

Supply Chain, Workforce, Ports and Marine Transportation Working Group

Ports

Draft Initial Recommendations – February 2022

Recommendation #1: Move forward with port development plans with urgency.

- Searsport is Maine’s location for OSW hub port infrastructure, in line with Maine’s 3-port strategy and the recent feasibility study and concept design report by the engineering firm of Moffat & Nichol.³⁴
- The state should conduct a robust environmental and regulatory/stakeholder/legislative review and begin this work at an early phase in the port development process. The WG was pleased to know that the stakeholder process had already begun and will continue.
- A business case for the development must be made before significant investment in engineering / construction planning is initiated.

Recommendation #2: Discuss with neighboring states in the region with OSW goals.

- Floating offshore wind should be the future focus for Maine moving forward. The long term OSW energy goals on the US East Coast relies on floating OSW, and Maine could position to facilitate that build out to support multiple states goals.
- WG recognizes that in order for Maine to position itself to take on a role of providing infrastructure to facilitate the floating OSW market on the US East Coast, a significant amount of time to achieve this goal makes it essential to start the planning and permitting process now.

Recommendation #3: Discuss with OSW developers the infrastructure needs of all East Coast OSW projects to best inform the state as it moves forward with planning and design of OSW infrastructure.

- Maine needs better data around the needs of developers, and how the state could support those needs. Maine should solicit a Request for Information to collect appropriate data from east coast developers interested in Maine as a staging port.
- OSW port infrastructure should be designed to accommodate the requirements of multiple (or all) OSW foundation types.
- Since the infrastructure requirements for floating and fixed have commonalities, considering projects in both modes would likely benefit the state, but WG consensus is that Maine could develop a competitive advantage with floating.

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<https://www.maine.gov/mdot/ofps/docs/port/MaineDOT%20OSW%20Port%20Infrastructure%20Feasibility%20Study-Concept%20Design%20Report%2011-17-2021.pdf>

Recommendation #4: OSW port activity is significant and impacts to ocean users should be considered/studied in ports that could potentially exist to support OSW, starting in Searsport.

- This is important to consider so that OSW infrastructure does not exclude other sectors that could benefit from multiple forms of ocean users (fishing, other marine cargoes, recreation, etc.).
- Maine should consider port improvements that simultaneously meet user needs. This could be achieved through a grant program that targets ocean users impacted by OSW development in Maine, specifically targeting working waterfront facilities.

Recommendation #5: Continue the ongoing work of evaluating multiple port facilities (Portland, Eastport, etc.) in Maine that could support OSW projects in the Gulf of Maine and/or Northeast region.

- Having sites evaluated early in the process will help the state/private sector focus investment for future port needs.
- The market will drive the port requirements for OSW. Investments will occur in phases as the east coast offshore wind pipeline matures with the OSW industry, and the value of a deep water, heavy lift quay side, and unlimited air draft in a protected port increases.

Recommendation #6: Pursue federal funding to develop OSW port infrastructure.

- It is important to begin discussions on funding paths with federal agencies and delegation staff.
- Proceed with OSW infrastructure design to identify a project to submit funding assistance through federal discretionary programs.
- It is important to the WG to stay aware of federal funding programs that may come into existence soon.

Recommendation #7: Expose Maine's ports-related supply chain to various stages of offshore wind projects – first with fixed, and then transitioning that experience and relationship building into floating.

- There will likely be spillover opportunities from projects south of Maine.
- These services could include the following, for example: security, utilities, fuel bunkering, stevedoring, cranes, handling, forklifts, self-propelled modular transporters (SPMTs), trailers, vessel maintenance, ships agent, towage, and waste removal.
- Offshore wind projects in the extensive U.S. pipeline require not only large port facilities, but also smaller port facilities with associated port and logistics services. Provision of these services spans all phases of an offshore wind project. Smaller ports in Maine may aid in these logistical services to support the development surveys and wind farm O&M stages for projects along the U.S. Atlantic coast.