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MMS AWARDS \$1.4 MILLION FOR CALIFORNIA OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS ENERGY RESOURCES STUDY

The U.S. Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) has awarded \$1.4 million to Dames & Moore of Santa Barbara, CA, to study offshore development scenarios in the Tri-County area of San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura, MMS officials announced today.

The California Offshore Oil and Gas Energy Resources (COOGER) study will provide information about onshore constraints associated with five hypothetical levels of offshore development -- ranging from no new development to full development -- on active, but undeveloped leases, offshore California, between the years 1995-2015. The analysis will consider geologic and petroleum engineering issues, zoning and transportation policies, and local, state and federal regulations.

"MMS initiated this effort in response to local and state constituents' interests about the future of offshore development in the Tri-County area," said MMS Acting Director Cynthia Quarterman. "MMS, the State of California, the three county governments involved, and the oil and gas industry all worked together to define the parameters of the study. The results will add greatly to the information needed for future decisions about offshore natural gas and oil activities.

"A significant component of the project will be the opportunity for the people in the Tri-Counties to attend public workshops to discuss the results of the study," Quarterman said.

"The award of the COOGER study reflects an unprecedented level of cooperation and dedication between the Tri-Counties, the State of California, the oil industry, and the MMS," said Dr. J. Lisle Reed, Regional Director for the MMS Pacific Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Region. "This study will provide all parties with valuable information on the benefits and risks of offshore energy development and the regulations that pertain to potential activity."

Companies holding leases in the study area are also

contributing funds toward the study. The final report is scheduled to be published by July 1997.

MMS is the federal agency that manages and regulates the nation's natural gas, oil and other mineral resources on the Outer Continental Shelf, and collects and disburses revenues from offshore federal mineral leases and from onshore mineral leases on federal and Indian lands.

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