

The NewsRoom

Release:

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MMS Opens Comment Period on the Scope of EIS for 2012-2017 Five-Year Program

WASHINGTON- The Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) published in the Federal Register today a Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed 2012-2017 Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Program. The Notice of Intent also opens a public comment period to help the agency determine the necessary scope of the EIS. The comment period will be open through June 30, 2010.

This notice starts the formal scoping process and solicits information regarding issues and alternatives that should be evaluated by the EIS. The EIS will analyze any potential impacts of the adoption of the proposed five-year program.

The EIS will evaluate offering all or portions of eight OCS planning areas for oil and gas leasing. These areas include the Beaufort Sea, Chukchi Sea, and Cook Inlet off the coast of Alaska; the Western, Central and a portion of the Eastern Gulf of Mexico; and the South and Mid-Atlantic.

Public meetings will be held in coastal locations near the areas to be studied for the EIS. The agency anticipates holding the meetings in June, and will post a final schedule at www.mms.gov and in the Federal register as soon as addresses and times have been confirmed.

The meetings are initially being planned for:

- Kaktovik, Alaska
- Nuiqsut, Alaska
- Barrow, Alaska
- Anchorage, Alaska
- New Orleans, Louisiana
- Mobile, Alabama
- Tallahassee, Florida
- Tampa/St. Petersburg, Florida
- Savannah, Georgia and/or Wilmington, North Carolina
- Norfolk, Virginia
- Trenton, New Jersey and/or Wilmington, Delaware
- Washington, DC

Interested parties may submit their written comments to Mr. J. F. Bennett, Chief, Branch of Environmental Assessment, Minerals Management Service, 381 Elden Street, MS 4042, Herndon, Virginia 20170, or online at: ocs5yeareis.anl.gov.

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