

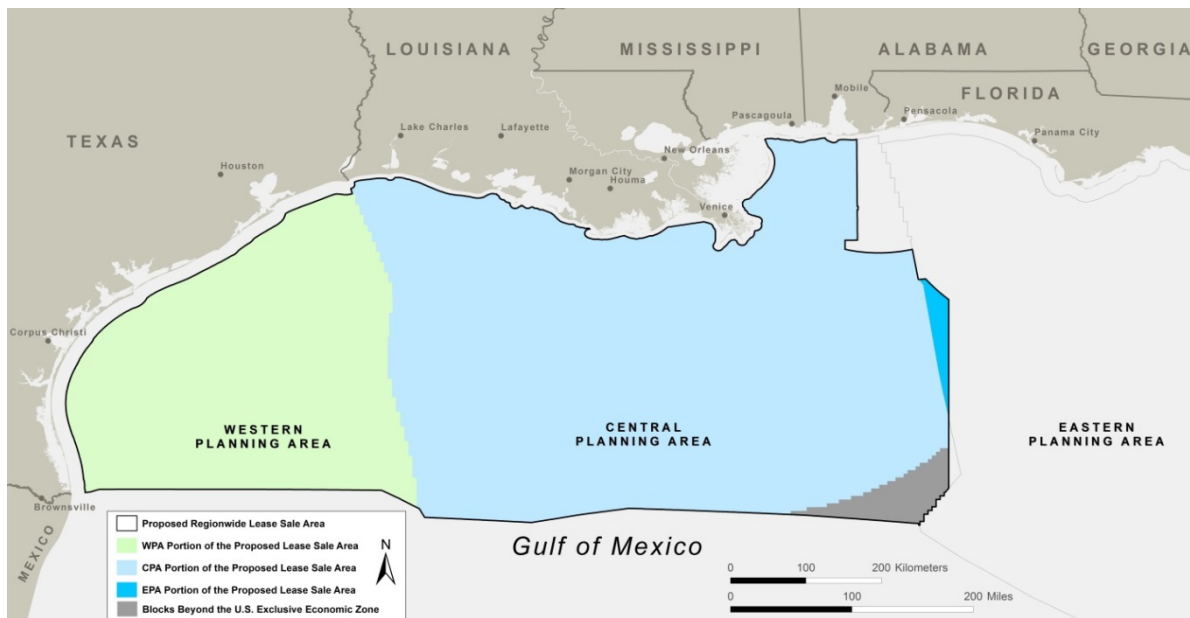
U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Ocean Energy Management Gulf of Mexico OCS Region

SPECIAL INFORMATION

March 2017

BOEM Issues a Notice of Availability of the 2018 Gulf of Mexico Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement and Plans to Hold Public Meetings for the Proposed 2018 Gulf of Mexico OCS Oil and Gas Lease Sales

The U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) announces the availability of the *Gulf of Mexico OCS Lease Sale: Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement 2018* (2018 GOM Draft Supplemental EIS). The 2018 GOM Draft Supplemental EIS provides an analysis of the potential significant impacts of a proposed action (a regionwide lease sale) and the reasonable alternatives to the proposed action. This Supplemental EIS is expected to be used to inform decisions for each of the two proposed lease sales scheduled in 2018 and to be supplemented as necessary for future Gulf of Mexico regionwide lease sales. This Supplemental EIS tiers from and updates the *Gulf of Mexico OCS Oil and Gas Lease Sales: 2017-2022; Gulf of Mexico Lease Sales 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 256, 257, 259, and 261; Final Environmental Impact Statement (2017-2022 GOM Multisale EIS)*. The proposed oil and gas lease sales detailed in this Supplemental EIS are tentatively scheduled to be held in 2018 under the *2017-2022 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing: Proposed Final Program (Five-Year Program)*. BOEM is proposing to offer for oil and gas leasing all available unleased blocks within the Western Planning Area (WPA), Central Planning Area (CPA), and Eastern Planning Area (EPA), with the exception of the whole and portions of blocks deferred by the Gulf of Mexico Security Act of 2006, blocks that are adjacent to or beyond the United States' Exclusive Economic Zone in the area known as the northern portion of the Eastern Gap, and whole and partial blocks within the boundary of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary. The proposed WPA lease sale area encompasses about 28.58 million acres. As of February 2017, approximately 25.9 million acres of the proposed WPA lease sale area are currently unleased. The proposed CPA lease sale area encompasses about 63 million acres of the total CPA area of 66.45 million acres. As of February 2017, approximately 49.2 million acres of the proposed CPA lease sale area are currently unleased. The proposed EPA lease sale area covers approximately 657,905 acres and includes those blocks previously included in the EPA Lease Sales 225 and 226 area, which is bordered by the CPA boundary on the west and the Military Mission Line (86°41' W. longitude) on the east. The area is south of eastern Alabama and western Florida; the nearest point of land is 125 miles (201 kilometers) northwest in Louisiana. As of February 2017, approximately 606,995 acres of the proposed EPA lease sale area are currently unleased.



BOEM published in the August 19, 2016, *Federal Register*, a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare a Supplemental EIS. The NOI sought input on the scope of the Supplemental EIS for the proposed 2018 Gulf of Mexico lease sales, which covers the regionwide area of the GOM offshore the States of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida.

BOEM published in the March 31, 2017, *Federal Register*, the Notice of Availability of the 2018 GOM Draft Supplemental EIS for the proposed 2018 GOM lease sales scheduled in the Five-Year Program.

BOEM will hold public meetings to obtain comments regarding the 2018 GOM Draft Supplemental EIS. These public meetings are held in an open-house format and may be attended any time between 4:00 p.m. CDT and 7:00 p.m. CDT. The meetings are scheduled as follows:

- **New Orleans, Louisiana:** Tuesday, April 25, 2017, Wyndham Garden New Orleans Airport, 6401 Veterans Memorial Blvd., Metairie, Louisiana 70003;
- **Houston, Texas:** Thursday, April 27, 2017, Houston Marriott North, 255 North Sam Houston Pkwy East, Houston, Texas 77060;
- **Pensacola, Florida:** Monday, May 1, 2017, Hilton Garden Inn Pensacola Airport, 1144 Airport Blvd., Pensacola, Florida 32504;
- **Mobile, Alabama:** Tuesday, May 2, 2017, The Admiral Hotel Mobile, Curio Collection by Hilton, 251 Government Street, Mobile, Alabama 36602; and
- **Gulfport, Mississippi:** Wednesday, May 3, 2017, Courtyard by Marriott, Gulfport Beachfront MS Hotel, 1600 East Beach Boulevard, Gulfport, Mississippi 39501.

If you cannot attend the meetings, you may submit your written comments on the 2018 GOM Draft Supplemental EIS no later than 45 days following the publication date of the Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register* in one of the following ways:

1. In an envelope labeled "Comments on the 2018 GOM Draft Supplemental EIS" and mailed (or hand delivered) to Mr. Greg Kozlowski, Deputy Regional Supervisor, Office of Environment (GM 623E), Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, 1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard, New Orleans, Louisiana 70123-2394; or
2. Through the regulations.gov web portal: Navigate to <http://www.regulations.gov> and search for Docket No. BOEM-2017-0001. Click on the "Comment Now!" button to the right of the document link. Enter your information and comment, and then click "Submit."

BOEM will be printing and distributing a very limited number of paper copies. In keeping with the Department of the Interior's mission of the protection of natural resources and to limit costs while ensuring the availability of the document to the public, BOEM will primarily distribute digital copies of the 2018 GOM Draft Supplemental EIS on compact discs. However, if you require a paper copy, BOEM will provide one upon request if copies are still available.

1. You may obtain a copy of the 2018 GOM Draft Supplemental EIS from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, Public Information Office (GM 335A), 1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard, New Orleans, Louisiana 70123-2394 or by telephone at 1-800-200-GULF.
2. You may download or view the 2018 GOM Draft Supplemental EIS on BOEM's website at <http://www.boem.gov/nepaprocess/>.

BOEM does not consider anonymous comments; please include your name and address as part of your submittal. BOEM makes all comments, including the names and addresses of respondents, available for public review during regular business hours. Individual respondents may request that BOEM withhold their names and/or addresses from the public record; however, BOEM cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. If you wish your name and/or address to be withheld, you must state your preference prominently at the beginning of your comment. All submissions from organizations or businesses and

from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

If you have questions, please call Mr. Greg Kozlowski at 504-736-2512.

If you would like to receive announcements for public meetings and the availability of our environmental documents for Gulf of Mexico OCS activities, please submit your name and contact information to BOEM at https://www.data.boem.gov/homepg/data_center/other/gmaillist/subscribe.asp. You may also request to be removed from the current BOEM mailing list in the same way.