



NEWS RELEASE

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

For Release: March 30, 2006
Release: 3484

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MMS Issues Final Rule on Geological and Geophysical (G&G) Explorations

WASHINGTON -- The Minerals Management Service (MMS) today published a final rule in the Federal Register that amends regulations regarding disclosure and proprietary terms of geological and geophysical (G&G) data and information.

G&G surveys and activities provide information and data used by government and industry to analyze and evaluate the potential for oil and gas resources and potential geologic hazards of offshore areas.

Under this final rule, MMS modifies the very limited circumstances in which third parties can inspect proprietary G&G data and information. This rule also modifies the start dates for determining the length of time geophysical data and information are withheld from public release. The period of nondisclosure will now begin with the date of issuance of the permit authorizing collection of the data instead of the date MMS actually receives the data and information.

MMS solicited comments regarding the changes in a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPR) published July 17, 2002 (67 FR 46942). The comment period ended September 16, 2002. MMS received 10 sets of written comments and recommendations to the NPR and has responded to them in the final rule. The comments and the NPR may be accessed at:

<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20061800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2006/06-3009.htm>

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