



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

Technical Announcement

October 2003

Contact: Barney Congdon  
(504) 735-2595

Caryl Fagot  
(504) 736-2590

Debra Winbush  
(504) 736-2597

## **Rigs and Reefs: A Comparison of the Fish Communities at Two Artificial Reefs, a Production Platform, and a Natural Reef in the Northern Gulf of Mexico: Final Report**

[OCS Study MMS 2003-009](#)

The Minerals Management Service (MMS), Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, announces the availability of a new study report, *Rigs and Reefs: A Comparison of the Fish Communities at Two Artificial Reefs, a Production Platform, and a Natural Reef in the Northern Gulf of Mexico: Final Report*.

The purpose of this study was to compare the fish communities associated with an operating oil and gas platform, two artificial reef configurations, and a natural reef, the West Flower Garden Bank. Artificial reef configurations included a production platform toppled in place as a deepwater artificial reef (West Cameron Block 617A), a nearby partially removed platform (High Island Block A355), and an operating production platform (High Island Block A350). Objectives included identification of fish species' composition at each site by using a remotely-operated vehicle, estimation of the fish biomass/density associated with each site using dual beam hydroacoustic surveys, and determination of the effects of side, depth, and distance from each site on fish biomass. Fish biomass and density around the standing platform were higher than the artificial reefs or the natural reef. Mean fish biomass at the standing platform was an order of magnitude higher than that found over and immediately around the two artificial reef sites and the natural reef. Fish biomass at the artificial reef sites was similar to the upper terrace (coral reef) of the nearby natural reef.

This report is available only in compact disc format. The discs are available from the Minerals Management Service, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, at a charge of \$15.00 by referencing OCS Study MMS 2003-009. 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 American Indian leases. These revenues totaled over \$6 billion in 2002 and nearly \$127 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>

**[Return to Technical Announcements](#)**