



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
**U.S. Department
of the Interior**

www.doi.gov

News Release

Date: April 1, 2010

Contact: Kendra Barkoff (DOI) (202) 713-0827

Frank Quimby (DOI) (202) 208-7291

Secretary Salazar Announces Offer of 18.8 Million Acres for Oil and Gas Development in Western Gulf Lease Sale

*Highlights New Offshore Oil and Gas Development in Eastern Gulf
During Tour of New Orleans-Based Superior Energy Services*

NEW ORLEANS, LA – Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar today announced that the next federal oil and gas lease sale in the Gulf of Mexico will occur in New Orleans on August 18, 2010. The Secretary made the Western Gulf of Mexico Lease Sale 215 announcement during a tour of Superior Energy Services.

“Continued responsible development in appropriate areas of the Outer Continental Shelf is a key component of our efforts to move forward on a comprehensive energy plan, to reduce our country’s dependence on foreign oil, and to create jobs here at home.” said Secretary Salazar.

The available blocks in Sale 215 are located from 9 to about 250 miles offshore in water depths of 16 to more than 10,975 feet (5 to 3,346 meters). The Department of the Interior’s Minerals Management Service (MMS) estimates the proposed lease sale could result in the production of 242 to 423 million barrels of oil and 1.64 to 2.64 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

The Secretary’s visit to New Orleans followed the Obama Administration’s recent announcement of a comprehensive strategy for strengthening the nation’s energy security and reducing America’s dependence on foreign oil. The strategy calls for expanded development and production throughout the Gulf of Mexico, including resource-rich areas of the Eastern Gulf of Mexico that are currently under Congressional moratorium and closed to development.

“The plan we are proposing calls for 4 more lease sales in the Gulf of Mexico by 2012 and, in the years beyond, would open up two-thirds of the oil and gas resources in the Eastern Gulf while protecting Florida’s coast and critical military training areas,” said

Salazar. “Our efforts to strategically open new areas in the Eastern Gulf would represent the largest expansion of our nation’s available offshore oil and gas supplies in three decades.”

MMS estimates that the Gulf of Mexico contains 36-41.5 billion barrels of undiscovered, economically recoverable oil and 161-207 trillion cubic feet of undiscovered, economically recoverable natural gas resources.

The President’s comprehensive national energy plan aims to make responsible use of all of America’s energy resources and technologies. That includes energy efficacy initiatives; renewable resources, such as wind, solar, hydropower and geothermal; appropriate conventional sources of oil, gas and coal; as well as expanded nuclear power. The goal is to build a clean energy economy, create jobs here at home and lead the world in the energy technologies that will define the next century, all of which will help to reduce the nation’s overdependence on foreign oil.

For more information about the Obama Administration’s offshore oil and gas strategy, visit www.doi.gov.

###