

The NewsRoom

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MMS Announces March 30 Date for Beaufort Sea Sale 195

The Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service today issued the Final Notice of Sale for Beaufort Sea OCS Lease Sale 195 to be held March 30, 2005, in Anchorage, Alaska. The Final Notice describes the sale area, terms and conditions for the sale, and requirements for protecting the environment.

The Department will offer about 9.4 million acres offshore Alaska's northern coast in the Beaufort Sea, but will exclude areas off Barrow and Kaktovik used for subsistence whaling by these communities. The Sale area is similar to that offered by the State of Alaska in its October 2004 Beaufort Sea sale.

"The Beaufort Sea remains the best near-term potential for offshore petroleum reserves on the Alaska OCS that can be vital to our Nation's economy," said MMS Director Johnnie Burton. "But MMS must also ensure protection of subsistence whaling that is vital to North Slope communities."

Stipulations for this sale were developed with many interested parties, and are designed to allow companies to explore for oil and gas while protecting the environment. In addition to MMS's existing regulations which extensively cover safety, drilling and pollution prevention, the Final Notice of Sale includes seven lease stipulations intended to address effects to the environment and to the Inupiat people from any development of the area's oil and gas resources. These stipulations call for protection of biological resources, including spectacled and Steller's eiders, use of pipelines rather than tankers, and methods to minimize interference with subsistence whaling and other subsistence harvesting activities.

"We believe that these stipulations have in the past and will continue to reduce environmental effects and conflicts with the bowhead subsistence hunts and other subsistence activities," said MMS Regional Director John Goll. "MMS will work closely with North Slope communities, tribes, the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission, local, State and federal agencies, and the industry whenever activity occurs."

Lease terms are the same used for MMS's Beaufort Sea Sale 186 in September 2003. The Final Notice suspends royalties on certain volumes of oil and condensate production, subject to price thresholds, and continues the minimum bid and rental rates that are comparable with State and other federal North Slope oil and gas leasing terms.

To request a copy of the Final Notice of Sale or the Environmental Assessment, write to the Minerals Management Service at 3801 Centerpoint Drive, Anchorage, Alaska, 99503, [via email](#) or call toll-free at 1-800-764-2627. The EA is available on CD-ROM, or on the [MMS Alaska Region webpage](#). You may view the Final EIS at libraries throughout the state.

MMS, part of the U.S. Department of the Interior, oversees 1.76 billion acres of the Outer Continental Shelf, managing offshore energy and minerals while protecting the human, marine, and coastal environments through advanced science and technology research. The OCS provides 30 percent of oil and 23 percent of natural gas produced domestically, and sand used for coastal restoration. MMS's collects, accounts for, and disburses mineral revenues from Federal and American Indian lands, with Fiscal Year 2004 disbursements of approximately \$8 billion and more than \$143 billion since 1982. The Land and Water Conservation Fund, which pays for acquisition of state and federal park and recreation land, gets nearly \$1 billion a year.

Additionally, the State of Alaska receives 27% of all revenues generated as a result of federal leases that lie within 3-to-6 miles offshore the Alaska coast, and 50% of this money goes into the Alaska Permanent Fund Account.

Relevant Web Sites:
[MMS Main Website](#)

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[MMS: Securing Ocean Energy & Economic Value for America](#)
U.S. Department of the Interior