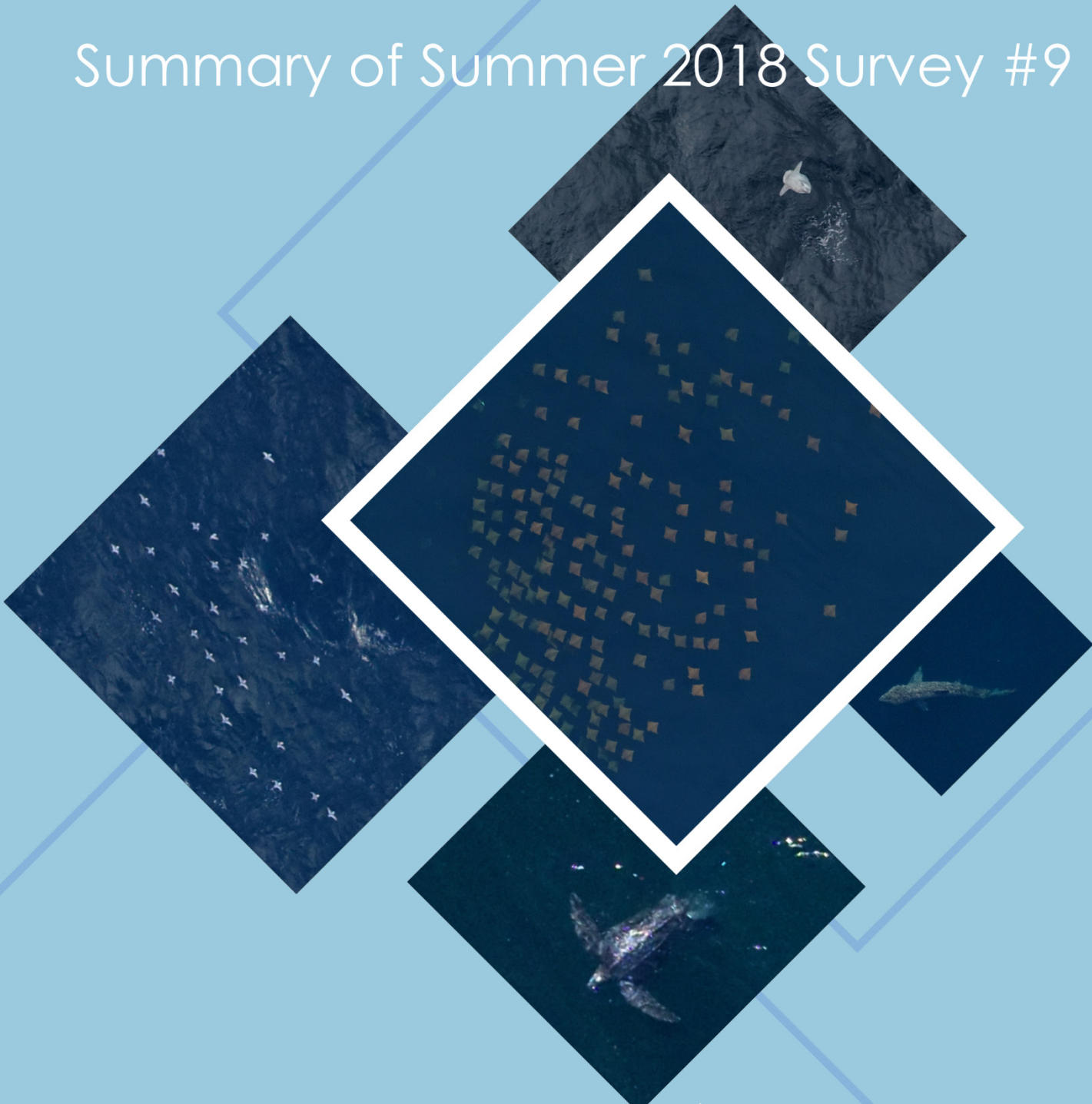


# Digital Aerial Baseline Survey of Marine Wildlife in Support of Offshore Wind Energy

## Summary of Summer 2018 Survey #9



**NYSERDA**





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## Summary of Summer 2018 Digital Survey #9

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## Overview

The third summer survey for the NYSERDA Offshore planning area (OPA) was started on July 29, 2018 and completed August 16, 2018. These surveys are designed to characterize the usage of the area by marine fauna to aid in the planning for offshore wind. The survey was undertaken by one APEM camera technician using the Shearwater 3 camera system with an image resolution of 1.5 cm. A Piper Aztec twin engine aircraft was used at the planned flight height of 1,360 ft. The survey team was based out of MacArthur Airport in Long Island, New York, for the duration of the survey.

## Methods

### Transect Orientation

The same flight plan was used for the Summer 2018 survey as detailed in the Spring 2018 Flight Plan and as used for the Winter 2017–2018 survey (confidential document to NYSERDA) in which the nearshore area is surveyed along transects parallel to the shoreline and the offshore area is surveyed along transects perpendicular to the shoreline (Figure 1). Because there are a number of local airfields on Long Island, FAA imposes varying altitude restrictions that survey aircraft must obey. These are designated according to distance from the airfield. Flights parallel to the shoreline within the restricted zone ensure that the survey aircraft can maintain constant altitude over a complete transect, thus ensuring consistency in image resolution and areal coverage along the transect.

FAA controlled altitude restrictions cease to be an issue several miles offshore. At this point transects were orientated perpendicular to the shoreline and consequently to the bathymetry, providing optimal orientation for expected clines in the distribution of target species (Figure 1).

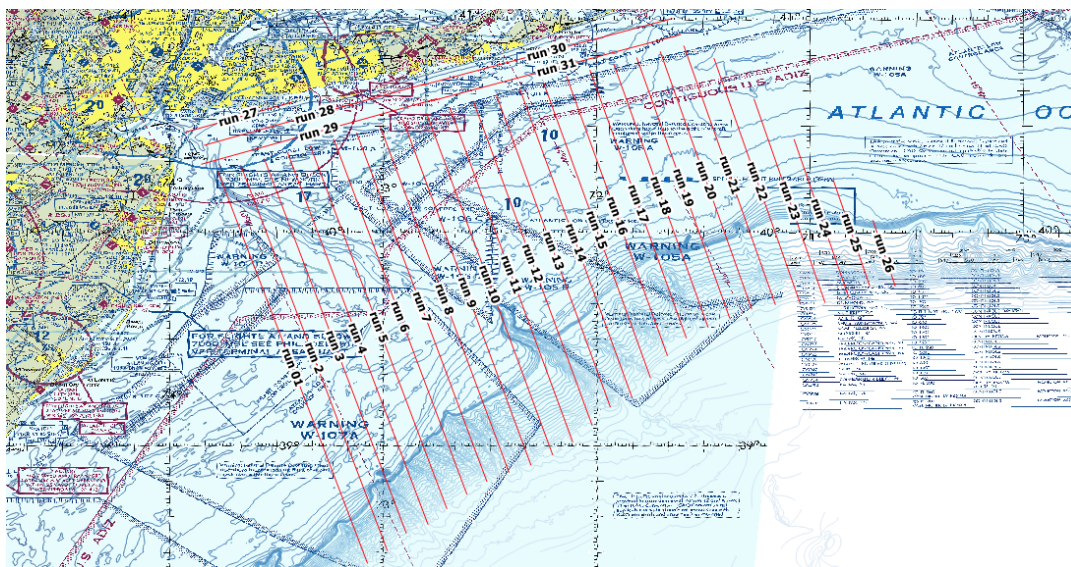


Figure 1. Transect lines flown for the OPA including nearshore and offshore areas

## Daily Schedule

The survey was undertaken by one APEM camera technician and pilot each day. The survey crew generally began surveying around 7 AM, depending on the weather the crew would either plan to conduct two short missions or one longer mission. Following each daily survey, sample imagery was evaluated to make sure it was of good quality for analysis. If data were deemed not high enough quality, the lines affected were re-flown. Data were backed up daily and prepared to be shipped for analysis.

## Flight Altitude and GSD Resolution

The flight crew was able to gain permission to enter the controlled airspace close to the coast at the proposed flight altitude and therefore the whole survey was completed at a flight altitude of 1,360 ft and resolution of 1.5 cm GSD. The weather was generally poor throughout the survey period with long periods of low cloud cover and with survey days interspersed with periods when it was not suitable to survey.

## Timing

The following details the lines completed on each day where surveying took place

| Date (2018) | Action   |
|-------------|--|
| July 29     | 3 lines of the OPA were flown  |
| July 30     | 5 lines of the OPA were flown  |
| August 7    | 2 partial lines of the OPA were flown                                  |
| August 8    | 2 partial lines of the OPA were flown                                  |
| August 9    | 2 partial lines of the OPA were flown                                  |
| August 10   | 10 lines of the OPA were flown   |
| August 15   | 5 lines and 1 partial line of the OPA were flown                       |
| August 16   | 5 lines and 2 partial lines of the OPA were flown (6,8,31,19,20,21,22) |

Other dates not listed above were non-survey days due to weather or aircraft maintenance.

## Results

There were approximately 400,000 images collected during the survey covering the OPA area, from which sufficient images will be extracted to achieve over 7% image capture coverage for the OPA. Details on the footprint size and capture point of each image along with the final coverage will be provided once data have been fully processed.