BOEMRE ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES PROGRAM: Ongoing Studies

Region: Pacific OCS Region

Planning Area: Atlantic OCS

Title: Inventory and Analysis of Archaeological Site Occurrence on the Atlantic OCS

BOEMRE Information Need(s) to be Addressed: With recent interest in alternative energy sources and new leasing activity planned for the Atlantic Region, development in this area will increase. Therefore, a current inventory and analysis of where submerged cultural resources might be expected will be crucial for mitigating adverse affects to these resources as required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and Executive Order 11593, which require that Federal agencies must apply the National Register Criteria to properties that may be affected by an undertaking.

Total BOEMRE Cost: $337,629.16 **Period of Performance:** FY 2009-2011

Conducting Organization: TRC-Environmental Corporation

Principal Investigator: Brian Thomas

BOEMRE Contact: David Ball

Description:
Background: It has been over 25 years since any type of archaeological study has been completed on the Atlantic OCS for BOEMRE. The study *Summary and Analysis of Cultural Resources Information on the Continental Shelf from the Bay of Fundy to Cape Hatteras, Final Report* - *Volume I: Physical Environment*, *Volume II: Archaeology and Paleontology*, *Volume III: Historic Shipping*, and *Volume IV: Management* completed in 1979 evaluated potential submerged archaeological resources from Cape Hatteras, NC, northward; and a 1981 study *A Cultural Resource Survey of the Continental Shelf from Cape Hatteras to Key West, Volume I: Introduction and Physical Environment*, *Volume II: Prehistoric Archaeology*, *Volume III: Shipwreck Archaeology and Remote Sensing Technology*, *and Volume IV: Conclusions and Recommendations* addressed potential submerged archaeological resources from Cape Hatteras, NC, southward. Since that time, there have been a number of significant archaeological discoveries off the Atlantic coastline, including both historic shipwrecks and submerged prehistoric sites. As a result, there is a critical need to develop a database of known and reported submerged cultural resources along the Atlantic OCS and to identify areas where inundated prehistoric sites might be located. A similar effort was completed in the Gulf of Mexico Region OCS in 2003; *Refining and Revising the Gulf of Mexico Outer Continental Shelf Region High-Probability Model for Historic Shipwrecks, Final Report*; *Volume I: Executive Summary*, *Volume II: Technical Narrative*, *Volume III: Appendices*

Objectives: The objectives of this study are to develop an inventory of known, reported, and potential archaeological sites for the Atlantic Planning Region similar to what has been developed for the Gulf of Mexico Region. The proposed study will develop an inventory of historic shipwrecks emphasizing the use of primary sources; assess areas of the Atlantic OCS for prehistoric site potential and develop a model for where prehistoric sites might be expected; and recommend appropriate survey methodology in order to detect and avoid impacts to such resources. While remote sensing surveys will be required of permittees in their area of effect, an inventory of potential archaeological resources developed by the proposed study will help guide decision makers in developing appropriate mitigation strategies for targets located by remote sensing. In addition, the development of an effective survey strategy is dependant upon knowing the nature of these resources and where they most likely may be located.

Methods: The proposed study will develop an inventory of historic shipwrecks emphasizing the use of original sources; assess areas of the OCS for prehistoric site potential by evaluating current theories on prehistoric settlement patterns, paleo-shorelines, sea level rise, and regional geology; and synthesize this information to recommend an appropriate survey methodology in order to detect and avoid impacts to archaeological resources. The database should be developed using the same format as the current GOMR shipwreck database and should link to a Geographic Information System compatible to the existing BOEMRE GIS.

Current Status: The contract was awarded on January 16, 2009 to TRC of Norcross, Georgia. A post-award meeting was held on 12 March 2009. Archival research is complete and a draft report of findings and draft database was submitted for review in August 2010. In December 2010 the period of performance was extended through May 2011. The report and database are currently under revision and will be submitted for review by the end of February 2011.

Final Report Due: April 2011

Publications: None at this time.

Affiliated WWW Sites: None at this time.

Revised date: March 4, 2011