



MMS Alaska OCS Region

News Release

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MMS Issues Liberty Project Final EIS

On May 17, the Minerals Management Service published the final environmental impact statement for BP Exploration (Alaska)'s Liberty Project, which would develop oil and gas resources in federal waters of the Beaufort Sea near Prudhoe Bay. The EIS evaluates a Development and Production Plan, an Oil Spill Contingency Plan, and a pipeline right-of-way application submitted by BP in early 1998.

In January 2002, BP announced they were putting the Liberty Project on hold pending an ongoing re-evaluation of project configuration and costs. On March 5, 2002, BP notified MMS and other agencies stating that, pending completion of project re-evaluation affected agencies should consider submitted permit applications incomplete and should suspend their processing of these applications. Also in March, BP indicated that submission of a modified DPP for the Liberty Project would likely take 6 months or more.

MMS has decided to publish this final EIS because it documents the extensive analysis done for the project, and MMS expects to use it as a reference document for future projects.

BP proposed to develop the Liberty Prospect from a gravel island located about 5 miles from shore in the Beaufort Sea 20 miles east of Prudhoe Bay, and about 8 miles east of its Endicott development. The proposal includes a self-contained offshore drilling and production facility on a man-made gravel island and a sub-sea and onshore pipeline that would connect to the Badami Oil Pipeline. BP estimates that the Liberty Prospect contains 120 million barrels of recoverable oil. The State of Alaska would share 27 percent of the federal royalties.

The final EIS analyzes BPXA's proposed development and production plan and a variety of alternatives, such as island location and pipeline route, pipeline design and burial depth, island slope protection, and potential gravel sources. The final EIS also examines the No Action alternative. The EIS contains a good deal of technical information beyond what is normal for an EIS.

MMS provided copies of the final EIS to local mayors, the North Slope Borough, State and Federal agencies, local Native tribal organizations, public libraries, and other interested parties. It is available in several formats: on the Internet from the MMS Alaska Homepage at www.mms.gov/alaska, on CD-ROM, and in paper. To request a copy, write to MMS at 949 East 36th Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska, 99508-4363, call 907-271-6070, toll-free at 1-800-764-2627, or via e-mail to akwebmaster@mms.gov. Please specify whether you would like a CD-ROM or paper version of the FEIS or an executive summary.

MMS is the federal agency in the U.S. Department of the Interior that manages the nation's oil, natural gas and other mineral resources on the outer continental shelf in federal offshore waters. The agency also collects, accounts for and disburses mineral revenues from federal and Indian leases. These revenues totaled nearly \$10 billion in 2001 and more than \$120 billion since the agency was created in 1982. Annually, nearly \$1 billion from those revenues go into the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the acquisition and development of state and federal park and recreation lands.

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