

**U.S. Department of the Interior
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NEWS RELEASE

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**FEDERAL AGENCIES SIGN MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT FOR THE RESTORATION OF
ASSATEAGUE ISLAND**

The U.S. Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service and National Park Service recently joined the U.S. Department of the Army's Army Corps of Engineers in signing a Memorandum of Agreement for the use of Federal sand resources on the Outer Continental Shelf for the Assateague Island Restoration Project.

"This MOA represents the diligent efforts of the participating agencies to develop a consensus-based process that will allow the restoration and maintenance of this beautiful island. MMS is proud to participate in this joint effort and provide the resources necessary to complete this project," said Acting MMS Director, Lucy Querques Denett.

The MOA, which includes a short-term and long-term restoration phase, will involve dredging OCS sand resources to restore the integrity of the island and minimize adverse impacts to threatened species that live on the island. The short-term project will take place first and focus on the restoration of the island. The second phase will consist of a long-term sand management element that concentrates on ongoing efforts and maintenance of the island. The groundwork for the agreement began in 1997 with the release of an Environmental Impact Statement that focused on the short-term aspect of the Assateague project. A second EIS, completed in 1998, proposed the long-term restoration component.

MMS is the federal agency in the U.S. Department of the Interior that manages the nation's oil, natural gas and other mineral resources on the outer continental shelf in federal offshore waters. The agency also collects, accounts for and disburses mineral revenues from federal and Indian leases. These revenues totaled nearly \$8 billion last year and more than \$110 billion since the agency was created in 1982. Annually, nearly \$1 billion from those revenues go into the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the acquisition and development of state and federal park and recreation lands.

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MMS Internet website address: <http://www.mms.gov>