

**The NewsRoom**

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**MMS Awards \$700,000 Grant to Alaska**

*Provides funding through the Coastal Impact Assistance Program*

**ANCHORAGE** – The Minerals Management Service (MMS) has awarded a \$700,000 grant to the Alaska Department of Natural Resources through the Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) for a project that will test for environmental contaminants in fish populations throughout Alaska.

The project will assess the impact of possible contaminants, such as heavy metals and pesticides, on the coastal and marine ecosystems in Alaska by testing muscle tissue from a variety of fish species. By testing the fish samples, scientists will be able to locate areas in Alaska where there may be high concentrations of contaminants, thus addressing ways to protect both fish and the wildlife that consume them.

“MMS is proud to partner with the State of Alaska in its conservation efforts,” said MMS Alaska Regional Director John Goll. “We are committed through the Coastal Impact Assistance Program to support our partners with important projects that will not only promote conservation, but protect the fish and wildlife that are dependent upon the land.”

Alaska’s CIAP plan was approved by the Minerals Management Service on September 30, 2008. The CIAP was created by the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and provides \$250 million in grants annually, from 2007-2010, to six eligible Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas producing states – Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, Alaska, California, and Mississippi. The funding to Alaska included \$37.5 million for each of the fiscal years 2009 and 2010.

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