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Q: What is OceanReports?

A: OceanReports is a web-based, automated geospatial tool for analyzing and visualizing U.S. ocean space. OceanReports allows users to select or draw an area over an ocean space and instantaneously obtain over 65 unique infographics containing analyses of the location, including its energy and mineral resources, other natural resources, transportation and infrastructure, oceanographic and biophysical conditions, and the local ocean economy specific to the user-created area of interest and surrounding data.

Q: What are the features of OceanReports?

A: Users can select infographics of interest, explore pertinent ocean data through interactive data tables and visualizations, toggle each layer related to infographic content, share results, and print reports to inform various offshore activities and ocean education.

Q: Why was OceanReports developed?

A: OceanReports was developed to help translate geospatial data into easy-to-understand results for use by ocean industries such as energy, shipping and transportation, aquaculture, fisheries, and seabed mining. Additionally, it can be used to navigate conflicting uses and environmental considerations, and to assess economic opportunity in U.S. waters. This tool adds an analytical and spatial planning capability to MarineCadastre.gov's suite of products. It should be used as a first step for information gathering about a specific location or in the initial stages of planning and discussions related to an area of interest.

Q: Who should use OceanReports?

A: OceanReports was made for non-technical users from a variety of institutions, including government, nonprofit organizations, private industry, academia, and the public.

Q: How is OceanReports related to MarineCadastre.gov?

A: OceanReports is the newest tool within MarineCadastre.gov and draws from over 100 of MarineCadastre.gov's data sets. Because of differences in how the systems are developed and maintained, data in OceanReports in some cases may not be as up to date as what is found in MarineCadastre.gov. Therefore, MarineCadastre.gov is the best place to go for data downloads and to visualize any differences in data layers between the systems that would also show up as differences in the reports. Users should always look at the metadata records to determine the latest data update.

Q: How does OceanReports enable better decision-making about ocean space?

A: OceanReports helps users make early informed decisions about wind energy siting, aquaculture development, potential activity conflicts, and environmental review by providing many of the accessible authoritative data layers needed for a specific area of interest.

Q: Why do I see data layers and infographics for some areas but not others?

A: There are areas where data do not yet exist in a format that can be ingested by OceanReports or other geospatial data portals, or they simply have never been collected. In these cases, the message, “The data are not currently available for this location,” will appear. A different message, “The data are not applicable to this location,” will appear when your area of interest does not coincide with the data extent; it does not mean that data are missing.

Q: Why do some infographics only provide links to other sites?

A: In certain cases, the authoritative agencies that manage the particular data have created their own tools and documentation that are best managed directly by them. There is no reason to re-create a tool or data layer that is already easily accessed from the originator’s site. Therefore, OceanReports simply points users to these well-maintained tools. Outputs and reports from these tools, along with an output report from OceanReports, can provide much of the information one might need to collect for permitting or project planning and analysis.

Q: Does OceanReports duplicate regional-scale ocean data portals and tools?

A: OceanReports is an analytical tool applicable to all geographies within the entire U.S. exclusive economic zone. For those geographies where a region-specific portal and data products already exist, OceanReports serves as a complementary tool with additional analytic capabilities. OceanReports should be considered as one of the first tools to use when investigating the available data, links, and information for a specific area.

Q: Who developed OceanReports?

A: OceanReports was developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM). It is part of the MarineCadastre.gov project.

Q: Why is the boundary of my Quick Report area generalized?

A: OceanReports contains a list of Quick Reports that are pre-calculated reports for established areas of interest (e.g., national estuarine research reserves). The boundaries represented on the map page are generalized for rapid display; however, the statistics and infographics for the Quick Report areas are based on the most recent, high-accuracy boundaries provided by the authoritative source.