

CASE STUDY

Minerals Management Service Atlantic Data Synthesis

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Minerals Management Service (MMS) Atlantic Data Synthesis - Herndon, Virginia

BACKGROUND

The Minerals Management Service (MMS) has recognized the need to update their knowledge base of research activities off the Mid-Atlantic and North Atlantic states with the expansion of their responsibilities to include the oversight of renewable energy projects in the waters of the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). MMS has conducted limited research in these areas since the 1980s, when oil and gas leasing was last pursued in the region.

THE CHALLENGE

Normandeau Associates, as a subcontractor to Mangi Environmental Services, Inc., provided literature review, data search and synthesis services to assemble information relevant to assessment of impacts from renewable energy projects, primarily wind power, on biological resources. Normandeau's information gathering and synthesis efforts covered Atlantic Ocean offshore resources from the US/Canadian border to Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, including State and Federal marine waters within the US EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone).

THE SOLUTION

The purpose of the project was to update the understanding of the ecological communities, the dominant oceanographic and other processes that drive the shelf and deep sea ecosystems, and the potential sensitivities to the area. Project areas of inquiry include geological, biological and chemical oceanography as well as social and economic sciences. Results of this effort will be presented as an annotated bibliography, a reference database, a GIS database and a synthesis report that will be a suitable starting point for future third-party Environmental Impact Statements prepared under the direction of MMS.

