

**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Minerals Management Service  
Office of Communications**

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**MMS Issues Call for Information & Nominations for Beaufort Sea/Sale 170**

The U.S. Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) published in the September 30, 1996 Federal Register, a Call for Information and Nominations for a natural gas and oil lease sale in the Beaufort Sea off Alaska's northern coast. Sale 170 is part of the Proposed Final Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Program 1997-2000 and is tentatively scheduled for April 1998.

"The Call is the first step in the prelease process," said MMS Director Cynthia Quarterman. "Its purpose is to gather information and nominations on natural gas and oil leasing, exploration, development and production from all interested parties. This is the beginning of the extensive and thorough decision-making process of whether or not there will be a lease sale in the area."

The area under consideration extends offshore from about three miles to approximately 25 miles, in water depths from about 25 feet to 120 feet. The area available for nominations and comments consists of 362 whole and partial blocks (about 1.7 million acres).

"The energy resources offshore Alaska can make a significant contribution to America's energy supply while supplying needed jobs and revenue," declared Quarterman. "In addition to identifying blocks to be included in a possible lease sale, comments are sought from all interested parties about particular geologic, environmental, biological, archaeological, or social and economic conditions, conflicts, or other information that might bear on potential leasing and development in the area. MMS encourages all customers and stakeholders to participate in this process."

Nominations and comments must be received no later than October 30, 1996. Submissions should be sent to the Regional Supervisor, Leasing & Environment, Alaska OCS Region, Minerals Management Service, 949 East 36th Avenue, Room 308, Anchorage, AK 99508-4302.

MMS is the federal agency that manages the Nation's natural gas, oil and other mineral resources on the Outer Continental Shelf (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.

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