



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
Office of Public Affairs

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT
Robin Lee Cacy, 907-334-5208

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, January 16, 2007

MMS to Prepare EIS for Proposed Arctic Sales

Four Sales Proposed Under Current 5-Year Program

ANCHORAGE - The Minerals Management Service (MMS) has begun an evaluation of the environmental issues associated with future federal Outer Continental Shelf lease sales in the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas. MMS will prepare an environmental impact statement covering both planning areas, which will focus on the potential environmental effects of the sales from exploration, development, and production of the area proposed for leasing. MMS chose as the proposed action the full sales areas.

“MMS will continue to work closely with the State of Alaska and local communities throughout the EIS process to ensure the document evaluates the potential impacts of the proposed sales,” said MMS Alaska OCS Regional Director John Goll.

The area to be evaluated for Beaufort Sea Sales 209 and 217, slated for 2009 and 2011 respectively, encompasses approximately 33 million acres, 3 to 205 statute miles off the northern coast of Alaska. The area stretches east from Barrow to the Canadian border.

The area for sales proposed for the Chukchi Sea, Sales 212 and Sale 221 slated for 2010 and 2012 respectively, encompasses approximately 40 million acres located 25 to 275 miles off the coast of Alaska. The proposed sale area stretches from north of Point Barrow to northwest of Cape Lisburne

Scoping meetings and tribal government-to-government meetings were held in both areas between September and November 2007. Using the analysis of the information gathered in those meetings, MMS is now developing deferral alternatives and mitigating measures to be evaluated in the EIS.

-- MMS --

R-07-3768