

**The NewsRoom**

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## **MMS Elevates Alternative Energy Office, Expands Authority**

*In Related Move, Offshore Program Renamed to Reflect New Energy Role*

**WASHINGTON** - The Minerals Management Service (MMS) has created a new organization to reflect the significance the agency places on alternative energy. The newly formed [Office of Offshore Alternative Energy Programs \(OAEP\)](#) raises the alternative energy program's stature in the organization, and enhances the program's ability to meet the new statutory mandates and respond to the unique needs of the regulated community.

In a complimentary move, MMS renamed its Offshore Minerals Management program as the [Offshore Energy and Minerals Management \(OEMM\) Program](#). The name change reflects MMS's expanded authority to regulate alternative energy on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS), in accordance with Energy Policy Act of 2005. The new alternative energy office will now directly report to the [Associate Director for OEMM](#).

The alternative energy office, led by career employee Maureen Bornholdt, will develop and implement policy, analysis, and overall management of the OCS alternative energy leasing and operations program while ensuring compliance with departmental goals and philosophy.

"Adopting this new and more comprehensive program name of Offshore Energy and Minerals Management reflects MMS's new authority to regulate offshore renewable energy sources, which are clearly not minerals, yet very important to our energy security," said Chris Oynes, Associate Director for OEMM. "This structural change will help continue to reinforce MMS's regulatory role to encourage alternative energy development on the [OCS](#). The organizational change will also raise the stature of the renewable energy program and provide management focus on this new area of energy development."

The [Energy Policy Act of 2005](#) authorized MMS to regulate alternative energy on the OCS including wind, wave, current, tidal, and hydrogen generation sources. MMS has developed comprehensive program regulations and published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in the Federal Register earlier this week.

MMS is also responsible for all phases of mineral resource management in Federal waters, about 1.76 billion acres of submerged lands. The OCS contributes approximately 27 percent of total U.S. oil production and approximately 15 percent of total U.S. natural gas production.

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