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### MMS ANNOUNCES RESULTS OF 1993 OCS ANNUAL REVIEW (#40022)

The Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) today released the results of the 1993 Annual Review of the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Natural Gas and Oil 5-Year Program (mid-1992 to mid-1997).

Federal law requires the Secretary to review an approved OCS 5-year program at least once a year. The current program was approved on June 30, 1992, after 3 years of analysis of the factors specified in the law and consideration of the numerous comments and recommendations of interested and affected parties.

MMS Director Tom Fry reported that of the 18 sales scheduled under the current program, 3 had been held--2 in the Western Gulf of Mexico (GOM) and 1 in the Central GOM. Annual sales are scheduled in both areas. Sales also are under consideration off Alaska, while sales scheduled for the Mid- and South Atlantic and Eastern GOM remain under Congressional moratoria for a second year.

Fry said that during the Annual Review, "MMS had found no new scientific/technical information that would require a fundamental change in the current program." He noted, however, that such a finding in no way means that the remaining sales are a foregone conclusion.

Fry echoed Babbitt's commitment to consultation and consideration of the views of all the constituents of the program. "The Department will look at the unique aspects of each sale area on a case-by-case basis," he said. "Any decisions that are made will be based on good science and consideration of the views of all concerned."

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