



U.S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region

Technical Announcement

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**Boating Uses, Economic Significance, & Information Inventory
for North Carolina's Offshore Area, "The Point"**
Volume I: Characterization of Recreational and Commercial Fisheries
**Volume II: Economic Analysis of "The Point" and Adjacent Counties:
Baseline Information, Valuation, and Potential Impacts**
**Volume III: Data Inventory Related to the Hatteras Middle Slope Area
Bibliography**

OCS Study MMS 2002-044, 2002-045, and 2002-046

The Minerals Management Service (MMS), Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, announces the availability of a new study report, *Boating Uses, Economic Significance, & Information Inventory for North Carolina's Offshore Area, "The Point" -- Volume I: Characterization of Recreational and Commercial Fisheries; Volume II: Economic Analysis of "The Point" and Adjacent Counties: Baseline Information, Valuation, and Potential Impacts; and Volume III: Data Inventory Related to the Hatteras Middle Slope Area Bibliography.*

Volume I of this study discusses the geographic extent of the area known as "The Point," identifies and characterizes the primary users of "The Point," and determines the extent of and seasonality of their use. Information was gathered from resource agencies and recreational and commercial fishers who were known to use the area extensively. Data from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Marine Recreational Fishing Statistics Survey (MRFSS) and the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries' Trip Ticket Program (TTP) were obtained to augment the survey of commercial fishers. Volume II generates baseline economic information for the counties near "The Point," provides information on the value of recreational fishing at "The Point," and estimates the potential losses to recreational fishing at "The Point" if there were an oil spill. The report describes the economies of affected coastal counties and the role of tourism and commercial fishing in these areas. Using data on individual fishing, the authors model how decisions are made about where to fish. Such decisions are affected by the expected catch of the various species and by the cost of getting to the fishing site. Using statistical models, the authors were able to estimate the role that these and other factors play in the decisions.

A large part of the commercial and recreational offshore fishing effort on North Carolina's northern Outer Banks takes place near "The Point." Commercially, these fishes tend to be species of high value like tunas, dolphin, king mackerel, swordfish, and sharks, and Dare County commercial catches of offshore species dominate the State's landings. Many of these same species, along with billfish, are highly prized by recreational anglers for their size, strength and food value, and catches from Manteo area charter and private boats also dominate the State's recreational landings. Although our knowledge of the region called "The Point" needs to be more complete, we now have a good idea of the geographical extent of this area used so extensively by recreational and commercial fishers. Evidence suggests that this region could contain one of the most productive sections of water-column along the U.S. East Coast.

This report is available only in compact disc format. The discs are available from the Minerals Management Service, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, at a charge of \$15.00 by referencing OCS Study MMS 2002-044, -045, and -046. You will be able to obtain this report also from the National Technical Information Service in the near future. Here are the addresses. You may also inspect copies at selected Federal Depository Libraries.

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MMS is the Federal agency in the U.S. Department of the Interior that manages the nation's oil, natural gas, and other mineral resources on the outer continental shelf in Federal offshore waters. The agency also collects, accounts for, and disburses mineral revenues from Federal and American Indian leases. These revenues totaled over \$6 billion in 2002 and nearly \$127 billion since the agency was created in 1982. Annually, nearly \$1 billion from those revenues go into the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the acquisition and development of state and Federal park and recreation lands.

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