



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



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*Long-term Monitoring at the East and West Flower Garden Banks
National Marine Sanctuary 1998-1999*

OCS Study MMS 2001-101

The Minerals Management Service (MMS), Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, announces the availability of a new study report, *Long-term Monitoring at the East and West Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary 1998-1999*. This study represents the continuation of the ongoing ecological monitoring that began in 1989 and was first reported in 1992. It represents an ongoing effort to understand the dynamics of the Flower Garden Banks coral reefs and to protect this unique and valuable natural resource. Research/monitoring efforts are critical to preserving the long-term health and sustainability of the Flower Garden Banks ecosystem.

This report assessed the growth, diversity, percent cover, incidence of disease, and bleaching of scleractinian hermatypic corals as well as an assessment of the water quality associated with the study area. The total percent coral cover did not vary significantly between the East and West Banks or between years. Analysis of species diversity and evenness showed no significant difference among previous studies, banks, or during the subject study with the exception of a significant increase of algae cover from 1998 to 1999. This increase was caused by the presence of large amounts of red turf algae and mainly at the expense of bare reef rock. Additionally, there were no significant amounts of toxins identified within the hydrological assessment of this study.

You can obtain copies of the report from the Minerals Management Service, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, at a charge of \$20.00 by referencing OCS Study MMS 2001-101. 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
(703) 487-4650 or FAX: (703) 321-8547
Rush Orders: 1-800-336-4700

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 \$10 billion in 2001 and more than \$120 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.

-MMS-GOM-

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

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