



U.S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
Office of Public Affairs

NEWS RELEASE

FOR RELEASE:

December 15, 2000

CONTACT: A.B. Wade
(202) 208-3985

Barney Congdon
504-736-2595

Proposed Notice of Sale 178 Amended to Add Western Gap Blocks

The Minerals Management Service has amended the [Proposed Notice of Sale for Outer Continental Shelf Lease Sale 178](#), Central Gulf of Mexico. In the amendment, MMS proposes to offer for lease blocks that are beyond the U.S. exclusive economic zone in an area known as the [Western Gap](#). This amendment adds 53 whole or partial blocks to the 4,366 blocks identified in the proposed notice of sale announced on Nov. 29, 2000.

This amended proposed notice follows the recent approval of a [treaty](#) by both the United States and Mexico that establishes the continental shelf boundary between the two countries. Specifically, blocks that lie beyond the U.S. EEZ in the northern portion of the Western Gap are now proposed to be available for leasing in the proposed sale. These additional blocks are not in the 1.4 nautical mile buffer zone that was established by the treaty.

The estimated range of resources that may be discovered and produced as a result of the sale are 1.53 to 4.39 trillion cubic feet of gas and 0.15 to 0.44 billion barrels of oil. The net economic value is estimated to be about \$1.2 - \$3.6 billion in 2001 dollars.

The MMS, a bureau in the U.S. Department of the Interior, is the federal agency that manages the nation's natural gas, oil and other mineral resources on the outer continental shelf. The agency also collects, accounts for and [disburses more than \\$5 billion per year in revenues](#) from federal offshore mineral leases and from onshore mineral leases on federal and Indian lands.

-MMS-

MMS Internet website address: <http://www.mms.gov>