



U. S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region

Technical Announcement

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Contact: Caryl Fagot
(504) 736-2590

Archaeological Analysis of Submerged Sites on the Gulf of Mexico Outer Continental Shelf

[OCS Study BOEM 2013-011110](#)

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), Gulf of Mexico OCS, announces the availability of a new study report *Archaeological Analysis of Submerged Sites on the Gulf of Mexico Outer Continental Shelf*.

This study investigated 11 shipwreck sites on the outer continental shelf of the Gulf of Mexico. The sites were investigated through geophysical survey and a combination of diver observation and sediment core acquisition. The purpose of the study was to verify that the targets were shipwrecks and, if possible, to identify and assess their potential eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. A second aim of the study was to assess site formation processes that affect individual wreck sites using, at a minimum, data obtained through sediment coring. The sites ranged in water depth from 11 to 36.5 meters (36 to 120 feet) below sea level and are located across the north-central and northwestern Gulf of Mexico, from approximately Morgan City, Louisiana to Galveston, Texas.

Between March 2010 and June 2011, the M/V *Nikola* conducted site-specific geophysical surveys at the six contracted shipwreck study sites; two more sites were added to the scope of work through a contract amendment. Geophysical sensors used at all sites included a single beam echosounder, a magnetometer, a subbottom profiler, a multibeam echosounder, and sidescan sonar. At selected sites, 3-D sonar was also used. In August 2010, diver investigations were conducted at 11 sites by archaeologists from Tesla Offshore, LLC and the University of West Florida Archaeology Institute. BOEM marine archaeologists accompanied the diving operations. During dive operations, sediment cores were acquired on site, logged onshore, and samples were prepared for evaluation of sediment characteristics and chemical analysis. Also during dive operations, water samples for each site were acquired and tested onshore for pH, salinity, and dissolved oxygen content. Oceanographic analyses were conducted for three datums throughout the Gulf of Mexico; the resulting models were used to extrapolate conditions at each site.

Of the 11 sites investigated, five are considered eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places: Sites 433, 386, 373, 389, and 236. Each is eligible under multiple criteria; USS *Hatteras* (Site 236) is already listed on the National Register and was added to the scope of work

for monitoring purposes. Nomination forms have been prepared for Sites 433 (*R.W. Gallagher*), 386 (*Heredia*), 373 (*Cities Service Toledo*), and 389 (*J.A. Bisso*) and submitted under this contract's scope of work. The four remaining shipwrecks verified as part of this study represent relatively modern vessels and did not display any unique qualities or apparent historical significance (Sites 15488, 15366, 15326, and 322). No shipwreck was identified at the reported location of Site 380. The feature investigated in West Cameron area (no site number available) was determined to represent modern industry-related debris rather than a shipwreck site and was not interpreted as eligible for listing on the National Register. Final results of this study are detailed in a report along with supplemental historical and archival information about the shipwreck sites.

To order a CD, use the Gulf of Mexico OCS Region contact information below and reference OCS Study BOEM 2013-011110. To download a pdf copy, use the Environmental Studies Program Information System and search using the study report number:

http://www.data.boem.gov/homepg/data_center/other/espis/espismaster.asp?appid=1

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region
Public Information Office (GM 217G)
1201 Elmwood Park Blvd.
New Orleans, Louisiana 70123-2394
Phone: (504) 736-2519, 1-800-200-GULF
Fax: (504) 736-2620

U.S. Department of Commerce
National Technical Information Service
5301 Shawnee Rd.
Springfield, Virginia 22312
Phone: (703) 605-6000, 1-800-553-6847
Fax: (703) 605-6900
Website: <http://www.ntis.gov/>

BOEM Main Website: <http://www.boem.gov/>