

[The NewsRoom](#)

Release: #4038

Date: September 25, 2009

Public Comments Received for Offshore Energy Plan Reaches 530,000

MMS Continues to Review Comments Received During Final Days of Commenting Period

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Interior Department’s Minerals Management Service (MMS) has now received more than 530,000 comments from the public regarding the development of a comprehensive offshore energy strategy for the Outer Continental Shelf.

MMS received the comments during an extended public comment period that Secretary Salazar established for the Draft Proposed Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program in February. When the public comment period ended on Monday, September 21st, the MMS had counted over 350,000 public comments. After reviewing submissions during the final days of the comment period, and more mailed at the last minute, that number has now been raised to over 530,000 total public comments.

“I’m pleased that so many Americans have provided their valuable input to this process,” said MMS Director Liz Birnbaum. “This administration is committed to including the public in the decision making process and Secretary Salazar’s extension of this public comment period has allowed over half a million Americans to take part in the future of offshore energy development in the United States.”

The MMS is carefully reviewing all of the comments submitted. Following the review and analysis of the comments, which is expected to take several weeks due to the large number, the next step in the process is to initiate environmental analysis and public scoping opportunities associated with the five-year plan, required by law, for oil and gas development in the OCS.

The MMS oversees more than 1.7 billion acres on the Outer Continental Shelf. In addition to overseeing oil and gas development in the OCS, the MMS has established the first-ever framework for offshore renewable energy development in order to guide environmentally responsible renewable energy development and to broaden the nation’s energy supplies.

News Media Contact:

[Nicholas Pardi](#) (202) 208-3985

[MMS: Securing Ocean Energy & Economic Value for America](#)
[U.S. Department of the Interior](#)