

FOR RELEASE: March 1997

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**Notice of Public Scoping Meetings to Collect Information  
For a Draft EIS on Proposed Western Gulf of Mexico  
OCS Oil And Gas Lease Sales 171, 174, 177, and 180**

The Minerals Management Service (MMS) will hold public scoping meetings in Texas during the first week of April 1997, to gather additional information for the draft EIS and to provide an opportunity for public participation in the process. On January 29, 1997, the MMS has published in the *Federal Register*, the Call for Information and Nominations and the Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on four proposed OCS Oil and Gas Lease Sales in the Western Gulf of Mexico. The specific sales included in this action are Sales 171, 174, 177, and 180, tentatively scheduled in August of each year beginning in 1998 and running through 2001. The meetings are scheduled as follows:

**CORPUS CHRISTI on April 1, 1997; 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.**

Texas A&M University--Corpus Christi  
Natural Resources Center, Room 1003  
6300 Ocean Drive  
Corpus Christi, Texas

**AUSTIN on April 3, 1997; 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.**

DoubleTree Guest Suites  
303 West 15th Street  
Austin, Texas

**GALVESTON on April 3, 1997; 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.**

Flagship Hotel  
2501 Seawall Boulevard  
Galveston Island, Texas

The meetings will be conducted in an informal manner. We are most interested in learning about any new concerns that should be addressed in this EIS. (The most recent EIS covering the area may be obtained from the Public Information Office at (800) 200-GULF or (504) 736-2519.) Participants in the meeting will be asked to contribute ideas and information that will help answer the following questions:

- Should additional significant issues be addressed?
- Does MMS adequately address the environmental effects (direct, indirect, and cumulative) projected as a result of OCS activities?
- Should additional alternatives be considered?
- Should additional significant resources be analyzed?
- Should any data gaps be considered in preparation of this document?
- Should additional mitigating measures be considered?

Questions or comments on the above meetings can be sent to the following address:

Minerals Management Service  
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region  
Office of Leasing and Environment  
Attention: Regional Supervisor (MS 5410)  
1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70123-2394

**-MMS-GOM-**