



U. S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region

Technical Announcement

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Determining the Geographical Distribution and Genetic Affinities of Corals on Offshore Platforms, Northern Gulf of Mexico

[OCS Study BOEM 2014-011](#)

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), Gulf of Mexico OCS, announces the availability of a new study report, *Determining the Geographical Distribution and Genetic Affinities of Corals on Offshore Platforms, Northern Gulf of Mexico*.

This study report describes the range of occurrence of corals on oil and gas platforms in the northern Gulf of Mexico, their distribution and abundance over this broad geographic range, and their species' diversity patterns. Twelve species of coral were found to occur on many of the platforms in the northern Gulf of Mexico. Coral species diversity (number of species) in the northern Gulf peaked on the Flower Garden Banks and was three times higher than the maximum observed on any individual oil and gas platform. The report also considers the patterns of genetic affinity in populations of two species of coral: *Madracis decactis* and *Tubastraea coccinea*. Results show that the Mississippi River most likely represents a formidable barrier to coral larval dispersal in this region. The data also indicate that *T. coccinea* has higher larval dispersal and recruitment capabilities than *M. decactis* and therefore exhibits greater gene flow.

This report is available on CD from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, for \$15.00, and free of charge as a pdf file downloaded from the BOEM website. Copies can also be viewed at selected Federal Depository Libraries. The addresses are listed below.

To order a CD, use the Gulf of Mexico OCS Region contact information below and reference OCS Study BOEM 2014-011. To download a pdf copy, use the Environmental Studies Program

Information System and search using the study report number:

http://www.data.boem.gov/homepg/data_center/other/espis/espismaster.asp?appid=1

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