

Finding of No Significant Impacts

The Minerals Management Service (MMS) has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) for proposed Lease Sale 195 in the Beaufort Sea Planning Area of the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). In February 2003, MMS filed with the Environmental Protection Agency a multiple-sale EIS assessing the effects of Sale 195 and two other Beaufort Sea lease sales in the 2002-2007 OCS Leasing Program. This EA tiers from the multiple-sale EIS and incorporates much of the material by reference. It also reexamines the potential environmental effects of the proposed action and alternatives based on new information regarding potential impacts or issues that were not available at the time the final EIS was prepared.

All of the information and analysis presented in the multiple-sale EIS was reviewed by MMS. Several topics were determined to have new information requiring a re-evaluation of the environmental impact analysis: marine and coastal birds, subsistence-harvest patterns and sociocultural systems, local water quality, bowhead whales, other marine mammals, fishes, and the cumulative effects of climate change. The new information is presented in the EA. The EA also analyzes whether this new information indicates that there are likely to be significant new impacts that were not addressed in the multiple-sale EIS.

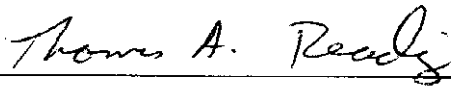
Based on the analyses in the EA, we have identified ringed seals and other ice-dependent pinnipeds as additional resources of primary concern due to the speculative effects of Arctic climate change. However, no new significant impacts were identified for the proposed lease sale that was not already assessed in the multiple-sale EIS. Therefore,

the MMS has determined that a supplemental EIS to the multiple-sale EIS is not required and is issuing this Finding of No Significant Impacts.

Supporting Documents:

Environmental Assessment, Proposed OCS Lease Sale 195, Beaufort Sea Planning Area, OCS EIS/EA MMS 2004-028, dated July 2004.

Final Environmental Impact Statement, Beaufort Sea Planning Area, Oil and Gas Lease Sales 186, 195, and 202, OCS EIS/EA MMS 2003-001, dated February 2003.



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Date