

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
Office of Communications**

For Immediate Release: January 13, 1997

CONTACT: Tom DeRocco
(202) 208-3983
Robin Lee Cacy
907-271-6070
1-800-764-2627

MMS Issues Environmental Assessment and Sets Community Meeting Dates for Proposed Cook Inlet Oil and Gas Lease Sale 149

The U.S. Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) announced today that an Environmental Assessment (EA) is available for Proposed Cook Inlet Oil and Gas Lease Sale 149. The Notice of Availability was published in the Friday, January 10, 1997, Federal Register. There is a 45-day public comment period.

In keeping with the Department's outreach efforts in soliciting stakeholders' involvement in the sale 149 pre-lease process, public meetings will be held in the communities of Kenai, Homer, and Port Graham to discuss the revised proposal. The public meetings are scheduled on:

February 5, 1997, in Kenai, at the Kenai Merit Inn, 260 South William Street, starting at 2:30 p.m. and again at 7 p.m.,

February 6, 1997, in Homer, at the Homer Elks, 215 South Jenny Lane, starting at 2:30 p.m. and again at 7 p.m., and on

February 7, 1997, in the Village of Port Graham, Community Center, from noon to 2:30 p.m.

On January 3, 1997, the MMS announced its plans to proceed with preparations for the proposed Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Lease Sale 149. The area being considered for leasing includes 101 whole and partial blocks encompassing about 430,000 acres. This is approximately a 78 percent reduction from the 402 blocks covering about 2 million acres analyzed in the final environmental impact statement; the Final EIS was made available on January 30, 1996. The revised proposal for Sale 149 is located beyond 3 miles offshore in Cook Inlet between Kalgin Island in the north and to the southern extent of State of Alaska leased area north of Anchor Point. This southern boundary of the proposed sale area is approximately 15 miles north of the entrance to Kachemak Bay (see attached map). The sale is tentatively scheduled to be held in May 1997; the final notice of sale will be published at least 30 days prior to the sale.

Copies of the EA are available from the

Minerals Management Service
Alaska OCS Region
949 East 36th Avenue, Room 308
Anchorage, Alaska 99508-4302.

Copies may be requested by calling (907) 271-6070 or 1-800-764-2627, by fax at (907) 271-6805, or via E:mail at akwebmaster@mms.gov. Comments may be sent to the Regional Supervisor, Leasing and Environment at the address or fax number stated above.

MMS is the federal agency that manages the Nation's natural gas, oil and other mineral resources on the OCS, and collects, accounts for, and disburses about \$4 billion yearly in revenues from offshore federal mineral leases and

onshore mineral leases on federal and Indian lands.

-MMS-