

BOEM ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES PROGRAM: ONGOING STUDIES

BOEM OCS Region: [Gulf of Mexico](#)

Title: The Relationship of Crime to Oil Development in the Coastal Regions of Louisiana (GM-92-42-80)

Planning Area: Central

Total Cost: \$110,000

Period of Performance: FY 2000-2008

Conducting Organization: [Coastal Marine Institute](#), Louisiana State University

BOEM Contact: [Dr. Harry Luton](#)

Description:

Background: By the end of the 1960's, the oil industry, including offshore production, was an integral part of the social and economic organization of the coastal regions of Louisiana. While it often has been suggested that the social and economic impact of the oil and gas industry has contributed to various social problems in the region, there has been little systematic research on the subject of crime. Much of the evidence suggesting a connection is anecdotal or speculative in nature, and to the extent that empirical research has been conducted, it has been limited in scope and inconclusive in results.

Objectives: The primary objective of this study is to specify the relationship between patterns of crime and the development of the oil and gas extraction industry in the coastal regions of Louisiana. It will:

- develop a comprehensive data set to facilitate the research; and
- analyze that dataset through multi-variate models, time-series analysis, and comparisons with control counties and parishes.

Methods: Crime data from the FBI will be merged with corresponding parish-level social and economic data from the U.S. Census and various state agencies. Oil-involved parishes will be compared and contrasted with noninvolved ones and both will be compared and contrasted to non-Louisiana and U.S. wide trends. Time-series and regression analysis will be used. In addition to the analysis of quantitative data, qualitative information will be gathered from Morgan City and the Grand Isle/Leeville/Port Fourchon area. This information will be used to focus the quantitative models and as an aid in interpretation of results.

Products: A final report.

Importance to BOEM: The BOEM is mandated by NEPA to analyze the social impacts of OCS development on GOM communities for EIS and EA documents. The issue of crime has been raised as a public concern that BOEM should address.

Current Status: A draft report has been reviewed by BOEM. The final study report was delivered to BOEM (formerly MMS) weeks before hurricane Katrina. BOEM has completed in-house editing and anticipates closing the study soon.

Final Report Due: August 2003

Publications: Forsyth, C., et al. 2007. "Framing perceptions of oil development and social disruption." *Social Science Journal* 44: 287-299.

Luthra, A., et al. 2007. "Economic fluctuation and crime: a time-series analysis of the effects of oil development in the coastal regions of Louisiana." *Deviant Behavior* 28(2) March: 113-130.

Affiliated WWW Sites: [Louisiana State University, Coastal Marine Institute](#)

Revised date: January 2012

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