

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
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NEWS RELEASE

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Proposed Notice of Sale Issued for Western Gulf of Mexico OCS Sale 174

Today, the U.S. Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) is making available the Proposed Notice of Sale for Western Gulf of Mexico (GOM) Sale 174. The sale is scheduled for August 25, 1999, in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Sale 174 encompasses 3,642 unleased blocks, about 19.81 million acres, in the Western GOM Outer Continental Shelf Planning Area offshore Texas and in deeper waters offshore Louisiana. The blocks are located from 9 to 200 miles offshore in water depths ranging from 8 meters to more than 3,000 meters. There are 2,120 blocks in water depths of 200 meters or more.

This is the fourth sale in the Western Gulf of Mexico, and the seventh sale overall, in which blocks receiving bids in water depths of 200 meters or more are eligible for consideration under provisions of the Deep Water Royalty Relief Act. The Proposed Notice of Sale offers all blocks in water depths of less than 800 meters for a minimum bid of \$25 per acre. The minimum bid on blocks in water depths of 800 meters or deeper has been changed to \$37.50 per acre.

The Proposed 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 Outer Continental Shelf; and collects, accounts for, and last year disbursed about \$6 billion in revenues from federal offshore mineral leases and from onshore mineral leases on federal and Indian lands.

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