



U.S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region

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Seasonal and Spatial Variation in the Biomass and Size Frequency Distribution of Fish Associated with Oil and Gas Platforms in the Northern Gulf of Mexico

OCS Report MMS 2000-005

The Minerals Management Service (MMS), Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, announces the availability of a new study report, *Seasonal and Spatial Variation in the Biomass and Size Frequency Distribution of Fish Associated with Oil and Gas Platforms in the Northern Gulf of Mexico*.

This report presents results of fishery resource assessments using dual beam hydroacoustics in conjunction with visual point count surveys at three petroleum platforms off the Louisiana coast. The research determined the effect of water depth on fish density, size distribution, and species composition. It measured the fisheries value of platforms of different depths in the same geographic region. The results of this project demonstrate the variability in abundance, size distribution, and species composition of fishes associated with petroleum platforms. The variability was linked to temporal, spatial, and environmental variables. Comparisons of results from this research with other petroleum platform studies from the northern Gulf of Mexico revealed similarities as well as significant differences. This research confirms the variability of fish assemblages associated with platforms and reinforces the need to sample on each side and throughout the water column to obtain an accurate estimate of fish abundance. The high abundance of fishes found at the study sites also demonstrated the importance of petroleum platforms to the marine environment of the northern Gulf of Mexico.

For more information about this study or the Environmental Studies Program in general, contact the Environmental Sciences Section (MS 5430), 1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard, New Orleans, Louisiana 70123-2394, telephone (504) 736-2789.

You can obtain copies of the report from the Minerals Management Service, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, at a charge of \$15.00 by referencing OCS Study MMS 2000-005. You will be able to obtain this report also from the National Technical Information Service in the near future. Here are the addresses. You may also inspect copies at selected Federal Depository Libraries.

Minerals Management Service
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region
Public Information Office (MS 5034)
1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard
New Orleans, Louisiana 70123-2394
Telephone requests may be placed at
(504) 736-2519 or 1-800-200-GULF
or FAX: (504) 736-2620

U.S. Department of Commerce
National Technical Information Service
5285 Port Royal Road
Springfield, Virginia 22161
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MMS is the Federal Agency that manages the Nation's oil and gas and other mineral resources on the OCS and collects, accounts for, and disburses about \$4 billion in yearly revenues from offshore Federal mineral leases and from onshore mineral leases on Federal and American Indian lands.

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MMS's Website Address: <http://www.mms.gov>

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