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MMS Going 'Green' with Electronic Statements

New Systems Offer Speed, Efficiency, Environmental Benefits

DENVER – New computing software activated this month by the Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) promises to speed delivery of invoices and account statements to energy producers while eliminating costly and wasteful paper trails.

"These new systems help improve efficiencies, save money, and eliminate paper and ink receipts, which will reduce our impact on the environment," said Gregory Gould, Associate Director of the Minerals Revenue Management (MRM) Program of MMS. "The new electronic systems allow invoices to be paid faster and strengthen MMS's ability to ensure that companies are properly reporting and paying their royalties in a timely and accurate fashion."

Historically, MRM invoices and associated reports were routinely printed and mailed to each customer. In many cases, particularly for large energy producers, this entailed shipping numerous boxes of paper files.

"Statements of Accounts," which highlight reporting information or payments that are outstanding, will now be available through this new system. Customers at one time would review their statements, make annotations on paper, and return them back to MMS where they would be reviewed manually. The new "eSOA" web site allows customers immediate access to their statements and allows them to make annotations electronically. When completed, the system automatically sends the annotations directly to the MMS servicing accountant, alerting them to go into the account and review the comments.

The new software provides electronic copies of all Federal and American Indian invoices, remittances and backup reports. Customers can instantly access their invoices and make required royalty payments. In addition to the electronic copies, American Indian invoices and reports will continue to be available in hard copy.

The latest software upgrades have been in the planning stages since 2008. MMS then began final development, installation and activation of the new systems, which "went live" Sept. 1, 2009.

The Minerals Revenue Management (MRM) Program of MMS is the Federal program responsible for collecting, auditing and disbursing revenues associated with mineral leases on Federal and American Indian lands, and in the Outer Continental Shelf. Disbursements are made on a monthly basis from royalties, rents and bonuses collected by the MMS. Since the agency was created in 1982, it has disbursed more than \$200 billion to various Federal, state and American Indian accounts.

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