

U.S. Department of the Interior

Minerals Management Service

Office of Communications and Government Affairs

NEWS RELEASE

FOR RELEASE: March 26, 1996 **CONTACT:** Tom DeRocco

(202) 208-3985

Barney Congdon

(504) 736-2595

MMS ANNOUNCES OFFSHORE LEASE ABANDONMENT WORKSHOP

The U.S. Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) today announced an international workshop on offshore lease abandonment and platform disposal sponsored by MMS and Louisiana State University's Center for Energy Studies. The workshop will be held April 15-17 at the Doubletree Hotel in New Orleans.

"There are about 4,700 offshore platforms and 22,000 miles of pipelines located in U.S. coastal waters, including 3,700 platforms on the federal Outer Continental Shelf (OCS)." said MMS Director Cynthia Quarterman. "Virtually all of these are in the Gulf of Mexico. There are about another 2,500 platforms in place worldwide."

According to Quarterman, each year between 100 and 200 offshore platforms are removed from the OCS or sunk to serve as artificial reefs. "About 1,200 have been removed," she said, "and 100 converted to artificial reefs. Over the next 30 years, virtually all the platforms now in active service in the world will have to be removed or otherwise disposed of because they will have reached the end of their useful life."

Most of the workshop's agenda will be allocated to the discussion of issues including:

* Abandoning wells * Site Clearance

* Abandoning pipelines * Regulation & Policy

* Removing facilities * Habitat Planning, Maint-

In addition to Quarterman, plenary and keynote speakers include: Bob Armstrong, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Land & Minerals Management; Ambassador David Colson, Oceans Deputy Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of State; Clifton Curtis, Ocean Political Advisor, Greenpeace International; F. Pat Dunn, chairman of the National Research Council's Marine Board; and Bill Griffin, Phillips Petroleum and E&P Forum.

For registration information, contact:

Irene Constantinou

Center for Energy Studies

Louisiana State University

Baton Rouge, LA 70808

phone: 504/388-3314 fax: 504/388-4541

MMS is the federal agency that manages the Nation's natural gas, oil and other mineral resources on the OCS, and collects accounts for and disburses about \$4 billion yearly in revenues from offshore federal mineral leases and from onshore mineral leases on federal and Indian lands.

-MMS-