



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

June 2000

**Deepwater Development: A Reference Document for the Deepwater  
Environmental Assessment, Gulf of Mexico OCS (1998 through 2007)**

**OCS Report MMS 2000-015**

*(Internet Note: PDF file size 8.7 MB; If you experience problems when opening in browser, right click on the link, for Explorer click Save Target As, for Netscape click Save Link As, and save to a local directory. Open saved file in Acrobat Reader.)*

This newly published report is a reference document accompanying the recently released Deepwater Gulf of Mexico Environmental Assessment (MMS 2000-001). It is part of the Gulf of Mexico deepwater strategy of the Minerals Management Service (MMS) of the Department of the Interior. During the past decade there has been an extraordinary increase of oil and gas exploration, development, and production in the deepwater Gulf of Mexico (defined as water depths of over 1,000 feet). Charged by Congress with the development of America's offshore mineral resources, MMS strives to do so while protecting human life and safety and the marine, ambient, and terrestrial environments. Release of this report to accompany the environmental assessment on deepwater operations helps fulfill that responsibility.

In preparing the environmental assessment and the reference document, MMS extensively researched deepwater development up to the present, evaluated it, and developed a scenario of where that development would likely lead. In gathering the background information, MMS authors used various industry journals and the large MMS database covering the facets of deepwater development, and held discussions with oil and gas industry experts about development plans and technology trends affecting deepwater activities. Experts on the staff of MMS contributed to the evaluation and projections, forecasting ranges rather than specific parameters. Such forecasts, of course, are affected by fluctuating crude oil prices and unforeseen leaps in technology. Finally, the authors held discussions with the oil and gas industry deepwater group, DeepStar, and the Gulf of Mexico Offshore Operators Committee (OOC) to gather additional information. Both DeepStar and OOC reviewed the technical descriptions and the scenario, and provided technical comments for MMS consideration. As a result, the scenario information is a consensus of what could potentially occur in deepwater during the 10-year period from 1998 through 2007.

Besides a discussion on the scenario, the document contains an in-depth description of the types of deepwater development systems such as subsea systems, compliant towers, spars, tension leg platforms, and floating production, storage, and offloading systems, as well as a discussion of deepwater operations.

You can obtain copies of the report from the Minerals Management Service, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, at no charge by referencing OCS Report MMS 2000-015. The environmental assessment, of which this report is a companion and additional information source, is available at no charge also, by referencing OCS EIS/EA MMS 2000-001. 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.

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Gulf of Mexico OCS Region  
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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 from onshore mineral leases on Federal and Indian lands.

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