



# **Report to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission ISFMP Policy Board**

October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
Simen Kaalstad

# ACFHP Steering Committee



Met Oct. 21 & 22, 2024

- Approved: NEFMC membership application, FY26 Project Funding Application
- Operations: Budget increase from \$85k to \$125k (seeking additional \$40k in coordination funding)
- Science & Data: Submerged Aquatic Vegetation, seed-based restoration, workshop development
- Action Plan: Began developing new 2025-2026 plan

## Guest Speakers

- Jason Olive (USFWS) Alex McOwen (NOAA) Daniel Wieferich (USGS)

# FY24 Habitat Restoration Projects



- Recently active projects:
  - Maryland Coastal Bays Salt Marsh Restoration
    - Increased from 39 to **114 acres** of wetland habitat across two private properties.
  - Engineering, Design, and Permitting for Upper E.R. Collins Dam Removal, Pequest River, NJ
    - 3 miles of river access.

# FY25 Habitat Restoration Projects



- Approved by NFHP Board.
- ACFHP retained top funding tier status (appx. \$300,000 for FY25); **3 projects**:
  1. Cedar Grove Dam Removal, Pequest River, NJ.
  2. No Name Dam Removal, Pequest River, NJ.
    - Removals add 57 miles of riverine habitat access
  3. Oyster Reef Restoration, Matanzas River, FL.
    - 500 ft. of living shoreline using innovative oyster arches

# NFHP



- National Fish Habitat Partnership (NFHP) Project Accomplishment Map now Live
- [fishhabitat.org](https://fishhabitat.org)

**NATIONAL FISH HABITAT PARTNERSHIP**

## Projects and Accomplishments

How to use

Filters

- Organizations:  NFHP or Fish Habitat Partnership Sponsor: - All - Lead organization: - All -
- Contribution Source:
- Fiscal Year Funded or Completed:
- Project Categories:
- Spatial Filters:
- Focal Species and Habitats:

Map: NORTH AMERICA, NORTH PACIFIC OCEAN, NORTH ATLANTIC OCEAN. Selected features: 0

Summary Dashboard:

9,535	7,901	85,924	1,484	78,049	N/A
Habitat	Miles Conserved	Acres Conserved	Science Products	People Engaged*	Organizations Partnering on

Project active

Project Details:

- Maryland Coastal Bays Salt Marsh Restoration Project - Phase I (2024)  
NFHP Sponsor: Atlantic Coast Fish Habitat Partnership  
Project Lead: Delmarva Resource Conservation and Development Council
- Engineering, Design and Permitting for the Removal of the Upper E.R. Collins Dam (NJ Dam #24-29) on the Pequest River in New Jersey (2024)  
NFHP Sponsor: Atlantic Coast Fish Habitat Partnership
- Weaver Basin Fish Passage Assessments (2024)  
Total: 1613 | Selection: 0 Fish Passage



# Habitat Committee Report

Presented to ASMFC Policy Board

October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024

# Recent Activities



- The Habitat Committee (HC) met Oct. 23 & 24, 2024
- Habitat Hotline Atlantic 2024
  - Discussed most useful content, format, and next steps; Anticipated release date: Dec. 2024
    - Intro to ASMFC Habitat Committee
    - Recent activities summary (FHOC, HMS Acoustic Impacts)
    - Next topic of interest (Atlantic Shell Recycling)
    - State Updates (Shell Recycling Programs)

# Recent Activities



- Habitat Management Series (HMS)
  - Began development of next issue; focused on shell recycling programs along the Atlantic coast.
  - Questionnaire/Survey for standardized information gathering
  - Draft expected May 2025 (approval; 2025 Spring meeting)
- Leadership Update:
  - Chair: Kate Wilke, TNC
  - Vice-Chair: Eric Schneider, RI DEM





**Questions?**



# **Law Enforcement Committee Report to ISFMP Policy Board**

October 24, 2024

# Specie Discussion



**Atlantic Striped Bass** – Staff updated the LEC on the status of the Recreational Release Mortality Work Group findings and recommendations. Staff also provided an update on the stock status and the potential for management changes in 2025.

**Atlantic Cobia** – Staff offered an update on the proposed regional recreational management measures considered under Addendum II of the Atlantic Cobia FMP.

**Spiny Dogfish** – Staff presented the Sturgeon Bycatch Reduction measures of Draft Addendum VII to the Spiny Dogfish Interstate Fishery Management Plan.

**Winter Flounder** - Staff updated the LEC on the Board approval of the Conservation Equivalency proposal of a Consecutive Daily Trip Limit Pilot Program for the State of Massachusetts.

# LEC Business Session



**GCLLEN** – Members of NACLEC presented on the Global Conservation Law Enforcement Network.

**Case Study** – Members from the US DOJ and NOAA OLE presented on a case from “Operation One-Way Chandelier.”

**On Demand Fishing** – The LEC discussed the topic of “On Demand Fishing” with the Chair of both the AML Board and the NEFMC LEC.

**LEC Role and Expectation** - The LEC members were provided information on the ISFMP Charter, Action Plan, Resources and Travel guidelines of the commission.

**Website** - The LEC was also briefed on the status of the ASMFC website upgrade and has provided relevant information and graphics to support the upgrade.

# Notable Case Work



## **Connecticut Encon Police**

- Catching the Charter Boat!

## **New Hampshire Fish and Game / OGT**

- A fantastic example of teamwork between anglers and law enforcement!

## **Multi-State Operation**

- Recreational vs. Commercial



**Questions?**



**BOEM** BUREAU OF OCEAN  
ENERGY MANAGEMENT

# Atlantic Croaker at the Coastal Virginia Offshore Windfarm

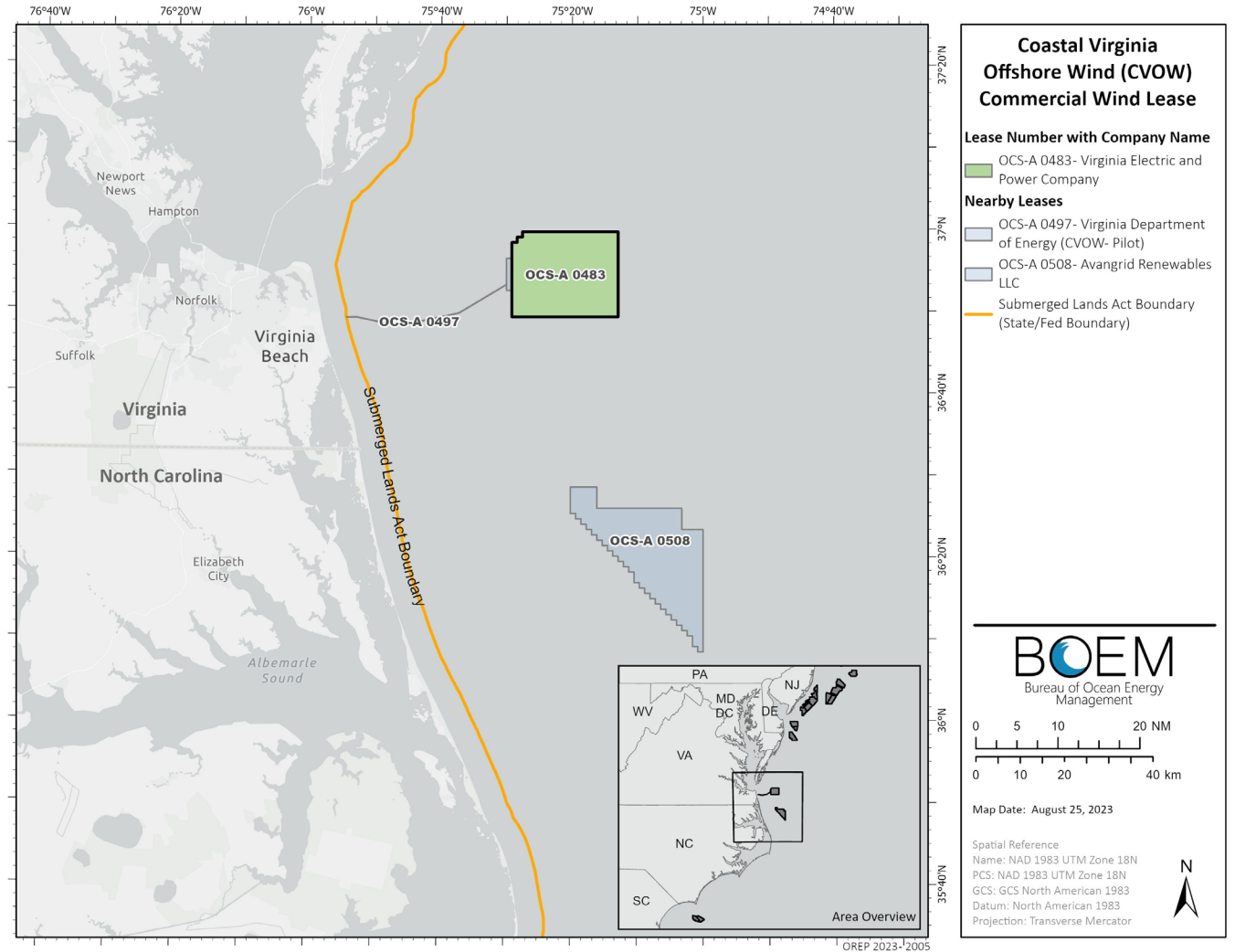
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October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Meeting

# Coastal Virginia Offshore Windfarm (CVOW)

- Construction and Operations Plan approval in January 2024
- 176 turbines
- Turbine installation began in May 2024
- First observation of deceased croaker on May 25<sup>th</sup> (50 fish)

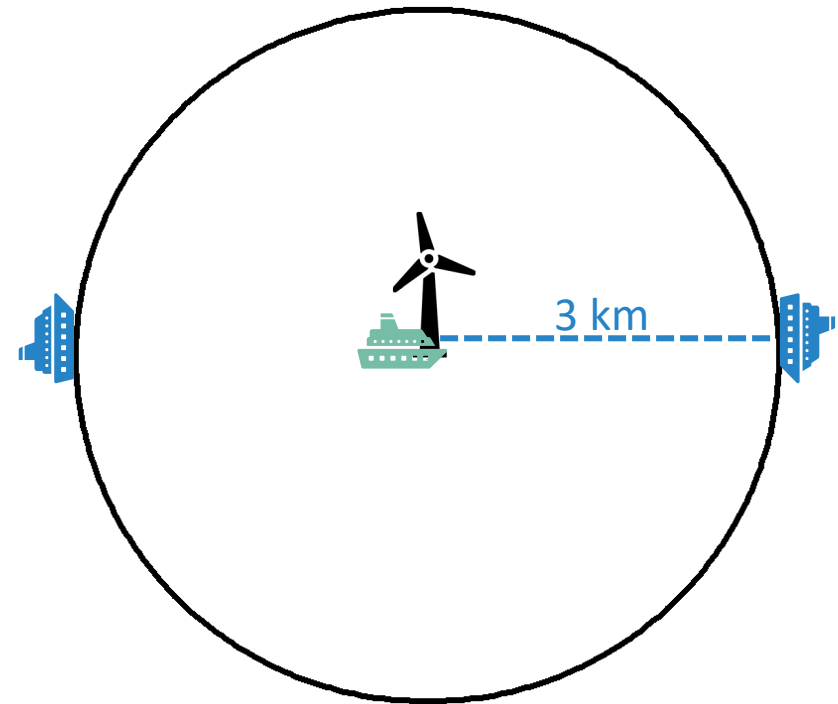




# What defines an observation?

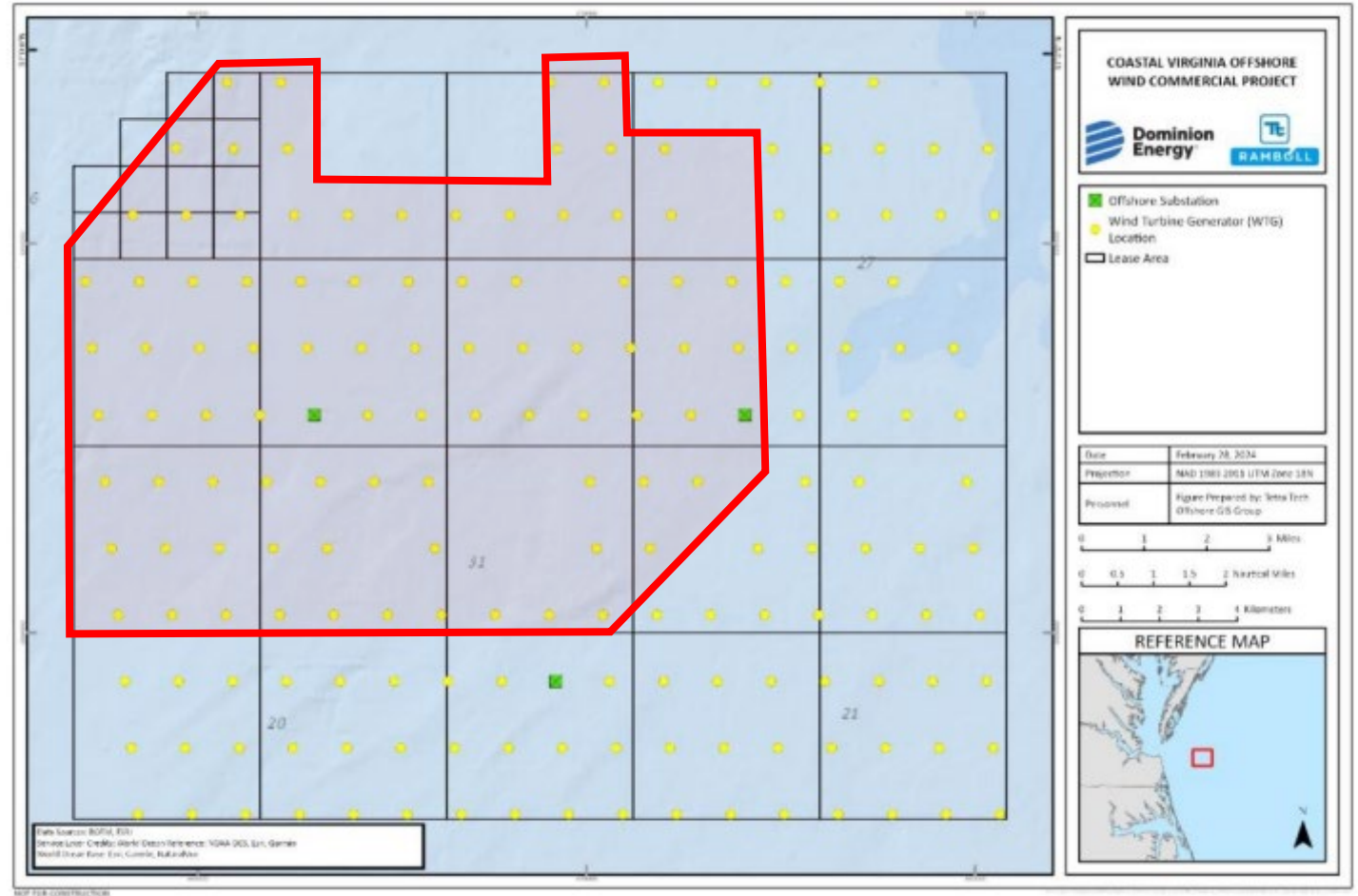
- Protected species observers (PSO)
- 3 PSO's per vessel
  - One installation vessel
  - Two support vessels
- Number of fish based on PSO estimates
- Drift & PSO locations could duplicate observations
- Small fraction of observations include spot

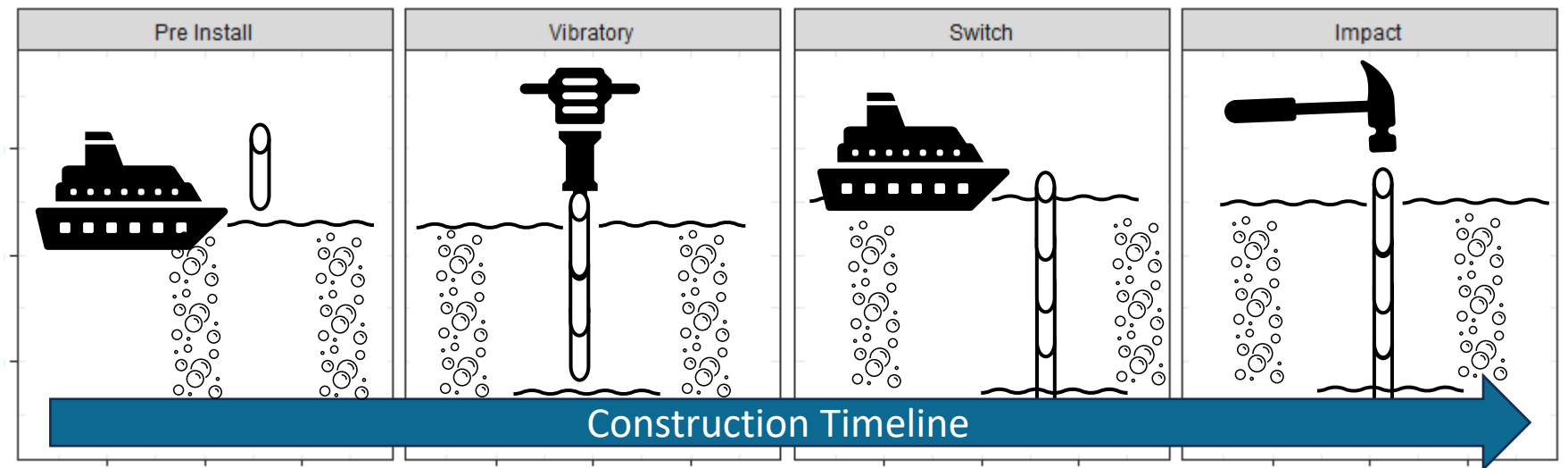
5.16.3.4 Detected or Impacted Dead Non-ESA-Listed Fish. The Lessee must report any occurrence of at least 10 dead non-ESA-listed fish within established shutdown or monitoring zones to BOEM and BSEE as soon as practicable (taking into account crew and vessel safety), but no later than 24 hours after the sighting. BOEM or BSEE will notify NMFS GARFO. The Lessee must confirm the relevant point of contact prior to reporting and confirm the reporting was received.



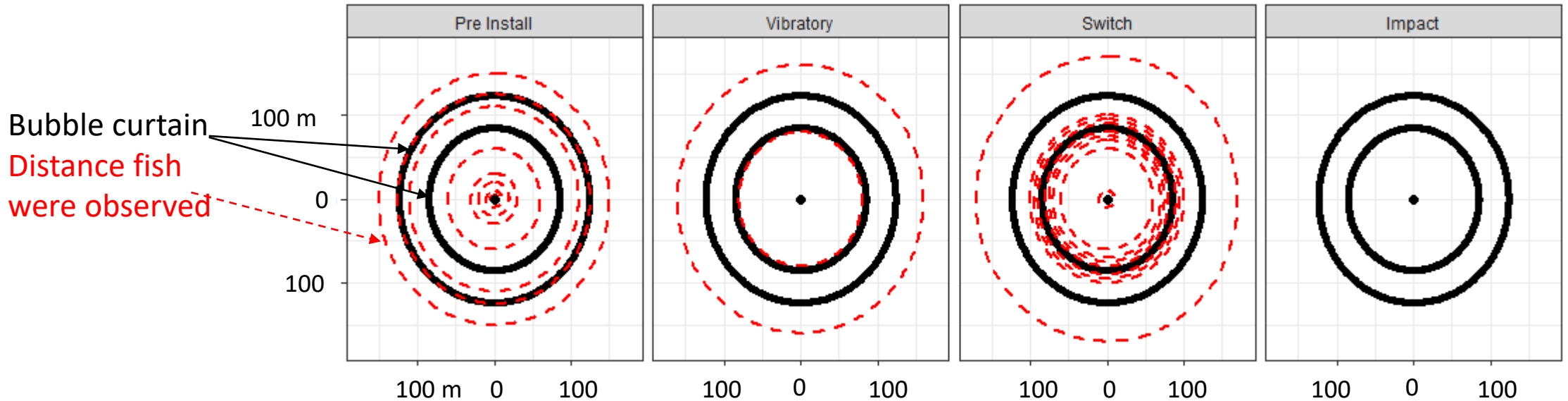
# Observations of Deceased Croaker at CVOW

- 39 observations at 24 foundation locations
  - Average is 450 fish per observation
  - Observations occurred at ~ 30% of the installed foundations
  - No observations in July or September





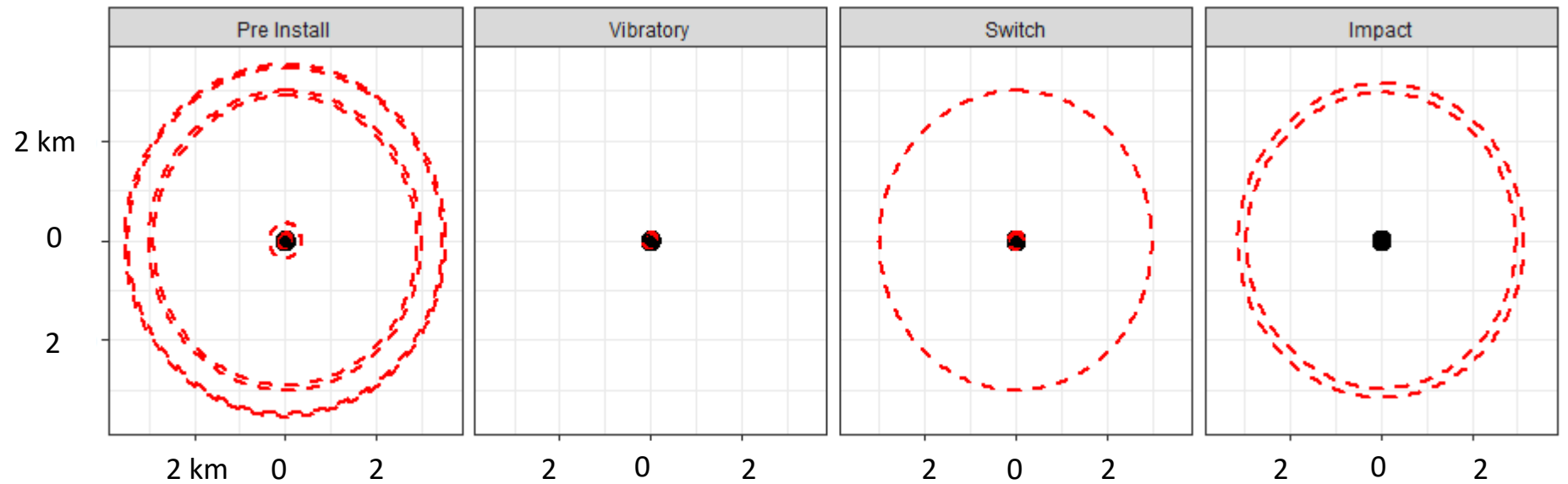
Construction Event	Mean Distance from Pile (m)	Mean Num. of Fish Observed	Total Fish	Num. of Observations	Percent of Observed Fish	Percent of Observations
No Construction	2,420	690	3,450	5	19%	13%
Pre-install	487	716	10,740	15	59%	38%
Vibratory piling	99	194	970	5	5%	13%
Post vibratory, pre impact ("switch")	606	163	1,792	11	10%	28%
Impact piling	3038	383	1,150	3	6%	8%
			<b>18,102</b>	<b>39</b>		



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25% of observations occurred greater than 1 km away from the pile



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Bubble curtains are used during installation of monopile foundations to attenuate sound, thereby reducing noise impacts for protected species & fish

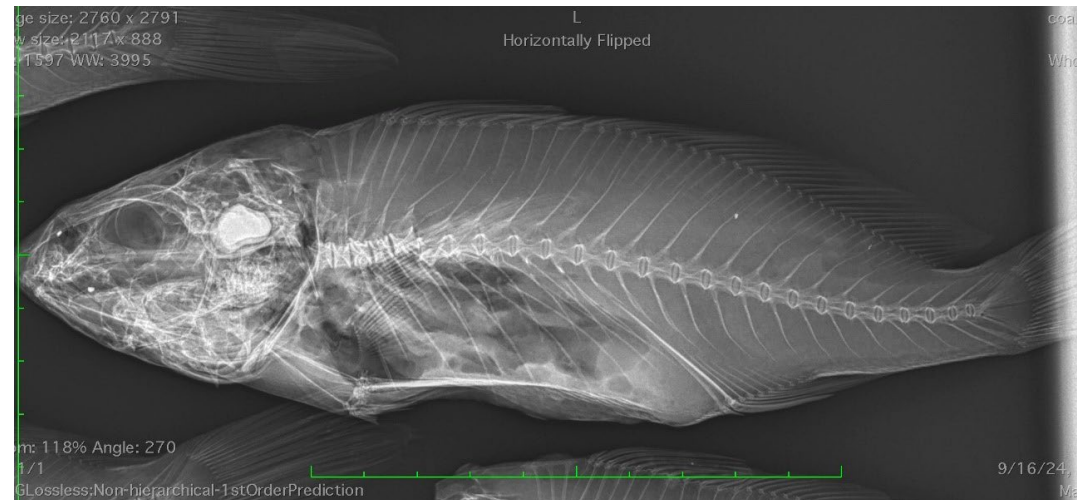
Double bubble curtains can reduce sound energy level by 90 %



# Current efforts

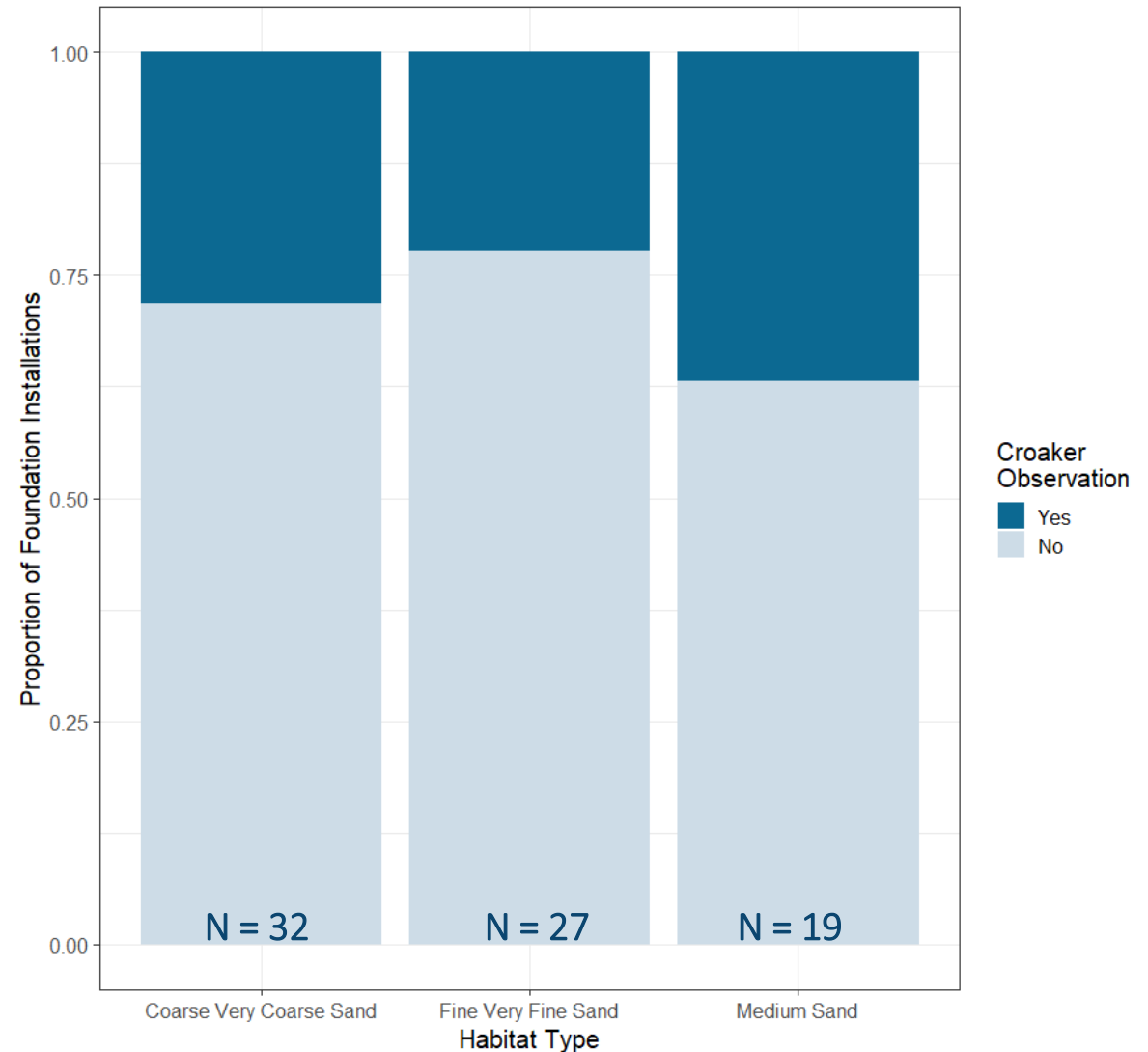
- CVOW construction is completed for 2024
  - To resume in May 2025
- Coordinating with Dominion Energy, DEME, and Bureau of Safety and Environmental (BSEE)
- Working with experts at VIMS, NC State, and NOAA fisheries to identify probable causes
  - Necropsies
  - Pathology
  - Acoustic monitoring

- Necropsy reports indicate
  - Acute trauma
  - Signs of barotrauma
  - “A definitive cause for the skeletal trauma is not grossly or histologically evident”



# Current efforts

- Considering a variety of drivers to see if observations are associated with
  - Time of year / temperature
  - Sediment type
  - Construction activity / duration
  - Sound levels
  - Distance to construction
  - Water turbulence
- Preliminary analyses indicate sediment type, and temperature do not appear to be drivers of the mortality events







[BOEM.gov](http://BOEM.gov)

