

RI Ocean SAMP Recreational Fisheries Issues and Opportunities
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This document reflects input received from recreational fishermen and the party/charter boat industry during Ocean SAMP meetings and written and verbal communication that took place between October 2008 and March 2009.

Recreational Fishing Issues

1. To protect fisheries within the SAMP area, there is a need for more and better information concerning local fisheries resources, food supplies, and habitats, as well as the potential impacts of construction, operation, and decommissioning of wind turbines, undersea cables, and other offshore renewable energy infrastructure.
2. The construction and operation of offshore renewable energy infrastructure may impact fishermen's livelihoods and/or quality of recreational experience by harming fisheries resources and habitats, reducing or prohibiting access to key fishing grounds, and increasing transit times to key fishing grounds.
3. Offshore renewable energy development may create navigational and safety hazards by limiting maneuvering room, increasing transit times, and placing hazardous undersea cables and other infrastructure in or near fishing grounds.
4. Strategies and tools must be developed to fairly and efficiently mitigate the potential impacts of offshore renewable energy development on fishermen and/or compensate fishermen for their losses.

Recreational Fisheries Opportunities

1. Offshore renewable energy structures may be used to create new fish habitat, which could benefit recreational fisheries provided that fishermen are permitted to fish near the structures.
2. A temporary or permanent exemption allowing bass fishing in federal waters would be one way to make up for the temporary or permanent closure of popular bass fishing areas in state waters that may take place as part of an offshore renewable energy project.