

Frequently Asked Questions for Ancillary Activities

1. Which type of ancillary activities will have their notifications converted into plans?

Any ancillary activity that proposes the use of explosives or airguns in any water depth may adversely impact endangered, threatened, and/or protected species, and therefore may not be in compliance with the performance standard for conducting ancillary activities set forth in 30 CFR 250.202(e). Therefore, in accordance with the provision of 30 CFR 250.209, the BOEMRE GOMR will automatically convert the notification to either a(n) Exploration Plan (EP), Development Operations Coordination Document (DOCD), or Development and Production Plan (DPP), as appropriate, and review and approve it as such.

In addition to activities involving explosives and/or airguns, the following types of activities also involve similar equipment that can produce noise at levels that can impact endangered, threatened, and/or protected species and will require their notifications to be converted into plans:

- **Deep-penetration seismic surveys** (e.g., 2D, 3D, 4D, and 3D wide-azimuth surveys) use acoustic sources to obtain data on geological formations from the sediment near-surface to several thousand meters below the surface. These surveys are commonly used for identifying and assessing potential hydrocarbon reservoirs, optimizing location of exploration and development wells, and maximizing extraction and production from a reservoir.
- **High-resolution seismic surveys** use acoustic sources to penetrate the sea floor from the sediment near-surface to several kilometers or more below the surface. These surveys are commonly used for identifying shallow hazards, benthic biological communities, archaeological resources, site evaluation for drilling rig or pipeline emplacement, sand resources, and general shallow exploration purposes.
- **Vertical seismic profiling surveys** (also called downhole seismic) use acoustic sources to generate higher resolution images of the subsurface by placing geophones down the wellbore for the purposes of correlating drilled geologic data to existing seismic data.

Note; however, that notification conversion does not apply to similar remote-sensing work that consists of sonar, sub-bottom profilers, and/or gravity/magnetometer surveys (only) as these activities, in general, do not produce noise at levels that can lead to significant impacts to endangered, threatened, and /or protected species.

2. What is the timeline for approval of ancillary activities?

If you do not receive a response to your ancillary activity request within 15 or 30 days of it being received it is approved. Please refer to NTL 2009-G34 to determine which activities require 15 or 30 days. If your plan is converted into an EP, DPP, or DOCD, the timelines for these plans apply.

3. What additional information do I need to include if I am conducting ancillary activities for a well?

If you are conducting ancillary activities for a well include BOEM Form 0137 with the most recent information on the well.