



U.S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region



FOR RELEASE:

August 11, 1999

Media Contact:
Barney Congdon
(504) 736-2595

Caryl Fagot
(504) 736-2590

Technical Contact:
Ann Scarborough-Bull
(504) 736-2794

**The MMS Will Hold Information Day and
Destin Dome 56 Draft EIS Hearing in Pensacola, Florida**

The U.S. Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service announced that it will host two important meetings in Pensacola, Florida. The Minerals Management Service has recently produced a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) that examines the proposed development plan filed by Chevron U.S.A. for the Destin Dome 56 area, 25 miles offshore Pensacola.

The DEIS is released to the public for a 60-day comment period. An "Information Day," to be held about three weeks after the release, will allow the public to meet with the MMS scientists who actually wrote the DEIS. This is an opportunity to discuss issues addressed in the DEIS, such as air and water quality, fisheries, coastal resources, safety and inspections, endangered species, spill response, and the Destin Dome 56 plan. This day will give citizens a firsthand look at what goes into this important process and allow them to question MMS scientists. The Information Day will be held on Thursday, September 9th at the New World Landing in Pensacola from 12 noon to 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Two weeks following the Information Day, MMS will conduct public hearings to receive comments on the Destin Dome DEIS; these hearings provide the public a forum to present oral statements or submit written comments. Citizens who cannot attend but want to submit written comments should send them to Dr. Ann Scarborough-Bull (MS 5412), 1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard, New Orleans, Louisiana 70123-2394. The comment period will close on October 19, 1999, and responses should be postmarked by then. The final EIS will address all comments received. Dates, times, and locations for the hearings are:

Thursday, September 23, 1999, 3-6 and 7-10 p.m.
New World Landing, 600 South Palafox, Pensacola, Florida

Tuesday, September 28, 1999, 6-10 p.m. Marriott's Bay Point Resort, Panama City, Florida

Wednesday, September 29, 1999, 6-10 p.m.
Ramada Plaza Hotel, 600 South Beltline Hwy, Mobile, Alabama

You are invited to meet with MMS scientists at Information Day on September 9, as well as to attend the public hearings scheduled above.

MMS is the Federal Agency that manages the Nation's oil and gas and other mineral resources on the OCS and collects, accounts for, and last year disbursed about \$6 billion in revenues from Federal offshore mineral leases and from onshore mineral leases on Federal and Indian lands.

-MMS-GOM-