



NEWS RELEASE

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MMS to Hold Oil and Gas Lease Sale in New Orleans

NEW ORLEANS – The U.S. Department of the Interior’s Minerals Management Service will hold its upcoming oil and gas lease sale in downtown New Orleans this March. The annual sale will cover the Central Gulf of Mexico planning area.

Regional Director Chris Oynes said he is pleased to be able to continue holding the annual sale in the city. “There was concern that New Orleans might not be able to host the event in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina,” Oynes explained. “Fortunately, the New Orleans Hilton Riverside will be able to accommodate our needs.”

Bid reading for Central Sale 198 will begin at 9:00a.m. on Wednesday, March 15, in the Napoleon Ballroom. Individuals needing rooms for the sale should call 1-800-445-8667 (1-800-HILTONS) and refer to the group rate for Department of the Interior/Minerals Management Service.

MMS, an agency of the U.S. Department of the Interior, manages offshore oil and gas exploration as well as renewable and alternative energy sources such as wind, wave, and solar on 1.76 billion acres of the Outer Continental Shelf while protecting the human, marine, and coastal environments. The OCS provides 30 percent of oil and 21 percent of natural gas produced domestically, and sand used for coastal restoration. MMS collects, accounts for, and disburses mineral revenues from Federal and American Indian lands, and contributes to the Land and Water Conservation Fund and other special use funds, with Fiscal Year 2005 disbursements of approximately \$9.9 billion and more than \$153 billion since 1982.

MMS Main Website: www.mms.gov
Gulf of Mexico Website: www.gomr.mms.gov

MMS: Securing Ocean Energy & Economic Value for America