

Rhode Island Ocean Special Area Management Plan

Course: Studio-Planning-Wind Energy Spring 2012

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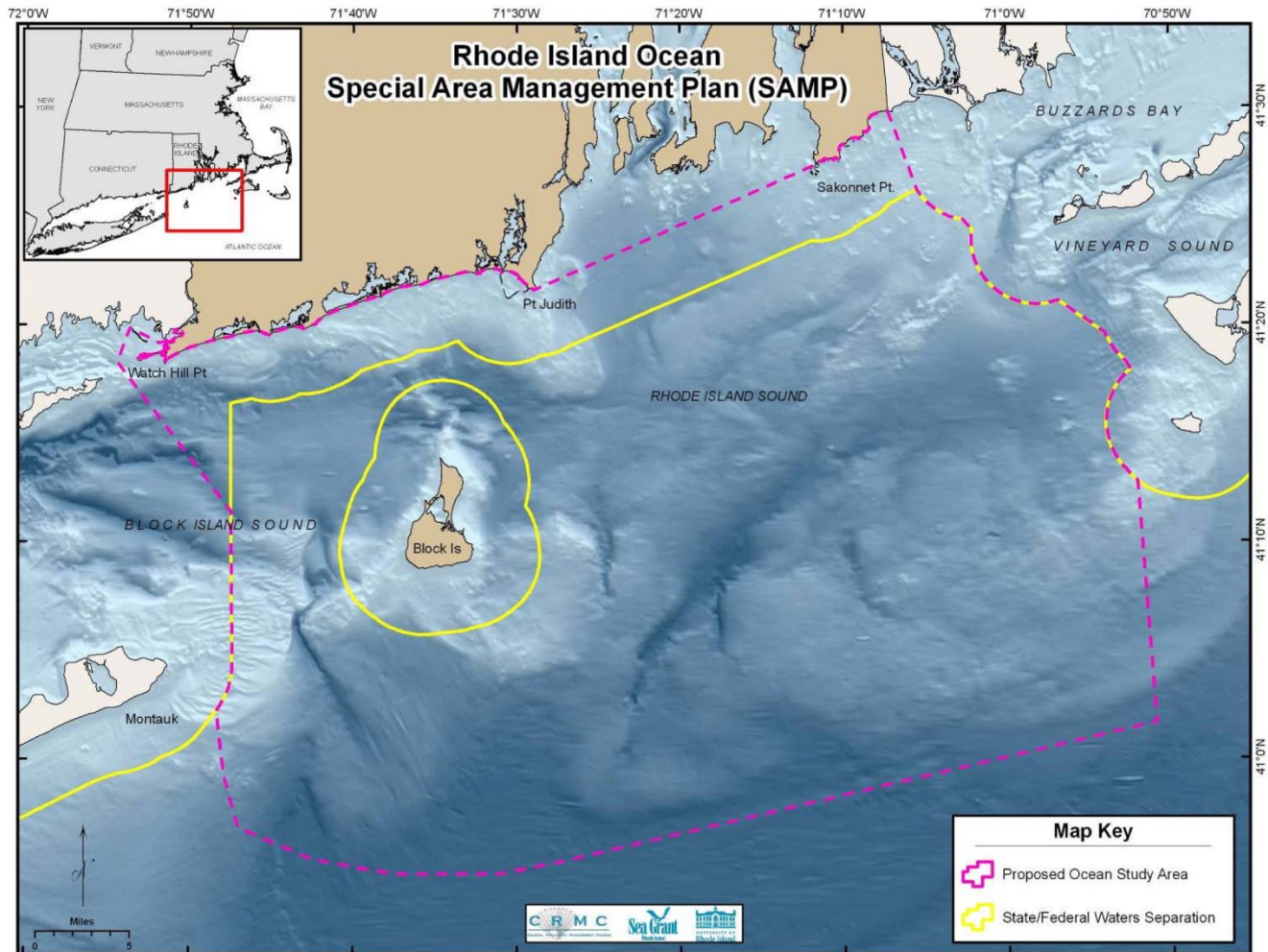
Course Context

- ❑ **An interdisciplinary studio based course that will focus on gaining an understanding of public perceptions of wind energy projects, and particularly off-shore wind energy.**
- ❑ **Research methods component based on a case study analysis of one or more proposed offshore wind energy projects.**
- ❑ **Interdisciplinary teams collect, interpret and analyze data with respect to public and other stakeholder input to identify objections and the likelihood for success of offshore wind energy projects.**

Objectives

- Public roles in wind energy projects
- Case study Rhode Island Ocean Special Area Management Plan (Ocean SAMP)
- Data collection, interpretation, and dissemination (Qualitative Data Collection)
- Cross-disciplinarily
- Research Methods:** Designing a research project and applying a collaborative research project and Using a case study method.

Case Study



Case Study

- ❑ **Rhode Island Ocean Special Area Management Plan**
- ❑ **led by the R.I. Coastal Resources Management Council**
(CRMC has already zoned Rhode Island's near-shore waters for a variety of uses)
- ❑ **CRMC has also designated the offshore waters that comprise the Ocean SAMP area as “multipurpose.”**
- ❑ **University of Rhode Island (URI), federal agencies such as the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and including the R.I. Department of Environmental Management.**

Field Trip



Assessing Ongoing Stakeholder Engagement Opportunities in Off- Shore Wind Development

**Perspectives and Experiences from the
Rhode Island Ocean SAMP Process**

Overview

- Background
- Research Questions
- Methods
- Results
- Conclusion

Background

As described in the RI Ocean SAMP, the CRMC is obligated to:

‘develop the Ocean SAMP in a **transparent manner; involve all stakeholders; honor existing activities;** base all decisions on the best available science; and establish **monitoring and evaluation that supports adaptive management**’

(RI SAMP Vol1. 11/2010, 2)

Background

A Commonly Recognized Value

- Robust, rigorous stakeholder processes are recognized as important elements when formulating and implementing a variety of programs and plans.
- Ongoing stakeholder processes are also important. They foster ownership, and create further opportunity for involvement and input.

Also: a useful tool for monitoring and evaluation?

Background

A Need For:

- Ongoing stakeholder processes.
- Stakeholder process as monitoring/evaluation.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the stakeholder/public process (to ensure that what was stated in the SAMP continues to happen)

What We Know:

- The SAMP does contain ongoing opportunities for stakeholder engagement

What We Don't Know:

- How stakeholders want to be involved
- Which issues they will want to address
- How often, HOW stakeholders will participate

Future Stakeholder Opportunities

- Fisheries Advisory Board
- Habitat Advisory Board
- Public Hearings
- Public Comment Periods

Research Gap

- ❑ Through literature review and case study, we determined that what has not been explicitly framed or agreed upon is HOW stakeholders will continue to be involved in the SAMP process, and in specific wind projects.
- ❑ HOW these ongoing process look and feel to stakeholders could serve as useful models for other wind projects in other states and regions, and help to inform continued SAMP formulation and project siting efforts.

Research Questions

- Does the Ocean SAMP include provision for on-going and sustained public involvement?
- If YES: HOW?
- IF NO: WHY?

- Perspectives + Experiences: What should happen again, and what issues should be avoided in an ideal ongoing public process?

- Potential role of social media in public outreach and process of engagement?

Methods

- Qualitative: Coding**
- Stakeholder Interviews**
- Review of Ocean SAMP**
- Analysis**

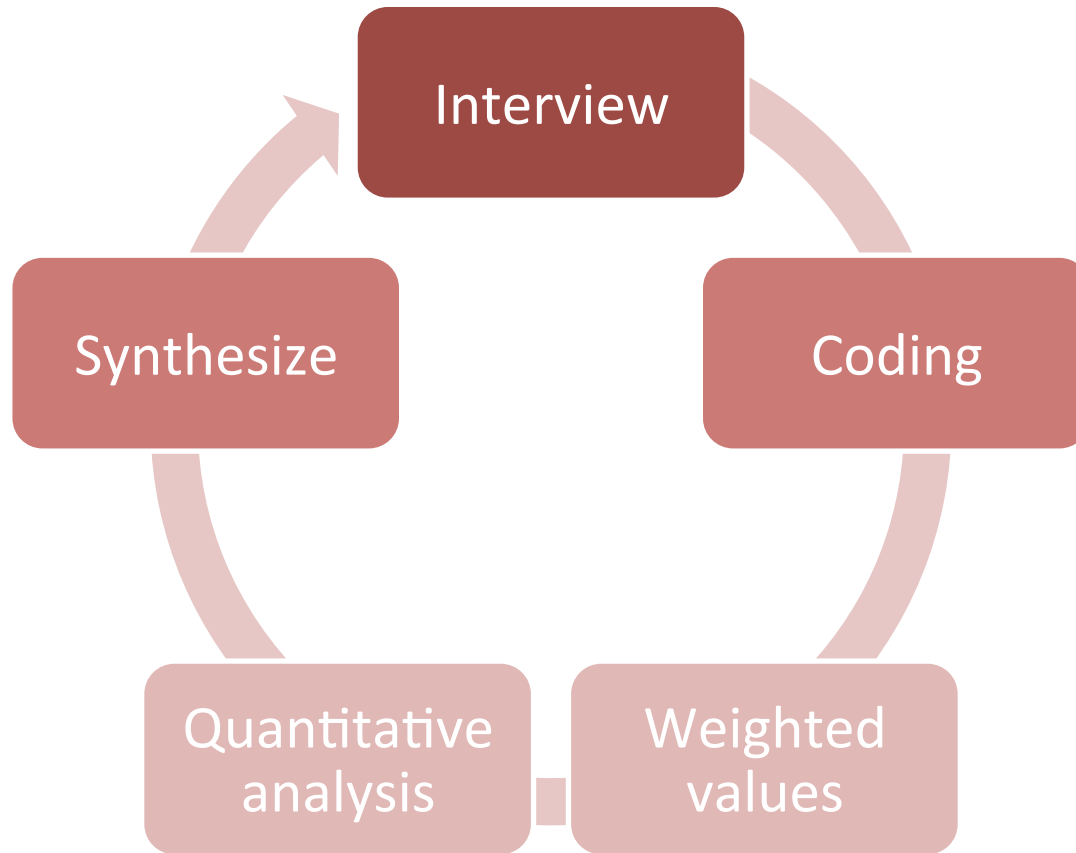
Interview Questions

- How were you involved in the Ocean SAMP process (in what capacity?)
- Have you participated in other public process before? If yes, what were significant differences in the RI Ocean SAMP Process
- What were positive attributes in the initial SAMP process you would like to see repeated in ongoing participatory opportunities?
- What were negative issues from the initial process you would NOT like to see replicated?

Interview Questions

- Did the stakeholder process leave you inclined to participate in ongoing events?
- Did ongoing opportunities for stakeholder participation come up in the initial SAMP process?
- Do you think there is a need for future/ongoing stakeholder participation?
- What issues do you think will come up in ongoing opportunities?
- What role could be played by social media tools such as Facebook or Twitter?

Coding System



Results

Contacted	Interviewed
10	4

Stakeholder	Interest/Organizational Affiliation	Ongoing Process
A	Coastal Resource Management Council Exec. Director (CRMC)	YES
B	Conservation Law Foundation (CLF)	YES
C	Stakeholder Process Chairperson	YES
D	Commercial Fishermen Liaison	YES

Results

	Background Marine Spatial Planning	Ecological and Marine condition	Feeling about SAMP Process	Financial Benefit From meeting	Future ongoing public process	Ideal Stakeholder Process	Negative or Challenging Aspect	Positive Aspect	Public Outreach	SAMP Challenges	Transparency	Totals
A	1	6	8		5	4	4	7	4	6	2	104
B	1	3	5	4	5	2	11	1	3	1	9	81
C	1	1	4		3	4	4	14	1	1	2	85
D	1	3	7		4	2	5	10	1	4	2	77
Totals	3	13	24	4	17	12	24	32	9	12	15	347

- Ecological issue
- Future ongoing public Process
- Positive experiences
- Public Outreach

Results

Positive Attributes

Positive Attributes	Count	Mean	Median
Total	32	6.4	6.5
Active Stakeholder engagement	19	7.5	8
Clear Process Structure	2	8	8
Early process start	1	7	7
Education of stakeholders	4	7	7
Fair and Transparent process	5	7.6	8
Inclusive process	4	8	8
Using local knowledge	1	8	8

Results

*“it was broken up, as you know, chapter by chapter...which created an opportunity to bring in stakeholders as they were drafting the chapters before the draft chapters went out for comments to talk about the kind of information they had in them , whether they addressed lack of a data or a particular data set adequately, how they might address other things, other issues of concern and gave more of an upfront kind of view of what the chapter was going to look like before it went out for public comment.....**so you had multiple, multiple bites at the apple and I think that in the end it created a better product. “***

Results

Negative or Challenging Attributes

Negative or Challenging Aspect	Count	Mean	Median
Total	24	6.2	6
Clear process structure	4	5.3	6
Outreach to relevant Stakeholders	4	8	8
Political agenda	3	5.7	5
Separation between agencies	1	7	7
Stakeholder Education	3	7.3	7
Transparency	15	6.7	7
Sharing Information	6	7.3	7.5

Results

“The biggest negative aspect to me was the politics... sometimes folks are making a decision based on agendas and things like that, marching orders from above and it can sweep the process”

Results

Ecological and Marine condition

What issues are missing?

- Main subjects of Future ongoing process
- User group and advocacy group versus organization group

	Count	Mean	Median
Ecological and Marine condition	13	5.8	5
Data Collection	6	7.3	7.5
Effects on Marine Habitat and Species	8	6.4	6.5
Siting consideration	3	6	6

Results

“The Fishermen Advisory Board is looking at siting considerations, construction sequence, construction interactions with the fishery, with the developer, so they will have a constant forum through out the project. Through the board they will have input on the project and the operation itself, which was extremely important to them”

Future ongoing public Process

<u>Future ongoing public process</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Median</u>
Total	17	6.4	7
NGO representing diverse use	1	8	8
Monitoring and Evaluating	7	5	5
Other stakeholders interest	2	7.5	7.5
Mediation and compensation tool	1		
State or Federal Obligation	6		

Results

“This is our ocean! This is our ocean, and these our resources...whatever use we attach, whether an individual or organization, whether it’s recreational fishing or shipping lanes or bird watching or critical habit, we want to make sure that policies are being adhered to”

Results

Public Outreach

Public Outreach	Count	Mean	Median
Total	9	5.6	5
Social Network as a process facilitator	5	3.4	3
Time of considering public comment	2	7.5	7.5
Other suitable communication tool	2		

Conclusion

- ❑ All stakeholders expressed positive experiences and perspectives, leaving little doubt that they will participate in ongoing processes, and that lessons learned from the Ocean SAMP process will carry into future processes.
- ❑ The initial SAMP process, then, could serve as a valuable model for future processes in the monitoring and evaluation of ongoing public processes related to ocean area wind development.

Conclusion

- ❑ There is a strong inclination towards emphasizing the role of environmental and user-interest groups in ongoing public processes.
- ❑ Despite the strong emphasis on environmental/user-group interest groups, they did not make a strong connection between ongoing public process and the monitoring and evaluation of the ocean ecosystem and ecological conditions.
- ❑ There is no general consensus as to what the general future public process will look like.