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MMS AWARDS \$134,548 TO UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA (#40069)

The U.S. Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) has awarded \$134,548 to the University of South Florida (USF) to conduct a Northeastern Gulf of Mexico Satellite Oceanography Study, MMS officials announced today.

Researchers will compile satellite remote sensing data from the eastern Gulf of Mexico into an atlas of surface circulation features. The study will utilize several existing archives of satellite images presently available at regional laboratories -- principally a federally-sponsored repository of images at USF.

"Cooperative agreements, such as this one, provide all interested parties with valuable environmental and scientific information needed in making offshore resource decisions," MMS Acting Director Cynthia Quarterman said.

"The data from this project have an immediate use in the planning of future physical oceanography programs," Quarterman said, "and provide valuable information to the decisionmaking process on proposed developmental drilling in the areas in question."

The 19-month study effort will take place at USF's campus in St. Petersburg, FL.

MMS administers the federal offshore minerals program and manages the mineral royalty collection program for federal and Indian lands.

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