

Environmental Studies Program: Studies Development Plan FY 2017-2019

Study Area(s): Western Gulf of Mexico, Central Gulf of Mexico, and Eastern Gulf of Mexico

Administered By: Gulf of Mexico OCS Region

Title: Support for Socioeconomic Impact Assessments of Offshore Energy Development in the Gulf of Mexico Region

BOEM Information Need(s) to be Addressed: The Secretary of the Interior is required by the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (1953), as amended (OCSLA), to identify, monitor and assess the impacts caused by offshore resource development activities on the human, marine and coastal environments. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is the federal agency established to conduct Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) lease sales and to assess the environmental and socioeconomic consequences of OCS activities. This contract will provide timely and focused information and analysis in support of Gulf of Mexico Region (GOMR) environmental impact statements, environmental assessments, and other decision documents. Critical information will be provided for ongoing scenario development and impact analyses of land-use, coastal infrastructure, economics, demographics and environmental justice. This contract will provide BOEM with reliable support for timely and substantive responses to rapidly changing facts and to the public concerns that they engender.

Period of Performance: FY 2017-2020

Description:

Background: The petroleum industry as a whole in the Gulf of Mexico Region (GOMR) has matured over several decades and is well-developed, expansive, extensive, and deeply intertwined in the regional communities and economies of the coastal states. Since the late 1990's, the offshore oil and gas industry has been changing rapidly, often in unanticipated directions, including: such as the removal of the Oil Export Ban, development of new facilities to export oil and liquid natural gas, rapid changes in the international business climate, business practices, industry reorganizations, mergers and outsourcing, advances in technology and control systems, and significant energy market shifts in response to in the customary and often volatile fluctuations in oil and gas prices. As a consequence, the onshore social and economic impacts of offshore energy development are also changing, intensifying the concerns of coastal states.

Objectives: In the face of changing conditions generated by natural and human processes, BOEM requires a mechanism to ensure the development of timely and accurate analyses of socioeconomic and environmental impacts and of the varied organizational and operational changes within the offshore industry that are significant for immediate planning purposes. The overarching objective of this study is to rapidly address issues that arise and require quick answers from the requisite experts when

time constraints inherent in NEPA schedules do not allow for targeted study development and peer-reviewed research

Methods: Methods may include but are not limited to: literature reviews, data collection from publicly available sources, targeted interviews or guided conversations with industry officials, workshops, and statistical and econometric analyses. Task orders under this contract will not employ any method that would require OMB clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act.

Research activities will be detailed at the task order level and may include short-term, highly focused efforts as issues critical to impact assessments arise as well as longer-term projects. The identification of specific tasks to be addressed and resources to be allocated will be done as needed and may include the following activities:

- Developing specific forecasting components for BOEM NEPA scenario projections (e.g., helicopter trips, pipeline landfalls)
- Identifying socioeconomic consequences of changes occurring within the industry that affect long- and short-term planning, operations, labor demand, distribution, and/or activity levels.
- Providing trend analysis of a specific industry sector (e.g., geotechnical services), including the identification and evaluation of its socioeconomic consequences (e.g., technologies, capitalization, purchases, labor demands, and geographic distribution).
- Determining the immediate economic and social impacts from natural and human-caused emergency events (e.g., hurricanes, oil spills)
- Pinpointing social and economic consequences to communities, counties/parishes, county/parish aggregations from the operations of (or changes in the operations of) the industry or specific sectors of the industry at the community, county/parish, or state level.
- Conducting GIS analysis or developing maps of infrastructure, socio-economic data (population, income, race/ethnicity, employment, etc), or other relevant geographic information.
- Conducting meetings or workshops to present and discuss findings of targeted research resulting from a task order under this contract.

Anticipated deliverables that may be produced under this study include, but may not be limited to, status reports, white papers, study reports, models, presentations, maps, field reports, databases, bibliographies, and literature reviews.

Revised Date: March 31, 2017