

RI forum will showcase latest offshore wind energy science

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The Southern New England Offshore Wind Energy Science Forum, the first gathering of scientists, stakeholders and community members engaged in following developments related to the Block Island Wind Farm, will take place December 11 and 12, 2017 at the University of Rhode Island (URI) Graduate School of Oceanography (GSO), in Narragansett, RI. The forum will showcase completed and ongoing research taking place at the wind farm and within the region to improve the management and development of offshore wind energy. Research topics include the effects of the construction and operation of offshore wind farms on habitat, fish, marine mammals, avian species, and people.



A view of the Block Island Wind Farm

This event is sponsored by the CRMC, U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), URI GSO and the URI Coastal Resources Center (URI CRC), with financial support from windfarm owner Deepwater Wind, and R.I. Sea Grant. "Rhode Island led the country in developing management policies for offshore renewable energy, and it's important that we take stock of how the facility is interacting with our coastal environment," said Grover Fugate, executive director of the CRMC. "The major benefit of our work is that the Block Island project is an in-place laboratory for studying potential impacts at a much smaller scale, which provides insight into larger-scale projects, without the same impacts."

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CRMC issues 2016-17 ROW annual report

The CRMC has released its 2016-2017 annual report on rights-of-way in the state, "Designation of Public Rights-of-Way to The Tidal Areas of The State."

From July 2016 through June 2017, the CRMC continued its ongoing efforts to discover and designate public rights-of-way to the tidal areas of Rhode Island, under its legislative mandate (RIGL 46-23-17). Beginning in 1978, this mandate tasked the Council with identifying and designating all public rights-of-way to the shore. To meet this charge, the CRMC created a Rights-of-Way Subcommittee. The report details actions of the subcommittee, as well as legal proceedings stemming from these activities and subsequent actions of the Council.

During the report period, staff researched and investigated 10 locations in North Kingstown, Portsmouth, and Warren for potential CRMC right-of-way determinations, some of which might appear in future reports. Four shoreline access sites in Warren meet the CRMC criteria for designation as legally recognized CRMC ROWs, and were forwarded to the ROW Subcommittee for consideration.

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CRMC gets verification certificate for BI Wind Farm

ABS Group, the independent Certified Verification Agent (CVA) for the Block Island Wind Farm Project off Rhode Island, has issued a Verification Certificate to the CRMC supporting the reliable operation of the first commercial wind farm in U.S. waters. The CRMC is the permitting agency responsible for overseeing that wind farm operations conform to state regulations, and developed the R.I. Ocean Special Area Management Plan which served as a blueprint for permitting the first offshore wind farm in the U.S. "The CRMC is proud to have been the driving force behind the first offshore wind farm in the United States, through its Ocean SAMP and groundbreaking permitting process, and we celebrate along with Deepwater Wind for achieving this Verification Certificate from ABS Group," said Grover J. Fugate, CRMC executive director. "ABS Group's independent evaluation of the design, construction and installation of the Block Island Wind Farm was integral to the process outlined in the Ocean SAMP, and brought integrity and additional transparency to the project." [Learn more about the Ocean SAMP process here.](#)

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