



NEWS RELEASE

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MMS Extends Evaluation Period for Central Gulf of Mexico Sale

Extensive review of bids ensures fair value for the American public

NEW ORLEANS — The Minerals Management Service (MMS) has extended by 30 days, the post-sale evaluation period for bids received in its record-setting federal oil and gas lease sale held in March. This action is necessary because of the unusually high number of bids received, especially in the deep and ultra-deep waters.

Central Gulf of Mexico Sale 206 held March 19, 2008, attracted \$3,677,688,245 in high bids. MMS received 1,057 bids on 615 tracts, with 513 of those tracts requiring additional detailed evaluations. The high number of bids received on a large number of tracts, and the substantial volume of recently processed and reprocessed seismic data identified, significantly increased the workload for reviewing the adequacy of bids, and made it necessary to allow more time for MMS geoscientists and engineers to gather, interpret and evaluate these enhanced data.

“Although MMS normally conducts and completes the bid review process within the 90 days of the bid reading, it is not unusual to extend the evaluation period when there is a large number of tracts with an extensive volume of information to assess,” said Lars Herbst, MMS Gulf of Mexico regional director.

Every bid is reviewed and high bids are evaluated to ensure that oil and gas companies are paying a fair price for the opportunity to develop any potential resources. If MMS determines that a bid on a particular tract of land is not adequate, the bid is rejected and the tract will be offered at the next sale for that area.

"This process ensures that the nation's offshore energy resources are protected and the public receives fair dollar value for development of those resources," said Herbst.

A notice published in the [Federal Register](#) extends the post-sale evaluation period for Central Gulf of Mexico Lease Sale 206. MMS will complete evaluating all the bids received in this sale by July 17, 2008.

—MMS—

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