

Public Meeting

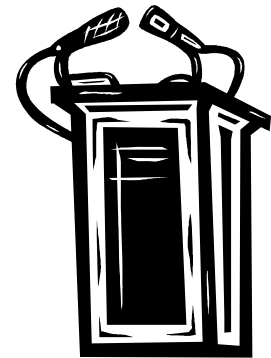
Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

Proposed Geological and Geophysical Activities in the Mid- and South Atlantic OCS Planning Areas



Public Meeting Schedule

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| • Jacksonville, FL | April 16, 2012 |
| • Savannah, GA | April 18, 2012 |
| • Charleston, SC | April 20, 2012 |
| • Norfolk, VA | April 24, 2012 |
| • Annapolis, MD | April 25, 2012 |
| • Wilmington, DE | April 26, 2012 |
| • Wilmington, NC | April 26, 2012 |
| • Atlantic City, NJ | April 27, 2012 |



Purpose of Today's Meeting

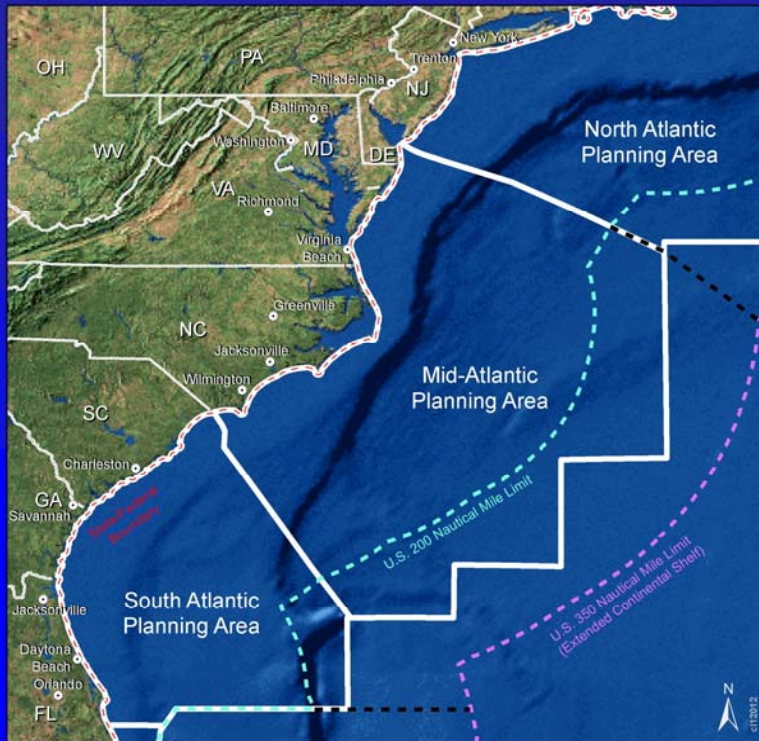
- We have distributed a Draft Programmatic EIS for a 60-day comment period.
 - The Notice of Availability for the Draft Programmatic EIS was published in the *Federal Register* on March 30, 2012.
- We are here today to record and collect your comments on the Draft Programmatic EIS to assist in preparing the Final Programmatic EIS.
- Public input is an important part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process.



- Assess the potential environmental impact of various types of G&G activity conducted on the Mid- and South Atlantic OCS
- Evaluate mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate impacts on affected resources
- Provide information and an analysis of impacts for BOEM and other agencies before decisions to authorize G&G activities



Proposed Geological & Geophysical Activities in the Mid- and South Atlantic OCS Planning Areas



April 2012

Authorize G&G activities required to support all three programs managed by BOEM in the Mid- and South Atlantic OCS Planning Areas (the area of interest [AOI])

- Oil and gas
- Renewable energy
- Marine minerals (sand)



- Geological
 - Coring
 - Shallow test drilling
 - Deep stratigraphic tests
- Geophysical
 - 2- and 3-dimensional seismic
 - Controlled source electromagnetic surveys (CSEM)
 - High-resolution geophysical surveys
 - Multibeam echosounder, sidescan sonar, and boomers
 - Gravity and magnetic surveys (sea and airborne)



- Routine Operations

- Active acoustic sound sources
 - Seismic airgun surveying
- Electromechanical sound sources
- Aircraft traffic and noise
- Drilling and coring
 - Operational wastes
- Seafloor disturbances
 - Bottom sampling
 - Drilling and coring, including discharges
 - Placement of anchors, cables, and sensors
- Onshore base support services
- Vessel traffic, noise, exclusion zones, and wastes
- Trash and debris

- Accidental Events

- Fuel spills



- Benthic Communities
- Fish and Fisheries (commercial and recreational fisheries, essential fish habitat)
- Marine Mammals
- Sea Turtles
- Coastal and Marine Birds
- Protected Species (among above)
- Socioeconomic Issues
 - Archaeological resources
 - Marine protected areas
 - Recreational resources
 - Human resources and land use
 - Other marine uses

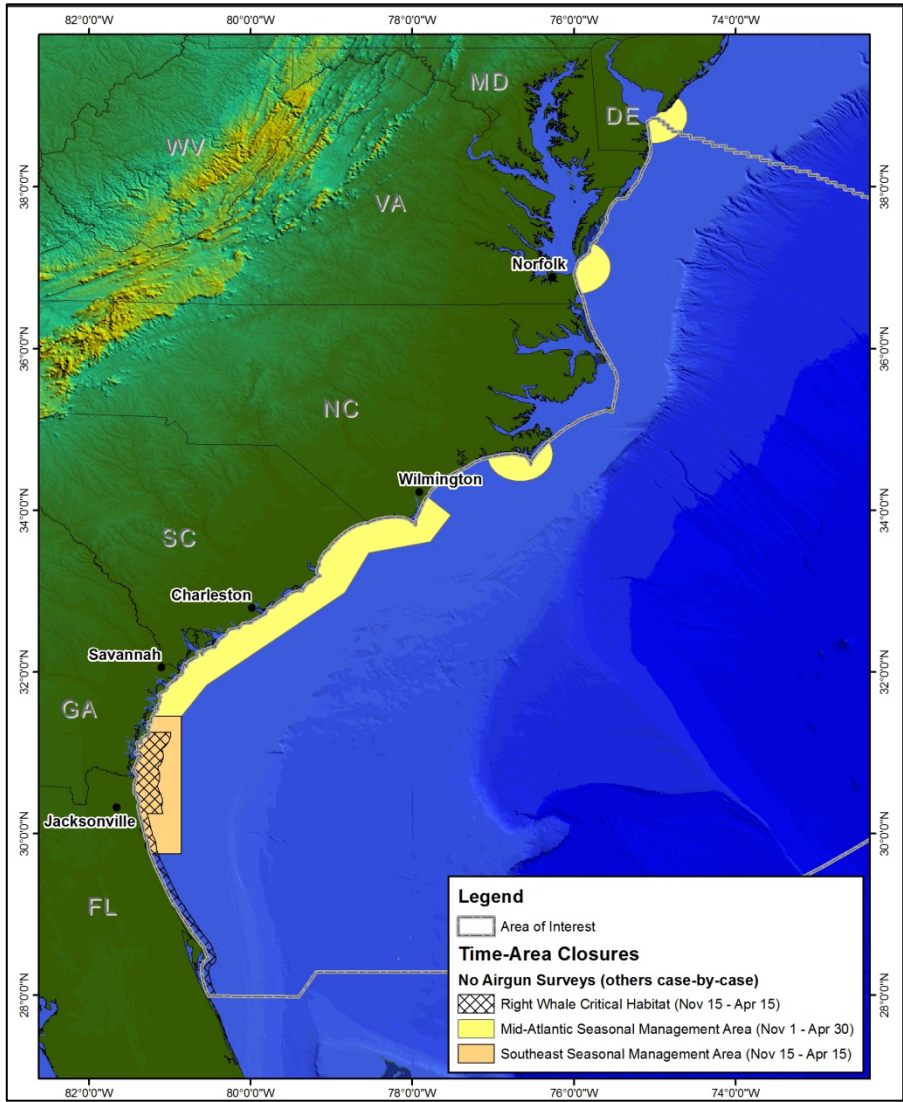


- Alternative A (Proposed Action)
 - Time/area closure for Northern Right Whales' seasonal management areas (SMA's)
 - Notices to Lessees and Operators (NTL's), with some modifications, based on BOEM/BSEE current practices in Gulf of Mexico that include the following:
 - Mitigation measures and protected species observers (NTL 2012-Joint-G02)
 - Vessel strike avoidance (NTL 2011-Joint-G01)
 - Marine trash and debris awareness (NTL-2012-BSEE-G01)
- Alternative B
 - All mitigations in Alternative A
 - Expanded time/area closures for Northern Right Whales' SMA's
 - Closure area for nesting sea turtles – central Florida
 - Separation between simultaneous seismic surveys
 - Required passive acoustic monitoring
- Alternative C
 - No Action for Oil and Gas G&G Activity, *Status Quo* for Renewable Energy and Marine Mineral G&G Activities



- Alternative A (Proposed Action) – Allow all G&G activities in the AOI from shore out to 350 nmi, with mitigations that include the following:
 - Entire AOI; survey protocols for active acoustic sound sources (airguns and electromechanical sources [high-resolution geophysical surveys])
 - Time/area closure for Northern Right Whales' SMA's
 - Mid-Atlantic SMA from November 1 to April 30
 - Southeast SMA from November 15 to April 15
 - SMA's; no airgun use during closure periods; other survey types on a case-by-case basis
 - Guidance for vessel strike avoidance and marine debris awareness
 - Avoidance and reporting for sensitive benthic communities and archaeological resources
 - Military/NASA coordination
 - Passive acoustic monitoring recommended





Time-Area Closures

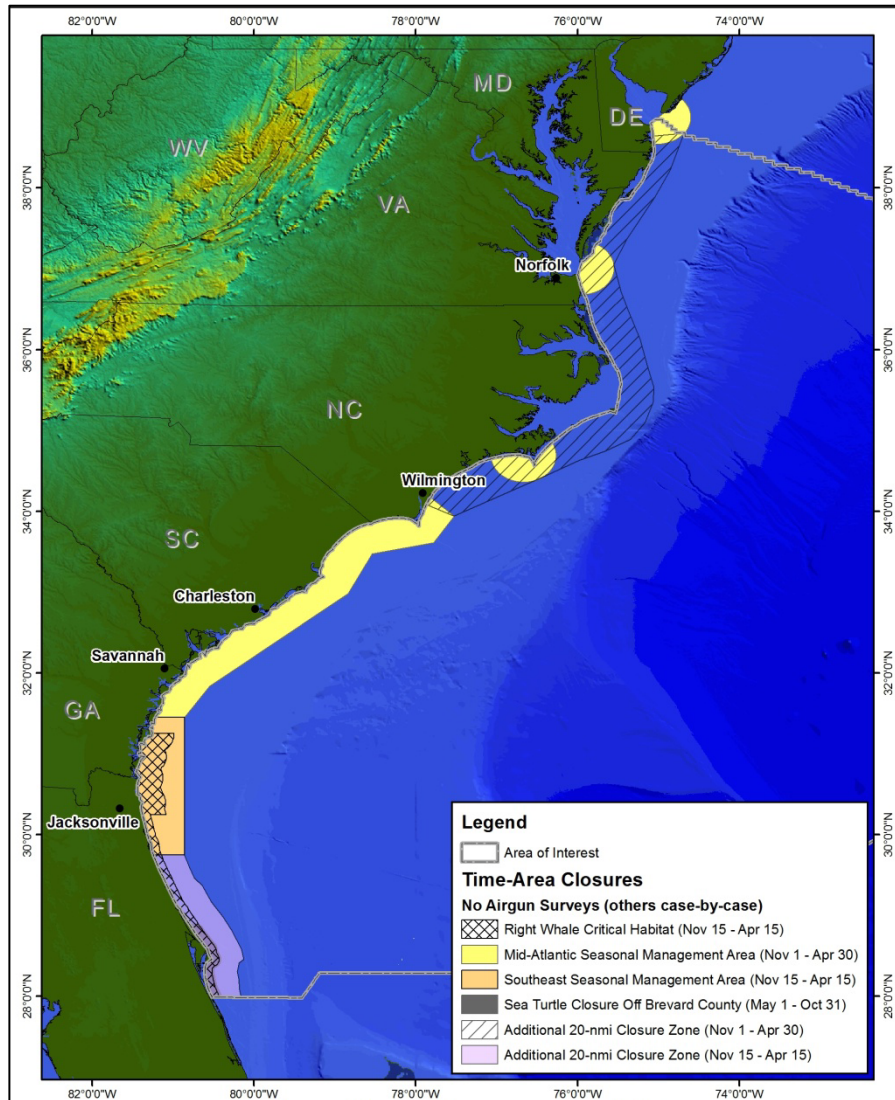
No Airgun Surveys (others case-by-case)

-  Right Whale Critical Habitat (Nov 15 – Apr 15)
-  Mid-Atlantic Seasonal Management Area (Nov 1 – Apr 30)
-  Southeast Seasonal Management Area (Nov 15 – Apr 15)



- Alternative B: Allow all G&G activities in the AOI from shore out to 350 nmi, with mitigations that include the following:
 - All mitigations that are part of Alternative A
 - Expanded time/area closures for Northern Right Whales' SMA's
 - Additional closure zone; shore out to 20 nmi to close gaps in the Mid-Atlantic SMA – November 1 to April 30
 - Additional closure zone; shore out to 20 nmi south of Southeast SMA – November 15 to April 15
 - Time/area closure for sea turtles during nesting season
 - Off Brevard County, Florida – May 1 to October 31
 - 40-km (25-mi) separation distance between simultaneously operating deep-penetration seismic airgun surveys
 - Seismic-survey protocol includes required passive acoustic monitoring



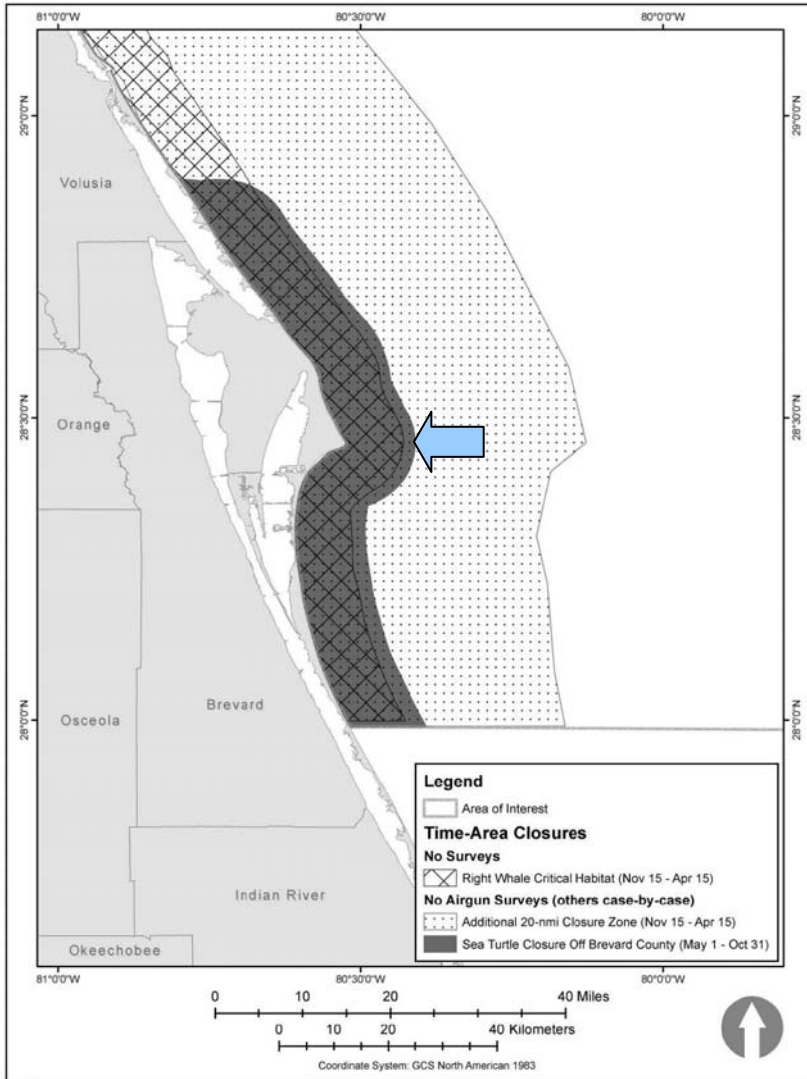


Time-Area Closures

No Airgun Surveys (others case-by-case)

-  Right Whale Critical Habitat (Nov 15 – Apr 15)
-  Mid-Atlantic Seasonal Management Area (Nov 1 – Apr 30)
-  Southeast Seasonal Management Area (Nov 15 – Apr 15)
-  Sea Turtle Closure Off Brevard County (May 1– Oct 31)
-  Additional 20-nmi Closure Zone (Nov 1 – Apr 30)
-  Additional 20-nmi Closure Zone (Nov 15 – Apr 15)





- Time/Area Closure for Sea Turtles off Brevard County, Florida
 - During the nesting season from May 1 to October 31



- Alternative C (No Action) – defined as follows:
 - No Action for the oil and gas program
 - Permitting for prelease G&G exploration would not occur
 - *Status Quo* for the renewable energy and marine mineral programs
 - Activity authorized by these programs would occur on a case-by-case basis, as they do now



Example of Impacts – Airguns

Resource	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
Benthic Communities	Negligible	Negligible	N/A
Marine Mammals	Moderate	Moderate	N/A
Sea Turtles	Negligible-Moderate	Negligible-Minor	N/A
Marine and Coastal Birds	Negligible-Minor	Negligible-Minor	N/A
Fisheries Resources and EFH	Minor	Minor	N/A
Commercial Fisheries	Minor	Minor	N/A
Recreational Fisheries	Negligible-Minor	Negligible-Minor	N/A



- Consultations Required by Law for Protected Species and Conducted during NEPA Evaluation
 - Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act
 - Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act
 - Marine Mammal Protection Act



Next Steps – Project Schedule

ID	Task Name	Apr 2012	May 2012	Jun 2012	Jul 2012	Aug 2012	Sep 2012	Oct 2012	Nov 2012	Dec 2012	
1	Public Comment Period	[Blue bar covering April and May 2012]									
2	Revise to Final PEIS	[Blue bar covering June, July, and August 2012]									
3	Review, Approve, Print & Publish FEIS	[Blue bar covering September, October, and November 2012]									
4	Environmental Consultations	[Blue bar covering April through October 2012]									
5	Record of Decision	[Vertical line in December 2012]									



- Comment period closes on May 30, 2012.
- Comments collected at this meeting may be
 - Oral comments – 3-minute maximum
 - Written comments – leave at the registration table
- Comments may be emailed to GGEIS@boem.gov.
- A copy of the Draft Programmatic EIS can be found at <http://www.boem.gov/Oil-and-Gas-Energy-Program/GOMR/GandG.aspx>.
- Label and mail “Comments on the G&G Draft Programmatic EIS”

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