



# Minerals Management Service

*People Promoting Energy, the Environment, and the Economy*

## Statement

### Office of Public Affairs

For Immediate Release

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## MMS Responds to 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals Decision

We were just made aware of the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals decision and of course are disappointed by the ruling. We intend to review the court's ruling closely.

MMS completed an extensive Environmental Assessment of the Shell exploration proposal, supported by a 1596-page Environmental Impact Statement, along with other environmental reviews. These extensively analyzed potential impacts to wildlife, including the bowhead whale and subsistence activities. We believe that MMS did conduct the required "hard look" to see if an environmental impact statement was necessary.

Over the past 30 years, MMS has funded nearly \$300 million for environmental studies concerning Alaska waters.

Since 2000, we have had 30 – 40 active environmental studies each year offshore Alaska, totaling over \$45 million.

It's important that MMS continue to open areas for oil and gas exploration because the world energy situation continues to be strained. Alaska and its adjacent offshore areas have great potential for increasing our energy security.