



New York & Long Island Field Offices

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Congressional District 1: Timothy H. Bishop

Fire Island Inlet to Montauk Point Reformulation (FIMP) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) continues to provide technical assistance in accordance with the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and Endangered Species Act regarding the potential impacts of the FIMP on fish and wildlife. In the period of time from January 2007 to the present, we provided formal input to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) regarding the Draft Executive Summary Formulation Report which provided information on the alternatives the Corps proposed to advance;



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comments on an early draft long-term management plan to protect listed species; a detailed report describing the current status of fish and wildlife and habitats within the project area; recommendations for types of compensatory mitigation we would like the Corps to further develop; and provided habitat restoration location options that we identified within the project area in close coordination and consultation with the landowners and managers.

FIMP - issues in need of clarification

From the USFWS's perspective, there are several issues still in need of further clarification. At this time it is unclear whether the non-structural and structural components of this planning effort represent the full and total sum of all plans for the 50-year planning period or whether additional impacts to fish and wildlife, including listed species, can be anticipated from locally sponsored beach fill/dune building, groin construction, jetty modifications, etc., (themselves requiring Corps permits). It is also unclear whether Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-funded storm damage mitigation will be provided that goes beyond what the FIMP comprehensive storm damage reduction plan calls for.



Fire Island National Seashore Community Beach Nourishment Project and Suffolk County Smith Point and Cupsogue County Parks Beach Nourishment Project The LIFO completed two expedited biological opinions on these projects in mid-September 2008 to facilitate the planning of these projects and enable the Fire Island communities and Suffolk County Department of Public Works proponents to complete the construction of these projects prior to April 1, the beginning of the piping plover breeding season. The LIFO is tracking the status of these projects and the implementation of habitat and species protection measures, in conjunction with the National Park Service and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.



Landscape Level/Programmatic Approach to Section 7 Consultation LIFO biologists are participating in ongoing Section 7 consultations with the Corps for 18 dredging projects proposed by the Suffolk County Department of Public Works. The USFWS is working with the Corps on a programmatic approach to streamline the consultation process, including development of standard conservation measures, “batching” of responses to public notices, and meeting with local congressional, County, State, and Federal representatives to address the cumulative impacts of these projects.

Partnerships for Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery

In late March 2008, biologists from State, Federal, and local agencies and NGO groups began the annual preparation of protective symbolic fencing for the Federally-listed (threatened) piping plover, which returns from wintering grounds on Caribbean Islands and Florida beaches. Here biologists erect symbolic fences to provide a measure of protection to known piping plover and least tern nesting areas. To accommodate adjacent landowners, the biologists also string walkway lines in order to keep people and animals from plover nests.



Sandplain Gerardia Recovery The LIFO is the recovery lead for the Federally endangered sandplain gerardia and is working on the species Status Review. Several potential outcomes to that review are under consideration and include incorporation of new information about the species genetic makeup and its relatedness to a similar species in the South. Sandplain gerardia is a grassland species that requires management (mowing/clearing of vegetation, prescribed burns, etc.) due to the suppression of fire that historically maintained sandplain grassland habitat.

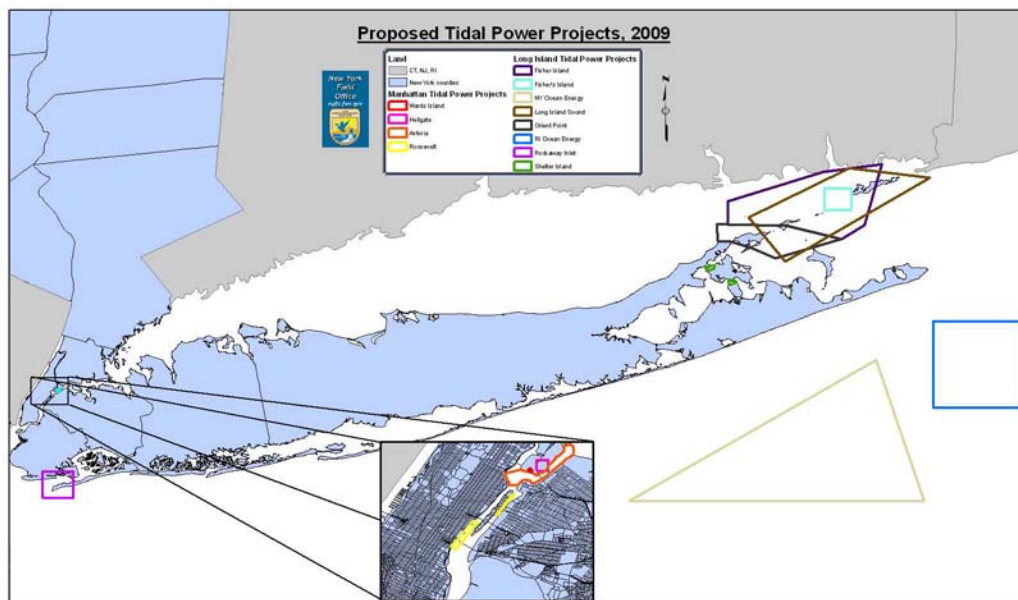


Winergy Plum Island Experimental Offshore Wind Energy Project

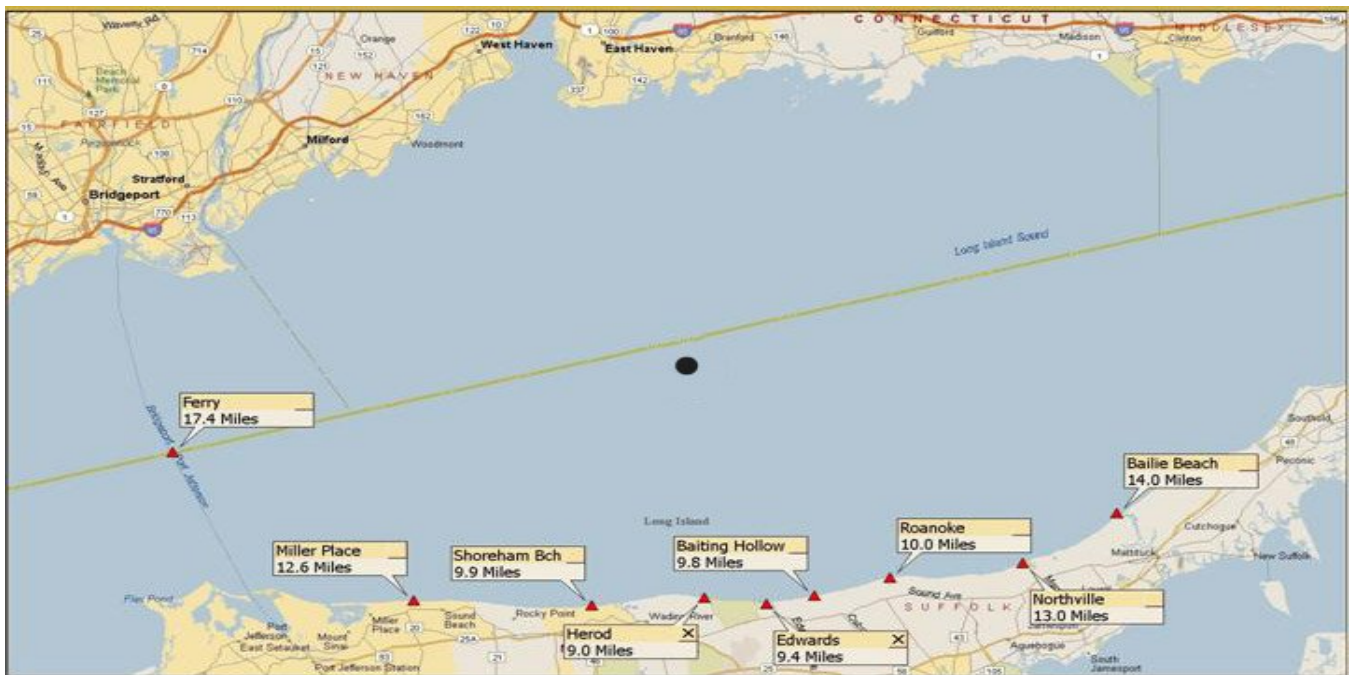
Our New York and Long Island Offices have been providing technical assistance on the potential impacts of this proposed 3-turbine project proposed at a location approximately 3 miles east of Orient Point, Long Island. The proposal is to test a new technology called Mobil Self-Installing Platform, which if successful, will allow for installation of turbines in deep water, for example, 12-20 miles offshore in water up to 150 feet deep, out of sight from shoreline communities. The Service is currently working with Winergy Power to identify any wildlife issues for the project. Studies commenced in the spring of 2008 and we are waiting for the results. The Corps must do an evaluation to determine if the project will have an effect on two Federally-listed species, the piping plover and roseate tern. In addition to potential impacts to plovers breeding, foraging, and staging on the North Shore of Long Island, we are seeking information on any potential impacts to birds which fly over (and may or may not stop over to forage in) the Long Island area, but continue on to plover breeding areas to the north in Massachusetts, Maine, and the Canadian maritime provinces. Nearby Great Gull Island is the site of an ongoing research project on State-listed common terns and Federally-listed (endangered) roseate terns where, since 1966, over a quarter of a million terns have been banded and re-banded by the American Museum of Natural History.



Tidal and Wave Energy The USFWS has reviewed a number of preliminary permits to develop wave and tidal energy off the coast of New York and in the East River. The proposed technologies are new and there is a poor understanding of the likely impacts of these projects on fish and wildlife resources. Underwater turbines have the potential to cause mortality and injury to fish, birds, aquatic turtles, and mammals. Thus far, only the Roosevelt Island Project (East River) has progressed to the point of a request for a pilot license. We have been working with this developer to study potential environmental impacts in conjunction with a phased approach to turbine installation.



Broadwater Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) Terminal The Broadwater LNG facility is a proposed terminal for the off-loading of liquid natural gas from LNG carriers for transport to the mainland through an underwater pipeline. It would be situated in central Long Island Sound. The USFWS has expressed a number of environmental concerns to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). In particular, we are concerned about the effects on fish and other aquatic organisms from the terminal and LNG carriers taking in and discharging large volumes of water. Annually, the water intake of the terminal would average about 5.5 million gallons per day (mgd), with a maximum daily intake of 8.2 mgd. Discharged water would be treated with the biocide, sodium hypochlorite. The water intake of the carriers would be about 22.7 mgd, including ballast and cooling water. The terminal and LNG carriers are predicted to annually impinge/entrain between 49.8 to 101.9 million fish eggs and 67.4 million to 173.1 million fish larvae. The FERC issued approval for the Broadwater facility on March 20, 2008. However in April 2008, the New York State Department of State determined that the proposed project is not consistent with six Long Island Sound Coastal Management policies. Broadwater has appealed this determination with the Secretary of Commerce, who can overturn it. We have concurred with the Endangered Species Act determinations of both FERC and the U.S. Coast Guard that the proposed project would not be likely to adversely affect Federally-listed species under the USFWS's jurisdiction.



Safe Harbor Energy Liquid Natural Gas Terminal On the other (south) side of Long Island is the proposed Safe Harbor Energy LNG Terminal. The proposed project consists of a constructed island approximately 16 acres in size with a disturbance footprint of approximately 116 acres, a terminal that would house an LNG receiving, storage, and regasification facility, and a 12.8-mile-long undersea pipeline. The proposed island and terminal would be located approximately 13.5 miles south of the City of Long Beach, New York (Long Island), and 23 miles southeast of the New York Harbor entrance. The USFWS is concerned about the potential impacts to listed and candidate species such as the piping plover, roseate tern, and red knot. We have also requested that the developer evaluate impacts to fish as a result of loss of ocean habitat, the impact of facility lighting on birds, and the effects of the facility on entrainment and impingement of ichthyoplankton and fish.