

[Code of Federal Regulations]
[Title 30, Volume 2]
[Revised as of July 1, 2007]
From the U.S. Government Printing Office via GPO Access
[CITE: 30CFR250.175]

[Page 287]

TITLE 30--MINERAL RESOURCES

CHAPTER II--MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

PART 250_OIL AND GAS AND SULPHUR OPERATIONS IN THE OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF--

Subpart A_General

Sec. 250.175 When may the Regional Supervisor grant an SOO?

(a) The Regional Supervisor may grant an SOO when necessary to allow you time to begin drilling or other operations when you are prevented by reasons beyond your control, such as unexpected weather, unavoidable accidents, or drilling rig delays.

(b) The Regional Supervisor may grant an SOO when all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The lease was issued with a primary lease term of 5 years, or with a primary term of 8 years with a requirement to drill within 5 years;

(2) Before the end of the third year of the primary term, you or your predecessor in interest must have acquired and interpreted geophysical information that indicates:

- (i) The presence of a salt sheet;
- (ii) That all or a portion of a potential hydrocarbon-bearing formation may lie beneath or adjacent to the salt sheet; and
- (iii) The salt sheet interferes with identification of the potential hydrocarbon-bearing formation.

(3) The interpreted geophysical information required under paragraph (b)(2) of this section must include full 3-D depth migration beneath the salt sheet and over the entire lease area.

(4) Before requesting the suspension, you have conducted or are conducting additional data processing or interpretation of the geophysical information with the objective of identifying a potential hydrocarbon-bearing formation.

(5) You demonstrate that additional time is necessary to:

- (i) complete current processing or interpretation of existing

geophysical data or information;

(ii) acquire, process, or interpret new geophysical data or information; or

(iii) drill into the potential hydrocarbon-bearing formation identified as a result of the activities conducted in paragraphs (b)(2), (b)(4), and (b)(5) of this section.

(c) The Regional Supervisor may grant an SOO to conduct additional geological and geophysical data analysis that may lead to the drilling of a well below 25,000 feet true vertical depth below the datum at mean sea level (TVD SS) when all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The lease was issued with a primary lease term of:

(i) 5 years; or

(ii) 8 years with a requirement to drill within 5 years.

(2) Before the end of the fifth year of the primary term, you or your predecessor in interest must have acquired and interpreted geophysical information that:

(i) Indicates that all or a portion of a potential hydrocarbon-bearing formation lies below 25,000 feet TVD SS; and

(ii) Includes full 3-D depth migration over the entire lease area.

(3) Before requesting the suspension, you have conducted or are conducting additional data processing or interpretation of the geophysical information with the objective of identifying a potential hydrocarbon-bearing geologic structure or stratigraphic trap lying below 25,000 feet TVD SS.

(4) You demonstrate that additional time is necessary to:

(i) Complete current processing or interpretation of existing geophysical data or information;

(ii) Acquire, process, or interpret new geophysical or geological data or information that would affect the decision to drill the same geologic structure or stratigraphic trap, as determined by the Regional Supervisor, identified in paragraphs (c)(2) and (c)(3) of this section; or

(iii) Drill a well below 25,000 feet TVD SS into the geologic structure or stratigraphic trap identified as a result of the activities conducted in paragraphs (c)(2), (c)(3), and (c)(4)(i) and (ii) of this section.

[64 FR 72775, Dec. 28, 1999, as amended at 67 FR 44360, July 2, 2002; 70 FR 74663, Dec. 16, 2005; 72 FR 25200, May 4, 2007]