

## **Environmental Studies Program: Ongoing Study**

**Study Area(s):** Atlantic

**Administered By:** Office of Renewable Energy Programs

**Title:** Integration of offshore Avian Spatial Data into the USFWS Information, Planning and Conservation System (NSL #AT-15-x11)

**BOEM Information Need(s) to be Addressed:** BOEM has a responsibility under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) to assess the risks of offshore wind energy development to listed species. The USFWS has recently required BOEM (and other action agencies) to use its [Information, Planning, and Conservation \(IPaC\) decision support system](http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/) (<http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/>) to obtain official species lists for its ESA consultations. To streamline the consultation process with the best available scientific information, IPaC needs to include scientific information from BOEM studies such as the [Compendium of Avian Information](#) and [Predictive Mapping of Seabird Distributions](#) and continually updated with information from other relevant BOEM studies. Addressing this need will strengthen migratory bird conservation and is consistent with BOEM's [Memorandum of Understanding](#) with the USFWS regarding implementation of [Executive Order 13186](#), "Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds."

**Total BOEM Cost:** \$150,000

**Period of Performance:** FY 2016–2018

**Conducting Organization(s):** U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

**Principal Investigator(s):** Eric Kershner, [eric\\_kershner@fws.gov](mailto:eric_kershner@fws.gov)

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### **Description:**

**Background:** This study is part of a larger effort that managed by USFWS and funded by federal partners (BOEM, Bureau of Land Management, Federal Highway Administration, USFWS, National Park Service, and U.S. Forest Service). The objective of the broader effort is to aggregate regional management bird monitoring data by constructing a National [Avian Knowledge Network](#) Node.

**Objectives:** Integrate seabird data collected on OCS into the USFWS Information, Planning, and Conservation (IPaC) decision support system.

**Methods:** For this BOEM study, USFWS (through the AKN) will integrate the predictive seabird maps from "[Integrative Statistical Modeling and Predictive Mapping of Seabird Distribution and Abundance on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf](#)" and other BOEM funded projects into IPaC. USFWS will also use data from the Compendium of Avian Information (<http://www.nodc.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/OAS/prd/accession/0115356>) and other relevant data sources to generate year-round relative abundance histograms and

other visualization tools for the IPaC system. A training session will be available on the use of the National Node and its tools.

**Current Status:** Data from BOEM study “[Integrative Statistical Modeling and Predictive Mapping of Seabird Distribution and Abundance on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf](#)” has been incorporated into the USFWS IPaC system on July 8, 2016.

**Final Report Due:** February 28, 2018

**Publications Completed:** None

**Affiliated WWW Sites:**

<https://sites.google.com/a/pointblue.org/national-node-project/home>

<http://data.pointblue.org/partners/natnode/>

**Revised Date:** June 30, 2017