



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

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***NEWS RELEASE***

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**FOR** July 24, 1997  
**RELEASE:**

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**Final Notice of Sale Issued  
for Western Gulf of Mexico OCS Sale 168**

The U.S. Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) will publish in the July 24, 1997, *Federal Register*, a [Final Notice of Sale for Sale 168](#) in the Western Gulf of Mexico (GOM). The sale will be held August 27, 1997, 9:00 a.m., at the Royal Sonesta Hotel, 300 Bourbon Street, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Sale 168 encompasses about 25.7 million acres offshore Texas and Louisiana, and includes 4,710 available blocks in the Western GOM Outer Continental Shelf Planning Area. The blocks are located from nine to 223 miles offshore in water depths ranging from 8 meters to more than 3,000 meters. There are 3,200 tracts in water depths of 200 meters or more.

"We're looking forward to Sale 168, considering the renewed interest and robust activity in the Gulf, both in shallow and deep water," noted MMS Director Cynthia Quarterman.

This is the second sale in the Western Gulf of Mexico, and the fourth sale overall, in which tracts receiving bids in water depths of 200 meters or more are eligible for consideration under provisions of the Deepwater Royalty Relief Act. Under the Act, MMS can establish new terms for leases in water depths of 200 meters or deeper in parts of the Central and Western Gulf of Mexico.

Sale 168 also encompasses tracts or portions of tracts which lie beyond the United States Exclusive Economic Zone in an area referred to as the Northern Portion of the Western Gap. MMS has established special procedures for bidding on tracts located in the Gap area.

The Final Notice of Sale will be posted on the MMS Website at <http://www.mms.gov>. In addition, copies of the document are available from MMS's Gulf of Mexico Regional Office, Public Information Unit, 1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard, New Orleans, Louisiana 70123 (504) 736-2519; toll free (1-800-200-GULF).

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 mineral leases and from onshore mineral leases on federal and Indian lands.

**-MMS-**

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## Statistical Summary for Sale 168

**Size:** 4,710 available blocks; 25.7 million acres

**Lease Terms:**

5 Years — 1,690 Blocks - Water depths less than 400 meters

8 Years — 354 Blocks - Water depths between 400-800 meters

10 Years — 2,666 Blocks - Water depths greater than 800 meters

**Bidding Systems:**

12 1/2% Royalty - 3,020 Blocks

16 2/3% Royalty - 1,690 Blocks

**Royalty Suspension Areas:**

200-400 Meter Royalty Suspension Area - 180 Blocks

400-800 Meter Royalty Suspension Area - 354 Blocks

800 Meter and Greater Royalty Suspension Area - 2,666 Blocks

**Minimum Bid:** \$25 per acre or fraction thereof.