

FOR RELEASE:
March 18, 2011

Office of Public Affairs

BOEMRE Approves Third Deepwater Drilling Permit to Meet New Safety Standards

NEW ORLEANS – The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE) today approved a third additional deepwater drilling permit that complies with all of the new safety standards, including demonstrated containment capacity, implemented in the wake of the Deepwater Horizon explosion and resulting oil spill. The approved permit is a revised permit to drill a new well for ATP Oil & Gas Corporation's Well #4 in Mississippi Canyon Block 941, located approximately 90 miles south of Venice, La.

"This permit approval demonstrates that deepwater drilling can and will continue in the Gulf of Mexico provided that operators have successfully demonstrated their ability to operate safely," said BOEMRE Director Michael R. Bromwich. "Further deepwater energy development is necessary and appropriate so long as it is done safely and in an environmentally responsible manner."

Initial drilling on ATP's Well #4 began August 2008, in 4,000 feet water depth. Drilling was suspended July 2009, and a rig was on-location April 2010 to prepare for installation of a production facility when activities were suspended due to the temporary drilling suspensions imposed following the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

As part of its approval process, the bureau reviewed ATP's containment capability available for the specific well proposed in the permit application. ATP has contracted with the Helix Well Containment Group to use its capping stack to stop the flow of oil should a well control event occur. The capabilities of the capping stack meet the requirements that are specific to the characteristics of the proposed well.

BOEMRE has worked diligently to help industry adapt to and comply with new, rigorous safety practices. These standards ensure that oil and gas development continues, while also incorporating key lessons learned from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. This new permit meets the new safety regulations and information requirements in Notices to Lessees (NTL) N06 and N10, and the Interim Final Safety Rule.

Today's permit adds to the number of permits that have been approved since new safety regulations have been put in place. For a list of well types, pending and approved permits, and information on new safety regulations, go to:

http://www.gomr.boemre.gov/homepg/offshore/safety/well_permits.html

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