

Environmental Studies Program: Ongoing Study

Study Area(s): Western GOM, Central GOM, Eastern GOM

Administered By: GOM OCS Region

Title: Administration of the LSU Coastal Marine Institute (2014–2019) (NSL #GM-14-03-01)

BOEM Information Need(s) to be Addressed: Since 1992, BOEM has maintained a strong partnership with the Louisiana State University (LSU) through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that established the Coastal Marine Institute (CMI). The CMI program provides a vital mechanism to continue dialogue and research on OCS issues that are relevant to the State of Louisiana and BOEM. With matching funds, BOEM and the State are able to collect information that otherwise might not be obtained. Individual projects conducted under the agreement address issues of immediate concern to both the State and BOEM, and provide information for numerous OCS decisions, depending on the focus and scope of the particular project.

Total BOEM Cost: \$224,995

Period of Performance: FY 2014–2019

Conducting Organization(s): Louisiana State University

Principal Investigator(s): Dr. David Dismukes (dismukes@lsu.edu)

BOEM Contact(s): Melanie Damour (Melanie.Damour@boem.gov)

Description:

Background: BOEM and LSU through an MOA are continuing the CMI program to conduct environmental and socioeconomic research of joint interest to the State of Louisiana and BOEM on offshore energy and marine minerals issues. Under the terms of this agreement the State, through LSU, provides matching funds of at least one dollar for each dollar BOEM provides for selected studies. A small part of the costs are dedicated to administrative support (CMI Director) while the majority of funds are utilized for individual projects. The first agreement was signed in September 1992, establishing the first BOEM CMI at LSU. This agreement was extended for a fifth 5-year period (2014–2019). Under this agreement, any LSU researcher can propose research projects of interest to both the State and BOEM, provided that the offeror provides matching funds.

The status of the ongoing CMI studies varies as to the individual study being conducted. The CMI agreement emphasizes a close cooperative working relationship between LSU and BOEM resulting in a program of research of vital interest to both the State of Louisiana and BOEM.

Objectives: The LSU CMI program is designed to use the highly qualified, scientific expertise at the local levels to: collect and disseminate environmental information needed for OCS energy and mineral decisions; address local and regional OCS related

environmental and resources issues of mutual interest, and strengthen the BOEM-LSU-State partnerships in addressing OCS energy information needs. The administrative objectives of the program are:

1. To manage the administration of the Coastal Marine Institute program. Tasks include maintenance of and updating studies information on the existing CMI webpage, organization of a coordination meeting between BOEM and LSU faculty and research units to communicate information about the CMI program and funding opportunities, coordination of all CMI activities with the Steering Committee members, and coordination of CMI proposal reviews by Steering Committee members and outside peer reviewers, as appropriate, and submittal of an annual progress report summarizing the work accomplished each year.

Methods: The LSU CMI Director coordinates the CMI program and works closely with the BOEM Project Officer. Annually, letters of intent and invited proposals for CMI studies that address the information needs identified within a general framework are solicited by BOEM and submitted to the LSU CMI Director. Letters of intent and solicited proposals are then submitted to BOEM and evaluated as to their scientific merit and applicability to information needs of BOEM and the State of Louisiana, and deemed either acceptable, in need of revision, or unacceptable. External peer review is sometimes sought to assist in the reviews, particularly when questions of technical merit cannot be resolved.

Current Status: Maintenance of and updates to the LSU CMI webpage are ongoing. Annual progress reports by LSU are in progress.

Final Report Due: August 2019

Publications Completed: Final reports for individual LSU CMI studies will be posted on the BOEM ESPIS website at: <https://marinecadastre.gov/espis/>

Affiliated WWW Sites: <http://www.cmi.lsu.edu/index.html>

Revised Date: June 14, 2017