



RWSC Annual Work Plan

This Annual Work Plan for the Regional Wildlife Science Collaborative for Offshore Wind (RWSC) are based on assumptions and descriptions expressed in the [Stakeholder Vision for a Regional Wildlife Science Entity](#) and recently advanced in the [RWSC Governance Structure](#). The Annual Work Plan has three parts:

1. **RWSC Annual Work Plan (pp. 1-4)** – a standing list of tasks that RWSC staff are responsible for, the RWSC components (e.g., Steering Committee, Sector Caucuses, Subcommittees) that will guide and/or assist with those tasks, and the estimated frequency of those activities.
2. **Specific projected actions and milestones for FY 2023 (p. 5)** (July 2022 – June 2023) in addition to or associated with the general tasks described in the Annual Work Plan. A document like this is produced during each year’s annual planning.
3. **Progress made on projected actions and milestones during FY 2022 (pp. 6-7)** (July 2021 – June 2022) in addition to or associated with the general tasks described in the Annual Work Plan.

RWSC Annual Work Plan

The purpose of this Annual Work Plan is to outline the broad bins of responsibilities of NROC, MARCO, and CSSF staff in launching and implementing the RWSC. This Annual Work Plan describes six broad ongoing tasks. Each year, more specific actions that will be required within each of these tasks are projected and progress from the previous year is reported (see pages 5-7). The Annual Work Plan is meant to assist RWSC members and stakeholders in tracking the types of activities that RWSC undertakes and the approximate frequency of those activities.

Task 1 Manage staff and contractors; coordinate with partners and others

Subtask	Frequency
1. Manage staff and contractors; coordinate with partners (e.g., RWSC member entities, regional IOOS, ROSA) on staffing	Ongoing
2. Staff meetings and regular coordination with other NROC/MARCO contractors including on marine life and regional data portals	Weekly
3. Coordinate with regional IOOS associations, ROSA, and others	Monthly / As needed

Task 2 Pursue and maintain funding commitments for operations budget

Subtask	Frequency
1. Maintain, renew, and grow funding agreements with member entities	Ongoing



Task 3 Establish and maintain governance structure and functions

The [RWSC Governance Structure](#) follows the initial [Stakeholder Vision](#) developed with the assistance of Cadmus/CBI. Refer to the RWSC Governance Structure for frameworks and terms of reference for the three main components below.

A. Steering Committee

The Steering Committee includes equal representation of the four Sectors. Representatives are selected by the Sector Caucuses. It provides guidance and direction for process and procedure of the RWSC overall, including to the Director and Subcommittees. Steering Committee members agree to the terms of the Steering Committee Charter.

Subtask	Frequency
1. Convene regular meetings	At least quarterly and as needed
2. Communicate and coordinate with Steering Committee members outside of regular meetings	As needed
3. Review Governance Structure, Conflicts of Interest Policy, Harassment Policy	Annually each July
4. Review pending and ongoing offshore wind/wildlife research funded by RWSC member entities with Steering Committee	Ongoing
5. Review each Sector Caucus's membership with Steering Committee members from each Sector	Annually / As needed
6. Review expert Subcommittee membership with Steering Committee members	Annually / As needed
7. Provide Steering Committee opportunities to review RWSC work products	Ongoing

B. Sector Caucuses

Sector caucuses involve standing meetings and listserv discussions within sectors (e.g., offshore wind developers; state government; federal government; and non-governmental environmental organizations). Sector Caucuses provide input to the Steering Committee to ensure progress on strategic research on offshore wind and wildlife topics. Each sector has developed its own Framework to guide the creation and use of their caucus including a clear definition of leadership, membership, and participation in that caucus.

Subtask	Frequency
1. Review Sector Caucus charters (with Steering Committee)	Annually / As needed
2. Convene regular Sector Caucus meetings (with Steering Committee)	Biannually
3. Review pending and ongoing research with each Sector	Ongoing



C. Subcommittees

These are the core entities that identify key gaps and needs, scope initial research concepts initially, and help maintain alignment between ongoing research and the gaps and needs of the RWSC. Subcommittees are convened as needed.

Subtask	Frequency
1. Maintain and review Subcommittee membership lists and invite members based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pending and ongoing research - Participation lists from recent wildlife research/monitoring workshops and meetings - NROC-MARCO Marine Life Work Groups - Steering Committee and Sector Caucus input 	Ongoing / As needed

Task 4 Prioritize and support regional research

Subtask	Frequency
1. Catalog existing research frameworks and strategies	Ongoing
2. Convene Subcommittees to address emerging research needs and to develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Data collection strategies that coordinate with ongoing/existing regional-scale research b. Taxa-specific lists of wildlife research priorities based on recent workshops, meetings, working groups, and emerging needs c. Data collection/standardization protocols d. Data storage best practices e. Guidance for research prioritization across taxa f. Scopes for projects that address gaps and needs 	Ongoing
3. Produce and maintain list of research gaps, needs, priorities, methods, and best practices (with Subcommittees)	Annually / Ongoing
4. Facilitate regional research and funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assist with scoping research projects that address regional gaps and needs with Subcommittees 	Ongoing



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Facilitate discussions about implementing funding and funding strategies with Steering Committee c. Coordinate with funders of regional wildlife research with Steering Committee d. Manage research funds and projects 	
5. Obtain funding commitments for research and/or support other entities in obtaining research funding	Ongoing

Task 5 Maintain sortable database of ongoing pending wildlife research, monitoring efforts, publications, and datasets

Subtask	Frequency
6. Develop, maintain, and make available a sortable database for continual review by Steering Committee, Sector Caucuses, and Subcommittees	Ongoing
7. Coordinate with researchers, research funders, and regional data portals to disseminate spatial data related to research activities (e.g., survey footprints and locations of data collection; eventually results/data products)	Ongoing

Task 6 Regularly communicate progress and engage stakeholders

Subtask	Frequency
1. Regular staff attendance at stakeholder and partner meetings (e.g., state offshore wind working groups, ROSA Advisory Committee meetings, industry conferences)	As needed / Ongoing
2. Build an email list and periodically provide updates on RWSC activities	Ongoing
3. Regularly post information and updates on a public website	Ongoing
4. Issue a public Annual Report to communicate progress	Annually
5. Convene Annual Science Meeting	Annually



FY 2023 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)

Projected actions and milestones in addition to or associated with the general tasks described in the Annual Work Plan (Annual Work Plan Task noted in parentheses)

Timeline	Actions and milestones
1st Quarter <i>July - September 2022</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate this year’s accomplishments and next year’s objectives (Task 6) • Steering Committee & Sector Caucuses (Task 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Approve and begin implementing FY 23 Annual Work Plan and Funding Plan ○ Continue to build membership, awareness, and engagement in all Sectors • Subcommittees (Task 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue convening Marine Mammals, Bird & Bat Subcommittees approximately monthly ○ Obtain support/hire consultant to coordinate Habitat & Ecosystem Subcommittee ○ Finalize rosters and convene Sea Turtle, Habitat & Ecosystem Subcommittees approximately monthly ○ Publicly release sections of the Science Plan as they are developed/drafted/finalized • Launch www.rwsc.org (Tasks 3, 5) • Develop collaborative funding plan for next campaign of MA/RI Aerial Megafauna Surveys (Task 4) • Further scope research support functions of the RWSC and develop agreements with funders
2nd Quarter <i>October – December 2022</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steering Committee & Sector Caucuses (Task 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to build membership, awareness, and engagement in all Sectors • Subcommittees (Task 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to publicly release sections of the Science Plan as they are developed/drafted/finalized • Further scope research support functions of the RWSC and develop agreements with funders
3rd Quarter <i>January – March 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steering Committee & Sector Caucuses (Task 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to build membership, awareness, and engagement in all Sectors ○ Begin strategizing for Science Plan implementation • Subcommittees (Task 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to publicly release sections of the Science Plan as they are developed/drafted/finalized • Further scope research support functions of the RWSC and develop agreements with funders
4th Quarter <i>April - June 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a specific actions, milestones, and funding plan for FY2024 (Tasks 1, 2) • Secure funding for FY 2024 (Task 2) • Steering Committee & Sector Caucuses (Task 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to build membership, awareness, and engagement in all Sectors ○ Strategize for Science Plan implementation • Subcommittees (Task 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to publicly release sections of the Science Plan as they are developed/drafted/finalized ○ Finalize the RWSC Science Plan • Further scope research support functions of the RWSC and develop agreements with funders • Develop a brief annual report, including this year’s accomplishments and next year’s objectives (Task 6)



FY 2022 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022)

Progress on actions and milestones in addition to or associated with the general tasks described in the Annual Work Plan (Annual Work Plan Task noted in parentheses)

Timeline	Actions and milestones
1st Quarter <i>July - September 2021</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steering Committee (Task 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Convene monthly meetings until at least December 2021 (COMPLETED) ○ Draft and finalize Governance Structure, Conflicts of Interest Policy, Harassment Policy (COMPLETED, July 2021) ○ Review Sector Caucus membership (COMPLETED, December 2021) • Sector Caucuses (Task 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discuss initial funding agreements with each member entity through Sector Caucus meetings and via one-on-one meetings with Director (COMPLETED, December 2021) ○ Draft Sector Caucus charters (with Steering Committee) (COMPLETED, December 2021) • Subcommittees (Task 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop plans to convene Subcommittees for Marine Mammals, Birds and Bats, Habitat and Ecosystem, and a Cross-cutting Subcommittee in partnership with NYSERDA E-TWG (COMPLETED) ○ Develop Subcommittee membership lists with Steering Committee and Sector Caucuses (COMPLETED) • Establish use of web-based document sharing platform (Tasks 3, 5) (COMPLETED) • Develop initial database of pending/ongoing wildlife and offshore wind research (Task 4) (COMPLETED) • Post RWSE information and public documents to a website (Task 5) (COMPLETED)
2nd Quarter <i>October – December 2021</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector Caucuses (Task 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Finalize Sector Caucus charters (with Steering Committee) (COMPLETED, March 2022) ○ Hold initial welcome meeting with each Sector Caucus (with Steering Committee), including review of Subcommittees membership (COMPLETED; December 2021) • Subcommittees (Task 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Convene Marine Mammals, Birds and Bats, Habitat and Ecosystem, Sea Turtle Subcommittees (ONGOING) ○ Secure funding for taxa-based status/gaps/needs assessment for each Subcommittee (COMPLETED for 4 of 6 Subcommittees, JULY 2022) ○ With each Subcommittee, begin drafting list of research gaps/needs/priorities (IN PROGRESS) • Maintain RWSE updates, information, and public documents on a website (Task 5) (ONGOING)
3rd Quarter <i>January – March 2022</i>	<p>Revised milestones (January 28, 2022 Steering Committee Meeting):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a specific actions, milestones, and funding plan for FY2023 (Tasks 1, 2) (COMPLETED, June 2022) • Initiate hiring of consultants to convene Subcommittees and begin drafting Science Plans (Task 4): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Marine Mammal (COMPLETED, March 2022) ○ Bird & Bat (COMPLETED, March 2022)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain RWSE updates, information, and public documents on a website (Task 6) (<i>ONGOING</i>)
<p>4th Quarter <i>April - June 2022</i></p>	<p><i>Revised milestones (January 28, 2022 Steering Committee Meeting):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize work plan and funding plan for FY2023 (Tasks 1, 2) (<i>IN PROGRESS</i>) • Secure funding for FY 2023 (Task 2) (<i>IN PROGRESS</i>) • Complete hiring of consultants to convene Subcommittees and begin drafting Science Plans (Task 4): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Marine Mammal (<i>COMPLETED, March 2022</i>) ○ Bird & Bat (<i>COMPLETED, March 2022</i>) ○ Sea Turtle (<i>Subcommittee convened, contract IN PROGRESS</i>) ○ Habitat & Ecosystem (<i>Subcommittee convened, contract IN PROGRESS</i>) • Maintain RWSE updates, information, and public documents on a website (Task 6) (<i>ONGOING</i>) • Begin to coalesce branding, logo, web and social media presence (Task 6) (<i>ONGOING</i>) • Issue a brief “annual report,” including the next year’s objectives and outcomes for the RWSE (Task 6) (<i>Existing materials that provide this content: June 2022 public webinar; NYSERDA State of the Science Symposium materials; this document</i>)