

THE NEWS ROOM

FOR RELEASE:
August 03 , 2011

THE BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY
MANAGEMENT,
REGULATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Office of Public Affairs

BOEMRE Begins \$650,000 Study of Coastal and Marine Archaeological Sites along the Pacific Coast

*Results Will Inform Analyses and Responsible Siting of Future Renewable Energy
Projects*

CAMARILLO, Calif. - The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE) today announced it is beginning a two-year, comprehensive study of coastal and marine archaeological sites along the Pacific Coast of the United States. The study will analyze and inventory marine archaeological resources on the Pacific Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) and existing historical sites located on the West Coast. Findings from the study will be used in future environmental analyses and may trigger specific steps to mitigate potential environmental impacts associated with future construction and deployment of offshore renewable energy facilities.

"A thorough understanding of coastal and marine resources is critical to adequately assess potential effects of future offshore renewable energy technology testing and commercial development," said BOEMRE Director Michael R. Bromwich. "The findings of this study will assist us in future siting decisions and enhance our ability to identify effective methodologies for protecting those resources."

It has been more than 20 years since BOEMRE has conducted a marine archaeological study offshore California, Oregon and Washington. Since that time, there have been a number of significant archaeological discoveries along the Pacific coast, including historic shipwrecks and now submerged prehistoric sites. The study will broaden our understanding of known and potential submerged cultural resources, as well improving our understanding of potential visual impacts to coastal historic properties along the Pacific coast. BOEMRE marine archaeologists and environmental scientists will use these findings for environmental assessments and use them as a basis to mitigate potential adverse effects of future offshore renewable energy activities. This study builds on similar efforts in the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico to create standardized geo-referenced databases of non-renewable cultural heritage resources.

BOEMRE funds approximately \$30 million per year for scientific studies in the Gulf of Mexico, the Atlantic, the Pacific, and the Arctic and is responsible for regulating activities on the 1.7 billion acres of U.S. offshore area on the OCS. As part of this national program, the Pacific Region manages research in physical oceanography, biology, ecology and socioeconomics. For information on the BOEMRE Environmental Studies Program, go to <http://www.boemre.gov/eppd/sciences/esp/index.htm>.

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