

Environmental Studies Program: Ongoing Study

Title	Response to Comments on the “Air Quality Modeling in the Gulf of Mexico Region” Report (NT-20-07)
Administered by	Headquarters
BOEM Contact(s)	Holli (Ensz) Wecht (Holli.Ensz@boem.gov)
Procurement Type(s)	Contract
Conducting Organization(s)	Eastern Research Group, Inc.
Total BOEM Cost	\$125,000
Performance Period	FY 2020–2022
Final Report Due	October, 2021
Date Revised	August 10, 2021
PICOC Summary	
<i><u>Problem</u></i>	The National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NAS), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), industry, and others have commented on BOEM’s <i>Air Quality Modeling in the Gulf of Mexico Region Study</i> Report. The Report included emissions development, meteorological modeling, and cumulative photochemical modeling of all oil and gas emissions sources in the Gulf of Mexico. The comments require additional analysis and review from BOEM’s contractors, Eastern Research Group, Inc. (ERG) and RAMBOLL US Corporation (RAMBOLL).
<i><u>Intervention</u></i>	This document responds to comments from the NAS, USEPA, industry, and others about the <i>Air Quality Modeling in the Gulf of Mexico Region Study</i> Report.
<i><u>Comparison</u></i>	All comments will receive an ERG/RAMBOLL response, which will complete all aspects of the modeling study. Final product is a BOEM response document.
<i><u>Outcome</u></i>	The expected outcome is that all concerns about the study will be addressed.
<i><u>Context</u></i>	Gulf of Mexico

BOEM Information Need(s): BOEM needs a response document to address all comments received on their *Air Quality Modeling in the Gulf of Mexico Region Study* Report (Wilson 2019).

Background: In accordance with BOEM’s Environmental Studies Program policy, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NAS) has peer reviewed BOEM’s *Air Quality Modeling in the Gulf of Mexico Region (GOMR)* report (Wilson 2019) because of its highly influential scientific information, which might be used to develop future air regulations. A formal NAS Consensus Report based on independent peer reviewers has been delivered to BOEM titled *Review of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management “Air Quality Modeling in the Gulf of Mexico Region” Study* (NAS 2019). In addition to the NAS’ peer review report, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), the states of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, and industry have also had a chance to comment on BOEM’s air modeling study. BOEM’s modeling study included emissions development, meteorological modeling, and cumulative photochemical modeling of all oil and gas emissions sources in the GOM. BOEM received

comments on all aspects of the cumulative GOM oil and gas impact assessment. These comments should now be responded to by the BOEM lead and project team, ERG and RAMBOLL.

Objectives: The purpose of the study is to respond to all comments received about the *Air Quality Modeling in the Gulf of Mexico Region Study* through a response document.

Methods: ERG and RAMBOLL will participate in a NAS briefing, in which NAS will discuss all their comments about the modeling study. BOEM will forward all comments received from the USEPA, States, industry and others to ERG and RAMBOLL. ERG and RAMBOLL will track and respond to all comments received through a response document. Some comments will receive additional analysis.

Specific Research Question(s): How does BOEM respond to all comments received on the modeling study, including the NAS peer review?

Current Status: BOEM has received a pre-draft version of the response document. ERG and RAMBOLL are following up on additional analysis of some comments.

Publications Completed: None

Affiliated WWW Sites:

<https://marinecadastre.gov/espis/#/search/study/100048>

<https://www.nap.edu/catalog/25600/review-of-the-bureau-of-ocean-energy-management-air-quality-modeling-in-the-gulf-of-mexico-region-study>

References:

Wilson, D., Stoeckenius, T., Brashers, B., Do, B. 2019. Air quality modeling in the Gulf of Mexico Region. New Orleans (LA): U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. Gulf of Mexico Region. OCS Study BOEM 2019-057. Prepared by the Eastern Research Group, Inc. 655 p.

National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2019. *Review of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management "Air Quality Modeling in the Gulf of Mexico Region" Study*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25600>.