

Technical Announcement

MMS

U. S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region

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Investigations of Chemosynthetic Communities on the Lower Continental Slope of the Gulf of Mexico: Interim Report

OCS Study MMS 2008-009

The Minerals Management Service (MMS), Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, announces the availability of a new study report, *Investigations of Chemosynthetic Communities on the Lower Continental Slope of the Gulf of Mexico: Interim Report*.

This document represents the first interim report for a large multidisciplinary study to investigate chemosynthetic communities and deepwater, hard-bottom communities including deepwater corals below a depth of 1,000 meters (3,280 feet) in the northern Gulf of Mexico. This project is a collaboration between MMS and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office of Ocean Exploration and Research sponsored by the National Oceanographic Partnership Program. This project was awarded in September 2005 and will continue through September 2009. The report compiles detailed information regarding operational procedures, stations occupied, sampling activity, and preliminary results. The information in this report is a compilation of two cruises. A two-week reconnaissance cruise was conducted from the vessel R/V *Gyre* from March 11-25, 2006, including drift camera work and trawling and box core sampling. A subsequent cruise was conducted on the Wood's Hole Oceanographic Institute research vessel R/V *Atlantis* and the submersible *Alvin* from May 7 through June 2, 2006. Results reported were obtained by analysis of the sampling information and data during these cruises and immediately afterward. New chemosynthetic communities and deepwater coral communities were discovered at numerous sites. Results could be revised. In February 2007, several study sites were mapped in great detail using the C&C Technologies Autonomous Underwater Vehicle in preparation for intensive sampling during the 2007 field season. A second interim report is expected in mid-2008 and a final report in late 2009.

This report is available only in compact disc format from the Minerals Management Service, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, at a charge of \$15.00, by referencing OCS Study MMS 2008-009. The report may be downloaded from the MMS website through the [Environmental Studies Program Information System \(ESPIS\)](#). You will be able to obtain this report also from the National Technical Information Service in the near future. Here are the addresses. You may also inspect copies at selected Federal Depository Libraries.

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