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*Selected Aspects of the Ecology of the Continental Slope Fauna
of the Gulf of Mexico:
Synopsis of the Northern Gulf of Mexico Continental Slope Study, 1983-1988*

OCS Study MMS 2003-072

The Minerals Management Service (MMS), Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, announces the availability of a new study report, Selected Aspects of the Ecology of the Continental Slope Fauna of the Gulf of Mexico: A Synopsis of the Northern Gulf of Mexico Continental Slope Study, 1983-1988.

The MMS funded extensive field investigations of the northern Gulf of Mexico continental slope in the 1980's. These studies were completed but results were not widely distributed. This study was awarded to the original contractors to reconstruct the database, prepare a layperson's guide to the deep-sea Gulf, and prepare a technical-level summary of the findings of the original slope study. The layperson's guide (OCS Study MMS 2001-065), including a photographic atlas on CD-ROM, was submitted as an independent product. This stand-alone technical report includes an introduction to the 1980's slope study and is followed by environmental and biological characterization of continental slope habitats with conclusions regarding selected aspects of the continental slope ecology. The results of the reanalyses of the faunal data discount the idea that the upper continental slope is characterized by three distinct megafaunal zones within which the species composition is homogeneous regardless of depth. Rather, the data reflect a pattern of a nonrepeating sequence of species arrayed along the depth gradients. The faunal composition changes continually with depth. The patterns of abundance and diversity of fauna by depth on the Gulf slope differed from the patterns observed in contemporary U.S. Atlantic slope studies.

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 2003-072. The report may be ordered through the Minerals Management Service's on-line ordering system at: <http://www.gomr.mms.gov/WebStore/front.asp>. 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

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5285 Port Royal Road
Springfield, Virginia 22161
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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.

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

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