

THE NEWS ROOM

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BOEMRE Approves Gulf of Mexico Deepwater Exploration Plan Supported by Post-Deepwater Horizon Environmental Review

NEW ORLEANS – The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE) today announced the approval of a deepwater Gulf of Mexico Exploration Plan (EP) following the completion of a site-specific Environmental Assessment (SEA) for deepwater oil and gas exploration.

Shell Offshore, Inc.'s Supplemental EP includes five proposed exploratory wells in approximately 7,160 to 7,259 feet water depth, as well as three previously approved wells approximately 72 miles offshore Louisiana.

"This exploration plan was reviewed under the heightened standards we are now using to conduct site-specific environmental assessments," said BOEMRE Director Michael R. Bromwich. "The standards are higher than they used to be, and further support our goal of ensuring that deepwater exploration is done more safely and with greater protections for the environment than ever before."

BOEMRE prepared the SEA to examine the plan's proposed exploration activities in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the implementation of departmental and bureau regulations.

The SEA included new scientific information that had not been previously available for consideration or analysis. Based on its review, BOEMRE found no evidence that the proposed actions would significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, BOEMRE determined that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was not required and issued the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), which allowed the exploration plan to be approved.

The bureau will not issue further news releases for the standard approval of exploration and development plans. Information on approved plans and permits can be found at: http://www.gomr.boemre.gov/homepg/offshore/safety/well_permits.html.

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