

Technical Announcement

U. S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region

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Assessment of Opportunities for Alternative Uses of the Hydrocarbon Infrastructure in the Gulf of Mexico

OCS Study BOEMRE 2011-028

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, announces the availability of a new study report, *Assessment of Opportunities for Alternative Uses of the Hydrocarbon Infrastructure in the Gulf of Mexico*.

The study seeks to answer several key and interrelated questions about the opportunities for alternative uses of hydrocarbon infrastructure. For example, (1) Can offshore systems be developed and operated in a cost-effective manner?, (2) How should these industries be regulated and supported?, (3) Can the Louisiana and Texas Artificial Reef Programs serve as a useful regulatory model?, (4) What market and investment conditions will stimulate offshore commercial development?, (5) What are the potential social and economic effects of alternative use opportunities in the Gulf of Mexico?, and (6) What is the track record of commercial applications?

The study examines three alternative uses of offshore structures in the Gulf of Mexico Region: artificial reefs, mariculture, and wind power. Generally, the study analyzes the relative merits of each alternative and potential use based on their technological and economic feasibility. Specifically, the study accomplishes the following tasks: (1) reviews the uses of offshore platforms for artificial reefs; (2) reviews the Louisiana and Texas Artificial Reef Programs; (3) examines the impact of the 2005 hurricane season on the Louisiana Artificial Reef Program; (4) assesses platform-based mariculture in the Gulf and its economic feasibility; (5) compares offshore wind power development in Europe and the U.S.; (6) conducts ecological and economic cost-benefit analysis of offshore wind energy; (7) reviews offshore wind power regulatory issues; and (8) provides commentary on the use of offshore oil and gas infrastructure for wind energy applications. Within this framework, the study develops business and general cost-benefit models for each alternative to illustrate the decision and economic processes involved.

This report is available only in compact disc format from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, at a charge of \$15.00, by referencing OCS Study BOEMRE 2011-028. The report may be downloaded from the BOEM website through the [Environmental Studies Program Information System \(ESPIS\)](#). 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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