



U.S. Department of the Interior  
Minerals Management Service

**MMS**

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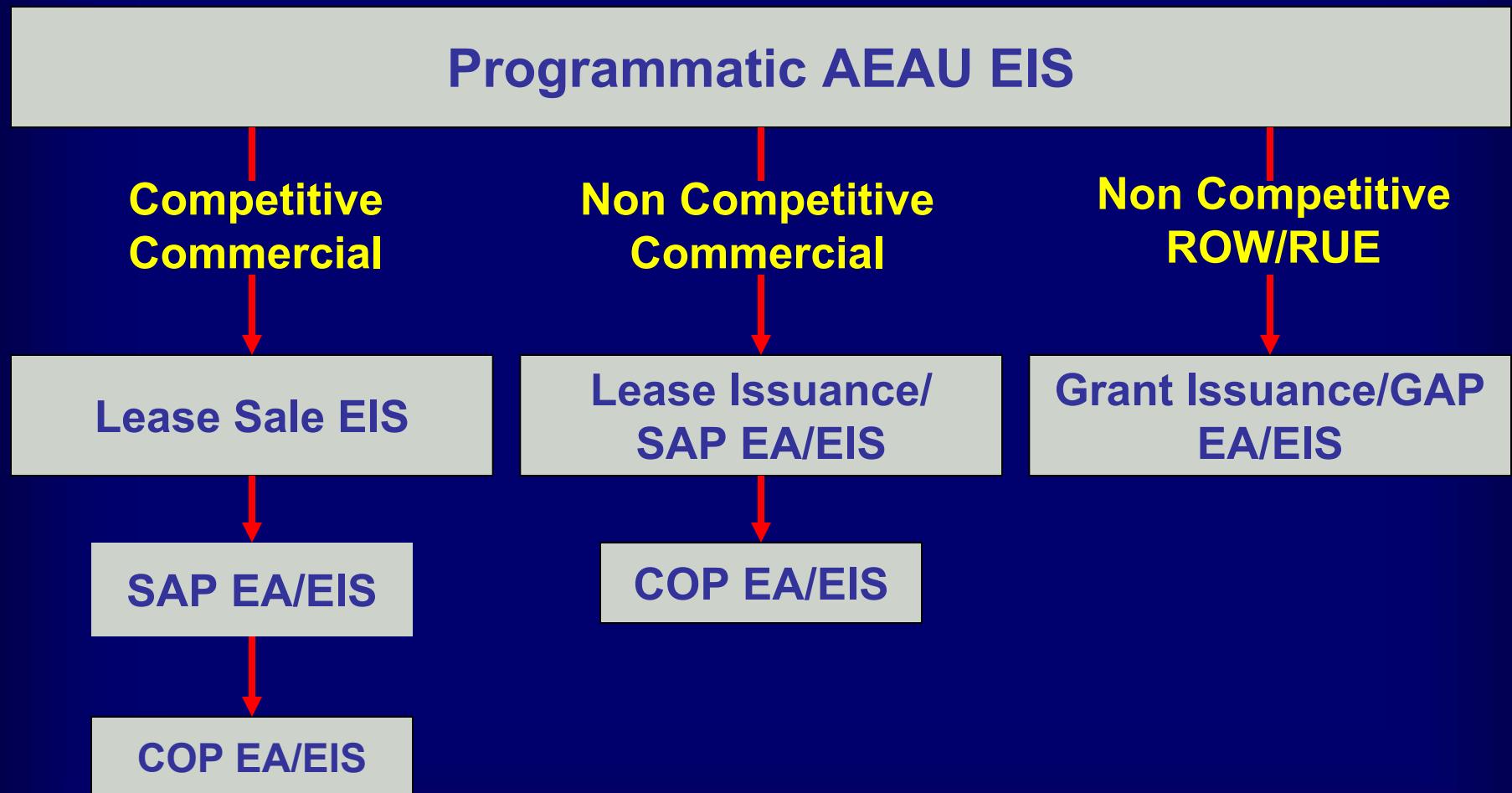
## Overview of MMS Environmental Review Process

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Branch of Environmental Assessment

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MMS Massachusetts Task Force  
November 19, 2009,  
Mass. Maritime Academy, Buzzards Bay

# Multi-Step Environmental Review Process





# Environmental Analysis

# Environmental Studies

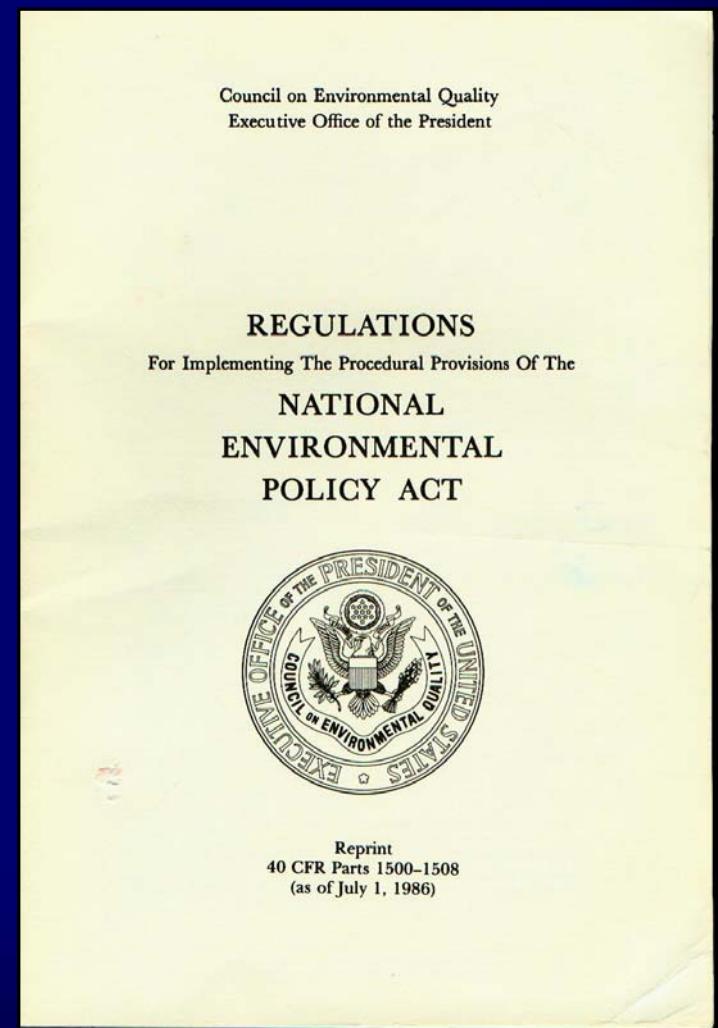
## MMS Mandate:

**Protect the environment and develop information necessary to assess and manage environmental impacts on the human, marine, and coastal environments.**



# The National Environmental Policy Act "NEPA"

- Disclose Plans
- Involve Public
- Identify and Evaluate Alternatives
- Avoid & Mitigate Negative Effects
- Integrate Environmental Analyses



# **Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Environmental Assessment (EA)**

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## **Sections**

- I      Purpose and Need for Action
- II     Alternatives Including the Proposed Action
- III    Affected Environment
- IV    Environmental Consequences
  - Cumulative Effects

# Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

## Steps:

- Public Scoping Meetings and Comment Period
- Draft EIS
- Public Hearings and Comment Period
- Final EIS
- Record of Decision



# Environmental and Socioeconomic Resources and Issues

- Air Quality
- Water Quality
- Marine Mammals
- Sea Turtles
- Marine and Coastal Birds
- Bats
- Seafloor Habitats



- Physical Oceanography
- Coastal Habitats
- Socioeconomics
- Cultural Resources
- Fisheries
- Multiple Use Conflicts

# Impact Producing Factors

- Visual and aesthetic interference
- Vessel traffic
- Air emissions
- Bottom disturbance
- Discharges
- Infrastructure (emplacement and presence)
- Noise
- Lighting



# Mitigation Measures

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- MMS's primary mitigation strategy is avoidance
- Lease Stipulations
- Source of mitigation measures:
  - Subject matter experts through the NEPA process
  - Consultations
  - Renewable Energy Regulatory Framework
  - Best Management Practices in the Record of Decision on the AEAU Programmatic EIS
  - Applicable stipulations from OCS oil and gas leases

# Major Federal Agencies Involved in OCS Activities



Minerals Management Service



U.S. Coast Guard



Environmental Protection Agency



Fish and Wildlife Service

National Marine Fisheries Service



Army Corps of Engineers



Federal Aviation Administration



U.S. Geological Survey



# **State & Local Stakeholders Involved in OCS Activities for Massachusetts**

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- Tribal Governments
- State Historic Preservation Offices
- Coastal Commissions
- Departments of Fish and Wildlife
- Air Resources Boards
- Departments of Water Resources
- Departments of Conservation and Natural Resources
- Departments of Environmental Regulations
- Departments of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism

## **NEPA Analysis**

Magnuson-  
Stevens  
FCMA

E.O. 13186:  
Protection of  
Migratory Birds

Endangered  
Species Act

E.O. 12898:  
Environmental  
Justice

National  
Historic  
Preservation  
Act

Federal Water  
Pollution  
Control Act

Marine Mammal  
Protection Act

Clean  
Air Act

Coastal Zone  
Management  
Act

# **Environmental Consultation Processes: Required for MMS Lease Issuance or Plan Approval**

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- Consultations:
  - Coastal Zone Management Act
  - Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
  - National Historic Preservation Act (Section 106)
  - Endangered Species Act (Section 7)
- Clean Air Act General Conformity Determination
- Migratory Birds Treaty Act Analysis

**Run concurrent with NEPA process**

# **Other Environmental Processes: Required by Other Federal Agencies or Responsibility of Applicant**

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- Marine Mammal Protection Act
- Federal Aviation Act
- USCG Ports and Waterways Safety Act, Maritime Transportation Act
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permitting under Section 404, Clean Water Act, Section 10 Rivers and Harbors Act
- EPA NPDES/VGP Permitting
- FERC Licensing and Coordination
- DOD Coordination



# MMS Environmental Review Process for OCS Wind Energy Offshore Massachusetts

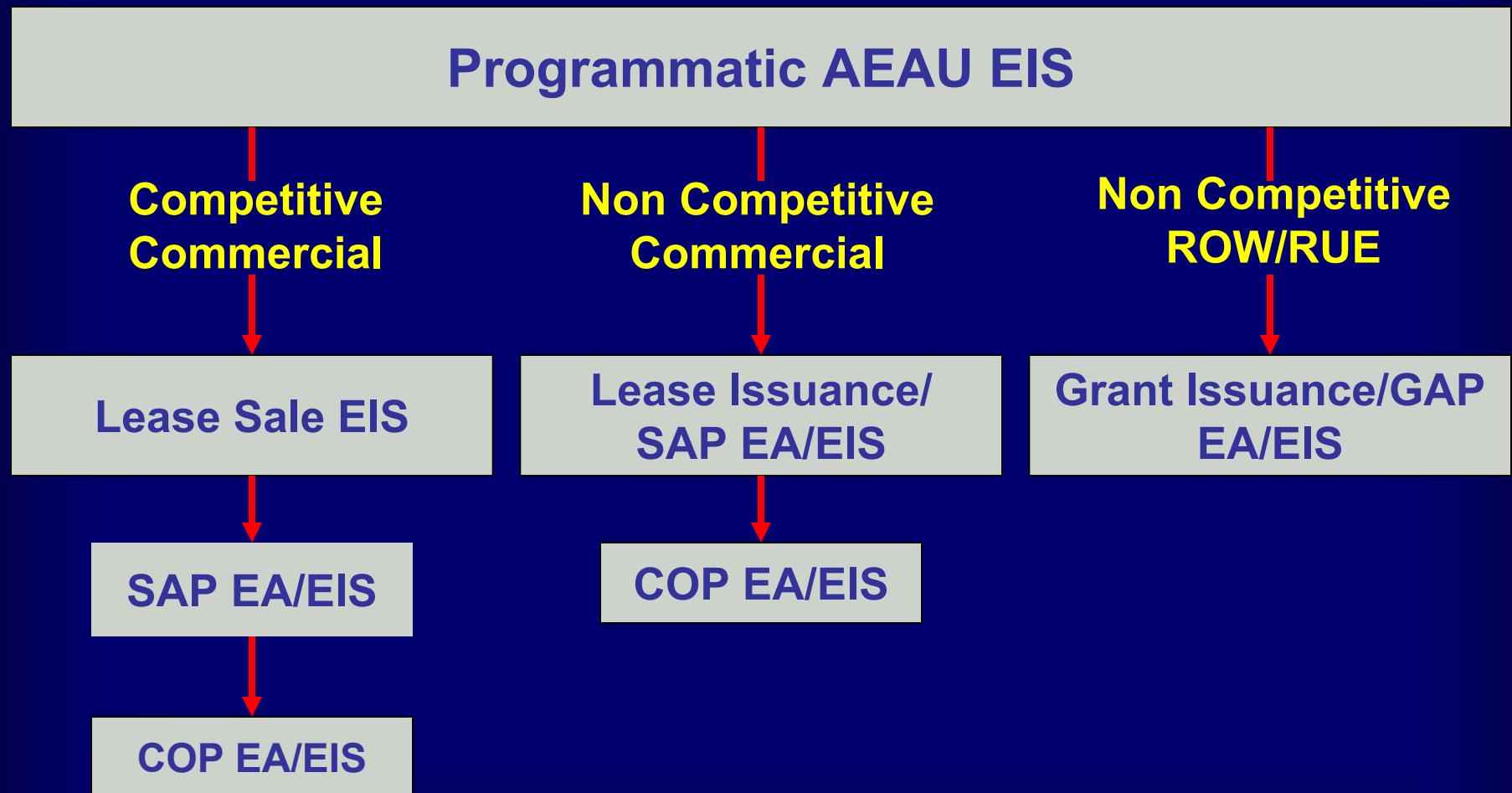


# **When will the NEPA Analysis begin?**

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- MMS will coordinate closely with federal, state and local stakeholders in order to help states meet their goals and determine timelines for leasing.
- An important factor in determining the start of NEPA analysis is the issuance of the Request for Interest (RFI).
- MMS expects the NEPA analysis to begin within 6 to 12 months after an RFI is issued.

# Multi-Step Environmental Review Process



## More Information...

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