



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



**FOR RELEASE:** April 1999

MMS Seafloor Monitoring Project:  
First Annual Technical Report, 1997 Field Season

OCS Report MMS 99-0014

The Minerals Management Service (MMS), Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, announces the availability of a new report, *MMS Seafloor Monitoring Project: First Annual Technical Report, 1997 Field Season*.

The MMS imposes certain mitigative measures in environmental documents, primarily Categorical Exclusion Reviews (CER's) and Environmental Assessments (EA's), to minimize or preclude impacts from proposed operations. Mitigation typically requires avoidance of biologically sensitive areas and potential archaeological sites, or the use of a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) camera to assess such features. On rare occasions, diver testing is employed when there is the potential for direct impact to biological or archaeological features.

In 1997, MMS instituted a Seafloor Monitoring Program to verify industry compliance with environmental mitigative measures and to ensure protection of significant seafloor habitats and archaeological properties. The Monitoring Program is twofold. First, it requires operators to demonstrate compliance with avoidance requirements by providing "as-built" maps showing anchor locations with their construction reports. Secondly, field monitoring by MMS personnel using high-resolution sidescan sonar and/or MMS divers verifies that protected features were avoided. This report presents the results of the first field season of the Seafloor Monitoring Program.

You can obtain copies of the report from the Minerals Management Service, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, at a charge of \$3.00 by referencing OCS Report MMS 99-0014. You can 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  
INTERNET: <http://www.mms.gov/>

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 that manages the Nation's oil and gas and other mineral resources on the OCS and collects, accounts for, and last year disbursed about \$6 billion in revenues from Federal offshore mineral leases and from onshore mineral leases on Federal and Indian lands.

**-MMS-GOM-**

MMS Internet website address: <http://www.mms.gov/>  
24 hour Fax-on-Demand Service: (202) 219-1703

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