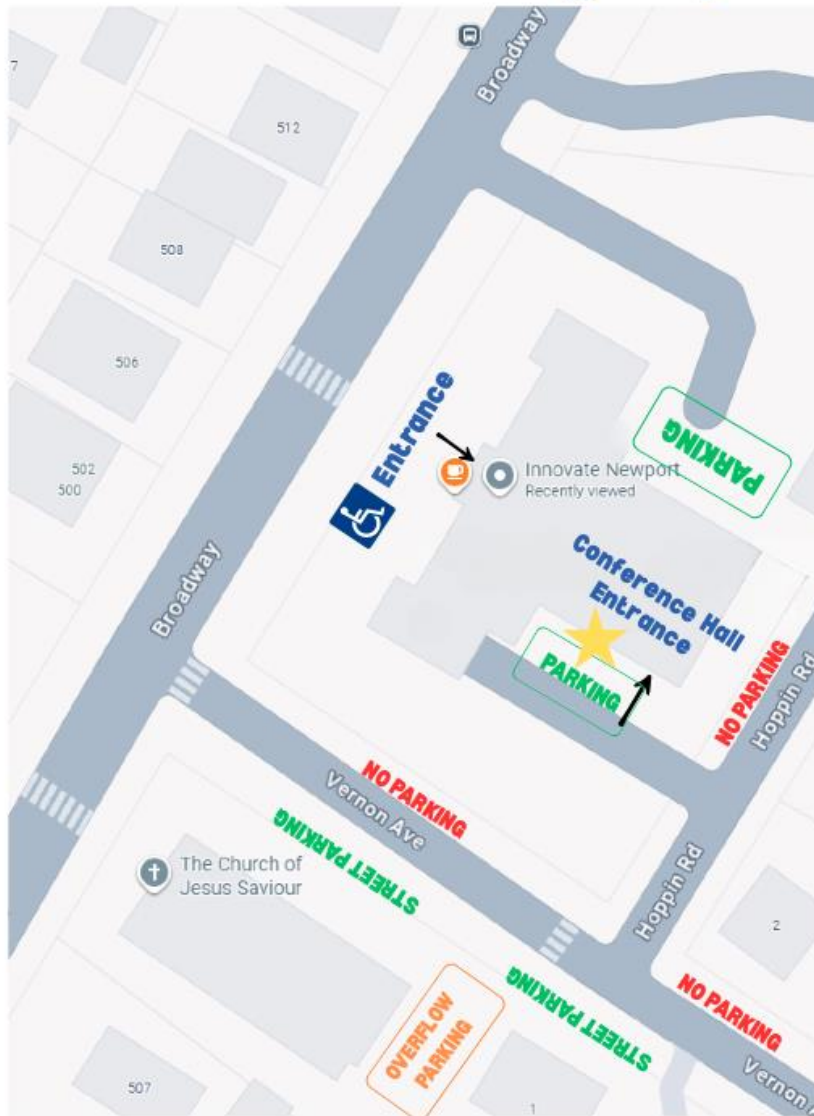
**Park in the lot
off Vernon Ave.**



**Head up the
stairs to enter**

Please reach out to the host if accessibility accommodations are needed.

Entrance & Parking Map



Briefing Materials – November 18, 2025

Regional Seafloor Mapping Priorities

The Habitat Classification and Ocean Mapping (HCOM) Subcommittee, within the Ocean and Coastal Ecosystem Health Committee, coordinates and collaborates on the seafloor mapping and data needs of New England. The goal is to acquire high-quality, regional seafloor data to produce mapping products for ongoing and emerging management challenges. Working with regional partners, HCOM works to update associated seafloor mapping priorities for the Northeast to inform and guide state and federal investments in seafloor mapping and characterization as well as highlight where data gaps are within the region for future mapping. Collaboration and information sharing on ongoing mapping efforts as well as new and emerging technologies for mapping and data processing are also shared frequently among Subcommittee members. The latest work will be presented in greater detail during the NROC meeting including:

- An update on previously identified seafloor mapping priorities
- Introducing a revised process for expanding outreach to additional sectors and regional partners to identify mapping needs and regularly updating regional seafloor mapping priorities
- A summary of efforts to document and update seafloor maps and products (e.g., SeaScapes, sediment maps)
- Coordination with researchers, data collectors, and technology providers to better understand options for seafloor data applications

Submerged Archaeological and Cultural Resources

At the request of Tribes, states, and federal agency Ocean Planning Committee members, the Submerged Archaeological and Cultural Resources Workgroup is focusing on coordinating regional approaches to assessing archeological and cultural resources, identifying information gaps, and initiating projects that will improve the collective understanding and the use of information in management, decision making, and permitting. The geographic focus of this work is coastal areas and state and federal waters from Maine through Connecticut.

NROC staff and partners are making progress on several of the tasks defined last year by the Workgroup. Gray and Pape were chosen to advance tasks defined by experts within the Workgroup and will present preliminary results of the literature review and synthesis of existing literature on historical sea levels, marine archaeology, geological and geophysical survey data, paleolandscape reconstructions, seafloor mapping, and sea-level modeling during the Fall Meeting. A similar presentation was also recently provided to NROC's Tribal Caucus. Results of this initial work will inform future data development for the Northeast Ocean Data Portal for planning, management, and permitting informed by Workgroup members. After the presentations, we plan to reconvene the Workgroup to discuss initial findings and next steps.

If you are interested in being engaged in this work, please reach out to NROC staff.

Northeast Ocean Data Portal

NROC launched a redesign of the [Northeast Ocean Data Portal](#) in September of 2025. The redesigned site includes an updated web presence, modernized information technology infrastructure to store and serve data, and the ability to provide additional context about the maps and data available through the site while maintaining much of the same content and functionality as in the previous site.

NROC released the redesigned site after many months of planning and coordination with NROC's committees, project teams, and Portal users. NROC held [webinars](#) to obtain user feedback and review progress along the way. Many more ideas for Portal improvements were shared from the user community, and NROC will continue implementing as many new and refined features and functions as possible. Use the contact@northeastoceandata.org email to get in touch with us with any questions or feedback on the new site.

The newly redesigned site includes five main components:

[Topic Pages](#)

Topic pages describe the Portal's [17 main categories of data](#), including 8 Marine Life & Habitat Topics and 9 Human Dimensions Topics. Each Topic page provides key information about data updates, data sources and providers, subtopics, data considerations, data status, examples of data, and links to view the data in the Data Explorer.

[Data Explorer Interactive Map](#)

The [Data Explorer](#) interactive map enables Portal users to visualize any combination of data from the 17 Topics. The maps show the richness and diversity of the ecosystem and illustrate the many ways that humans and environmental resources interact.

[Get Data](#)

Most of the data layers that are viewable on the Data Explorer are also available to use on other platforms such as desktop GIS. The [Get Data](#) page provides links to either download databases hosted by the Portal or access the data from external sources.

[Agency Actions](#)

In coordination with US federal agencies, the Portal provides data to inform public review processes for selected agency actions pertaining to the Northeast region. The [Agency Actions pages](#) provide centralized access to these resources, which can be used by individuals and organizations when submitting public comments.

[Updates](#)

Check the [Updates page](#) for information about changes to the Portal's data resources and Agency Actions pages. [Subscribe](#) to the [Portal newsletter](#) to receive periodic email summaries of updates.

Research Coordination and Improving Ocean Data Management

NROC is working with project teams, advised by workgroups or subcommittees, to coordinate research and improve the management of ocean data that are integrated into specific maps, models, and data products that are used to inform management, regulatory, and business decisions in the region. NROC investments in specific data infrastructure and workflows will increase the accessibility of a wider variety of data collections and support more efficient and frequent updates to models and data products, ensuring that information shown in the Portal and used in decision making are more current and accurate.

These two agenda sessions will include brief presentations by project teams or partners working to improve ocean data management for specific topics. Presentations will include a summary of why the project is necessary, including the decisions and products that will benefit from improved data management, what the project team is specifically doing to improve ocean data management, and how meeting participants can inform and implement the data management recommendations. After the presentation, meeting participants will be encouraged to engage with the panelists individually at stations around the room for thirty minutes or after the meeting.

Topics and speakers include:

- *Coordination of marine life research and data collection in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic*
Julia Dombroski (Regional Wildlife Science Collaborative)
- *Assessing seafloor data management related to bathymetry, geomorphology, sediment, and habitat products used in decision-making*
Marisa Guarinello (Inspire Environmental/Venterra Group)
- *Improving marine mammal, sea turtle, and avian data management through OBIS-SEAMAP*
Jesse Cleary and Sarah DeLand (Duke Marine Geospatial Ecology Lab)
- *Assessing and improving marine life and habitat data repositories*
Kate Wing and Rachael Blake (Intertidal Agency)
- *Improving access to USCG marine safety and navigation data and information products*
R. David Lewald (USCG)
- *Integrating commercial fisheries dependent data sources to inform decision-making*
Doug Christel (NOAA Fisheries)
- *Data governance for fisheries monitoring - benthic imaging and fishing gear methods*
Mike Pol and Tricia Perez (Responsible Offshore Science Alliance)
- *Summary of potential methods for collecting or integrating data on recreational boating and fishing patterns*
Amy Trice (NROC)
- *Improving access to data on ocean acidification and understanding management and business data needs*
Nikelene Mclean (NROC)

NROC Outreach, Research Coordination, and Expert Input on Data Management & Products

NROC	NROC (via RWSC Subcommittees)
Ports, shipping, and maritime	Marine mammals
Recreational boating & fishing	Birds & bats
Commercial fishing	Sea turtles
Energy & infrastructure	Habitat & ecosystem
Telecommunications	Protected fish
Aquaculture	Technology
National security	Data governance for marine life & habitat
Seafloor mapping (via HCOM)	
Submerged archaeological and cultural resources	
Coastal vegetation	
Coastal resilience and sand	

Briefing Materials – November 19, 2025

NROC Executive Committee – NROC Funding Status Update – November 2025

NROC Funding from Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)

1. NOAA-NOS-OCM-2022-2007464
 - Project: *Implementation and Coordination of Coastal and Ocean Management Priorities for the Northeastern United States via the Northeast Regional Ocean Council*
 - Total Award: \$3,924,563
 - Leads: NROC (via Coastal States Stewardship Foundation as fiscal sponsor). Projects are led by the NROC Executive Committee, Coastal Hazards Resilience Committee (CHRC), Ocean and Coastal Ecosystem Health Committee (OCEH), and Ocean Planning Committee (OPC)
 - Funding Period: December 2022 - November 2025
2. NOAA-NOS-OCM-2024-2008310
 - Project: *Implementation and Coordination of Coastal and Ocean Management Priorities for the Northeastern United States via the Northeast Regional Ocean Council*
 - Total Award: \$1,963,233
 - Leads: NROC (via Coastal States Stewardship Foundation as fiscal sponsor). Projects are led by the NROC Executive Committee, Coastal Hazards Resilience Committee (CHRC), Ocean and Coastal Ecosystem Health Committee (OCEH), and Ocean Planning Committee (OPC)
 - Funding Period: December 2024 - November 2026
3. NOAA-NOS-OCM-2025-29789
 - Project: *Implementation and Coordination of Coastal and Ocean Management Priorities for the Northeastern United States via the Northeast Regional Ocean Council*
 - Total Award: \$1,963,233
 - Leads: NROC (via Coastal States Stewardship Foundation as fiscal sponsor). Projects are led by the NROC Executive Committee, Coastal Hazards Resilience Committee (CHRC), Ocean and Coastal Ecosystem Health Committee (OCEH), and Ocean Planning Committee (OPC)
 - Funding Period: October 2025 - November 2027
4. FY2025 NOAA Regional Ocean Data Sharing/Regional Ocean Partnership Funding
 - Project: *Update fishing, marine life and habitat, recreation, maritime, seafloor, and other data on the Northeast Ocean Data Portal*
 - Award: \$205,000
 - Lead: NROC (via Coastal States Stewardship Foundation as fiscal sponsor)
 - Funding Period: November 2025 – January 2027

Regional Wildlife Science Collaborative (Co-hosted with the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean)

The Regional Wildlife Science Collaborative (RWSC) is funded through a mix of member dues, in-kind contributions, projects, and research funding. RWSC coordinates its funding and activities with NROC and MARCO who provide in-kind staff time and frequently co-fund specific projects, which might be reported elsewhere.

Current Funding

In FY 2026 (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026), RWSC expects to receive \$310,000 in membership dues from 14 individual entities. RWSC also receives in-kind staff time from NROC, MARCO, NYSERDA ETWG, and NOAA Fisheries, and funding for the following projects and research:

1. *Support for the administration and coordination of regional research associated with NYSERDA's regional monitoring requirement*
 - a. Funder: Equinor
 - b. Award: \$4,050,000.00
 - c. Funding Period: February 5, 2025 – February 4, 2031

Project Notes: RWSC is administering and managing funds to support regional scale research, specifically to support NYSERDA's regional research requirement for state projects. The RWSC Steering Committee approved the selections made by technical experts and outlined conditions and additional recommendations for each awarded team. RWSC expects to award two research contracts before the end of 2025.

2. *Support for publicly sharing data from the Maine Offshore Wind Research Consortium and the Maine Offshore Wind Research Array through a Maine Offshore Wind Research Data Catalog in fulfillment of State law and the State's federal research lease*
 - a. Funder: Maine Governor's Energy Office
 - b. Award: \$100,000.00
 - c. Funding Period: April 7, 2025 – December 31, 2026

Project Notes: RWSC is assisting Maine in establishing, launching, and maintaining a Maine Offshore Wind Research Data Catalog that will display and link to the datasets being collected offshore Maine associated with the Maine Offshore Wind Research Consortium and the Maine Offshore Wind Research Array. RWSC will support infrastructure improvements for individual high-priority repositories (e.g., OBIS-SEAMAP, Regional Seafloor Data Repository, North American Bat Monitoring Program) to directly connect to a Catalog that is compatible with the regional ocean data catalog concept being piloted by RWSC, NROC, and MARCO.

Pending Funding

3. *Membership dues:* RWSC continues to fundraise to support its Annual Work Plan for FY 2026 and has secured commitments from a dozen entities (states, eNGOs, industry). RWSC expects a reduction in operational funding for FY 2026 and a continuation in projects and research funding.
4. *Marine Life and Habitat Research Funding:* RWSC convenes annual funding strategy meetings for federal agencies, states, eNGOs, and industry to increase collaboration around deploying research funding to ensure that it results in high quality data and research outputs. RWSC is currently assisting funders (e.g., states, eNGOs, industry) with decisions related to project selection and funding allocation, and is providing input on funding

agreements to ensure robust data management and data availability. RWSC has been asked to serve as an aggregator, coordinator, and manager of funds from multiple sources in the future as entities seek to leverage each other's resources and maximize the value obtained from research dollars.

NROC Tribal Caucus

The Tribal Caucus, established in 2024, is meeting regularly to advance Tribal priorities related to coastal and ocean management, to provide opportunities for Tribes to make recommendations about NROC projects, and to facilitate coordination around Tribal issues. NROC's Tribal Engagement Coordinator convenes the Tribal Caucus every two months.

The Tribal Caucus is focused on advancing the following priorities:

- Developing a regional map of herring runs and connecting the map to associated information and resources
- Identifying youth and early career opportunities for Tribal members
- Understanding Tribes' needs for geospatial data, providing technical assistance, and supporting the integration of relevant datasets from the Northeast Ocean Data Portal into Tribal systems
- Providing input on the maps of historical territories and languages that are compiled by *Native Lands Digital*
- Providing feedback on NROC projects and priorities

Current And Emerging Ocean Management and Planning Issues

Based on feedback from NROC members, NROC has established a Seafloor Planning Workgroup to support planning, management, and interjurisdictional coordination for current and emerging issues in the region.

The Workgroup builds on NROC's work with governments at all levels in the region and a wide range of ocean users to develop data and knowledge that supports informed decision-making about regional priorities. These currently include, among others, submarine cables and other infrastructure, aquaculture, marine mineral leasing and exploration, habitat modification or enhancement, and research and monitoring.

In addition, recent federal executive actions have established as national priorities a suite of activities related to energy, marine minerals, seafood, and maritime commerce. Federal actions have also directed changes aiming to simplify and improve federal permitting and policies that govern these national priorities and other coastal and ocean activities that may be considered in the region. This includes recent legislation and policy directives related to improvements in the standardization, transparency, and accessibility of ocean data and information for use in decision making. NROC has provided the Northeast Ocean Data Portal for fifteen years to accomplish some of these same goals, as previously defined and advanced by regional participants.

Effectively addressing regional and national priorities is central to NROC's work of enhancing data, information, and coordinating functions that drive efficient, informed decision-making. Much of the Fall Meeting is dedicated to outlining recent work to prioritize data acquisition and to improve data management related to specific maps and products used to inform decisions. The Meeting will also highlight the need for improved ocean data management and increased data accessibility for ocean management and business decisions, leading to a broader discussion of how this current and ongoing work can be used to inform the goals of the Seafloor Planning Workgroup.

Initial priority uses and activities for consideration by the Workgroup include: electric and telecommunication cables; marine sand and gravel mining; and marine aquaculture. The Workgroup expects the list to expand as discussions and work advance. For each use and activity, the assessments could include:

- Background information
- Drivers and policy context
- Key relevant federal policy directives and opportunities for NROC support
- Key federal authorities and lead agencies
- Consulting agencies and authorities
- Consultation with federally recognized Tribes
- Key data and knowledge needs

The presentation at the NROC Fall Meeting will provide additional detail, using **electric and telecommunication cables** as an example for discussion. Participants are asked to be prepared to:

- Identify emerging data needs and issues related to the siting of submarine cables, particularly those extending beyond the datasets that are typically identified in planning efforts;
- Consider approaches for integrating key datasets to enhance planning and siting processes; and
- Highlight opportunities for improved coordination across jurisdictions and among governmental entities, industry partners, and others to support the siting and permitting of marine cables.

We also encourage meeting participants to be prepared to discuss other ocean uses potentially being considered by their entity as well as information on lessons learned from previous activities in the region that could be integrated into these assessments.

Emerging Ocean Technologies in New England

Ocean technology, spurred by public and private investment, is evolving rapidly and leading to new coastal and waterway uses and new methods for mapping, research and monitoring that need to be considered in planning, management, and decision making. NROC and RWSC recently sponsored and managed a [TechSurge](#) with the Marine Technology Society, Rhode Island SeaGrant, University of Rhode Island, and Responsible Offshore Science Alliance to explore advancements in fisheries and benthic monitoring technology. The proceedings of that event will be available in the coming weeks.

During this session, presenters from the Quonset Development Corporation and the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center will provide an update on recent investments in ocean technology and port infrastructure that are facilitating new ocean innovations and waterways uses.

Topics and Speakers:

- *The Port of Davisville Master Plan*
Greg Coren (Director of Engineering and Construction, Quonset Development Corporation) and Joe Riccio (Port Director, Port of Davisville, Quonset Development Corporation)
- *MA Clean Energy Center Investments in Ocean Technology*
Lisa Engler (MA Clean Energy Center)

Regional Coastal Resilience Initiatives

This session is hosted by NROC's Coastal Hazards Resilience Committee, which provides a regional forum for sharing tools, guidance, approaches, resources, and case studies to advance community coastal resilience across the Northeast states. The session will begin with an update from NROC's ongoing collaboration with The Nature Conservancy, state coastal managers, Woods Hole Group, and other partners to advance knowledge and implementation of successful living shorelines projects across the Northeast. The session will also provide an opportunity to learn about the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management's statewide and regional coastal resilience planning and coordination efforts, as well as Aquidneck Island regional resilience efforts being led by the Aquidneck Island Land Trust.

Topics and Speakers:

- *Advancing Living Shorelines in New England*
Joan LeBlanc (NROC) and Adam Finkle (Woods Hole Group)
- *Rhode Island Resilience: Resilient Rhody 2025, Regional Resilience Coordinators, and What's Next*
Kimberly Koriath (Chief Resilience Officer, State of Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management)
- *Growing Regional Resilience Coordination on Aquidneck Island*
Paige Myatt (Director of Climate Resilience, Aquidneck Island Land Trust)

Committee Updates

These topics will not be discussed in detail during the NROC meeting. Please contact NROC staff for more information.

Coastal Hazards Resilience Committee

Submitted by Anna Simpson, NERACOOS, and Joan LeBlanc, NROC Coastal Hazards Resilience Program Director

Water Level Monitoring Network

NROC, NERACOOS, NOAA, and other partners have established a water level monitoring network to enhance coastal resilience by improving access, quality, and coverage of water level observations throughout the Northeast. The goals of the network are to increase access to water level data and products through collaborative partnerships, expand knowledge and use of innovative technologies, and expand coastal water level monitoring capacity across the region. The network provides tools and resources to help coastal managers plan and respond to increasing impacts from coastal storms and flooding.

The project team has supported the installation of 30 sensors across the five New England States, with 10 more installations planned before the end of 2025. The [map of water level sites](#) highlights existing, planned, and proposed water level monitoring stations throughout New England. The data from these sensors is available through the [NERACOOS ERDDAP data server](#) and can be visualized on [the water level dashboard](#) developed by NERACOOS and GMRI. For more information about navigating the water level dashboard and interpreting the data at different stations, [please see this guide](#). As a follow-up to this work, the project team developed a draft [guide for water level sensor station installation](#) with links to SOPs, field data sheets, and guidance for metadata requirements. Efforts are underway to ingest and share data from additional sensors that other organizations have deployed.

NROC and NERACOOS hosted a workshop in August 2025 that brought together federal, state, and local partners involved in monitoring water levels. The workshop goals were to

- Share lessons learned related to water level sensor installation, types of sensors, site conditions, and matching sensors with community needs
- Review and assess data management and reporting products to identify potential improvements for existing products
- Identify future needs and direction for site-specific and region-wide data product development
- Identify opportunities for integrating water level sensor data with other tools and decision-making processes

Three sessions provided opportunity for discussion that included: (1) best practices for implementing a water level sensor network, (2) water level data uses across the region that highlighted 4 projects utilizing water level data to inform decision making, and (3) identifying future priorities for accessing, visualizing water level data, and developing products, analysis, and reporting tools. A full workshop report will be available by mid-December.

Next Steps

- NROC and NERACOOS will complete and share the workshop report from the August 2025 workshop.
- Continue installing water level sensors and working with local points of contact to further develop specific installation locations and procedures.

- Compile the input received from the workshop and NERACOOS's lessons learned into a 'Best Practices for Implementing a Water Level Sensor Network' living document.
- NROC and NERACOOS will engage sensor operators, communities, and managers to train them on sensor maintenance and obtain feedback on data and tools required for management needs.
- NERACOOS will continue to improve its data products and water level data visualization tools with input from end users and partners.

Ocean and Coastal Ecosystem Health Committee

Submitted by Amy Trice, NROC Senior Program Director

These topics will not be discussed in detail during the NROC meeting. Please contact NROC staff for more information.

Coastal Vegetation Workgroup

NROC convenes the Coastal Vegetation Workgroup under the Ocean and Coastal Ecosystem Health Committee. The Workgroup promotes regional understanding of coastal soils, biogeochemical processing, and vegetation through the coordination and convening of experts. Coastal Vegetation data and data products are being shared [publicly on the Northeast Ocean Data Portal](#). Through this Workgroup, NROC provides a regional forum for collaboration and information exchange, sharing lessons learned from past and ongoing initiatives, and identifying data and information needs to better support the management of coastal sediments, soils, and vegetative communities.

The objectives of the Workgroup are to:

- Coordinate between federal and state scientists, academic scientists, and managers
- Identify critical knowledge gaps and management-relevant data products
- Advance knowledge of Northeast US coastal sediment biogeochemical processes

Since the NROC Spring Meeting, the Workgroup has been revamped and is now led by NROC staff on behalf of NROC members with support from three thematic leads:

- Vegetation mapping lead – coordinate characterization of soil properties and extents
- Soil biogeochemical lead – biogeochemical processing in the coastal zone allowing for fluxes of material via gas or aqueous phase to the atmosphere or coastal ocean
- Policy lead – translate new knowledge into actionable, decision-making frameworks

The Workgroup is currently focused on reviewing and updating seagrass (*Zostera* and *Ruppia*) data layers for the Northeast Ocean Data Portal. NROC recently launched a new version of the Data Portal and reorganized data according to user feedback as well as NROC Workgroup structure. There is a new Seagrass & Tidal Marsh data category to explore where data related to this Workgroup are housed. Additional information on relevant work and groups across the region addressing coastal vegetation are also being reviewed by the Workgroup and will be made available via the Data Portal accompanying the updated seagrass data products. Lastly, the Workgroup has discussed several policy needs and future directions. Discussions will advance in the coming months to further refine the needs of managers, especially information that NROC states are factoring into restoration and resilience efforts.

Updates from NROC Partners

Northeast Sea Grant Consortium

Submitted by Sea Grant Director, Sylvain DeGuise, Chair of NE SG Consortium - contact: sylvain.deguise@uconn.edu, Consortium Website - <https://www.northeastseagrants.com/>

NESGC Updates:

- The NESGC continues to support local, need-driven, collaborative core programming that integrates research, extension, education, workforce development and communications across four focus areas:
 - Resilient Communities and Economies (RCE)
 - Healthy Coastal Ecosystems (HCE)
 - Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture (SFA)
 - Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development (ELWD)
- All Sea Grant Programs will be announcing new biennial research awards soon (to start in 2026)
- The Northeast Sea Grant Consortium (NESGC), in partnership with NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center, awarded funding to 4 projects beginning in 2025 to improve understanding of fishing community interactions with offshore wind development in the U.S. Northeast from the New York Bight through the Gulf of Maine (projects listed below)
- The NESGC is looking to improve connections with NROC committees and programming in coming years

Regional research and extension <https://www.northeastseagrants.com/initiatives>

- Ocean Renewable Energy
- American Lobster Initiative

Ongoing Projects

- Sea Grant Liaisons - <https://seagrants.noaa.gov/liaisons/>
 - National Sea Grant Offshore Wind Liaison - jmccann@uri.edu
 - Aquaculture Liaison, Sarah Bodenstein - sarah.bodenstein@uconn.edu
- Contaminants of Emerging Concern
(<https://seagrants.uconn.edu/research/contaminants-emerging-concern/>)
- Sea Grant Hard Clam Selective Breeding Collaborative
(<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/3425623358164278bbe1ed7f7311a605>)

Upcoming Events

- Sea Grant Week, Oxford, MS October 2026

Northeast Sea Grant Consortium Regional Research Projects (started in 2025):

Title: Community-based approaches for reducing spatial conflicts in fishing communities facing offshore energy development.

Project Lead: Jynessa Dutka-Gianelli, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Gloucester, MA

Title: OffRec: Mapping offshore recreational fishing activity and perceptions in the US Northeast region

Project Lead: Mateja Nenadovic, University of Rhode Island

Title: Measuring Economic Impacts of Offshore Wind on Commercial Fishing Fleets in Southern New England

Project Lead: Todd Guilfoos, University of Rhode Island

Title: Mapping Fishing Communities' Economic and Cultural Ties to Offshore Locations to Enhance Participation in Management and Decision Making

Project Lead: Kevin St. Martin, Rutgers