Co-Locating Fixed Gear Fisheries with a Floating Offshore Wind Turbine

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HOW THE STUDY WORKS

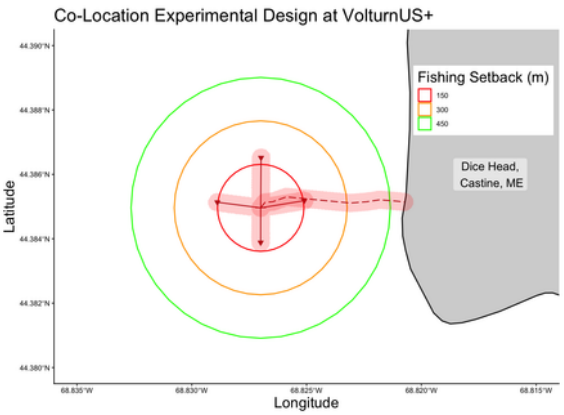
- **Standard Operating Procedures:** An SOP specific to vessels around a floating offshore wind turbine will be developed and informed by the project
- **Fishing Gear Trials:** A commercial fishing boat will place five trap trawls at different distances from the wind turbine and monitor how they move relative to the turbine with acoustics and GPS located buoys.
- **Mooring System Monitoring:** Sensors on the wind turbine's mooring lines will track potential gear entanglements in real time.
- **Data Analysis:** The study will use models to estimate how likely fishing gear is to get caught under different ocean conditions at different distances.

OUTCOMES

- **Reduce uncertainty** around offshore wind-fishing interactions.
- **Improve safety guidelines** for fishermen operating near FOSW infrastructure.
- **Support informed decision-making** for regulators, developers, and fisheries.
- **Enhance coexistence** between renewable energy and commercial fishing.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The University of Maine is studying how **fixed gear fisheries** interact with **floating offshore wind (FOSW)** turbines in the Gulf of Maine. This project will use a 1:4 scale FOSW platform, **VolturnUS+,** to explore how fishing gear might interact with the mooring lines that hold the platform in place. The goal is to find **safe ways** for fishermen to work near the turbines and support **regional monitoring** of gear-wind interactions.



WHY THIS MATTERS

- Floating offshore wind technology is growing, but **little is known about their impact on commercial fishing.**
- Understanding how much **fishing gear can move** and developing **safe fishing practices** from this information can reduce problems between fisheries and offshore wind development.
- The project will inform **environmental impact assessments** and **policy decisions** for future FOSW projects.

PROJECT GOALS

- **Demonstrate safe commercial fishing** practices at a FOSW site.
- Determine **how frequently fishing gear could get caught on wind turbine moorings** in different weather and sea conditions based on the distance of activities.
- **Quantify the lost fishable area** around the VolturnUS+ platform.
- **Provide data to support fisheries access** in offshore wind lease areas.

ROSA Regional Research Program

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