



NEWS RELEASE

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Minerals Management Service To Hold Public Meeting in Texas on Renewable Energy and Alternate Use on America's Outer Continental Shelf

Meeting to be held in Austin, Texas

WASHINGTON – The Interior Department's Minerals Management Service (MMS) will hold a public scoping meeting Tuesday, May 23 in Austin, Texas to obtain comments from the public on renewable energy projects and alternate use of facilities in Federal waters. This meeting is part of a series of meetings scheduled across the country during the months of May and June. The meetings are the first step in the preparation of a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the nation's Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Renewable Energy and Alternate Use Program.

The meeting will be held at the Hilton Austin Airport, 9515 New Airport Drive in Austin, Texas. The public will be required to sign in to speak at the meeting. Sign-in begins at 5:30 p.m., followed by an overview of the EIS at 6:30 p.m. and public comments at 7:30 p.m.

MMS is also accepting written comments through July 5, 2006 electronically, using the online comment form available on the project website at ocsenergy.anl.gov or by mail to:

MMS Renewable Energy and Alternate Use Programmatic EIS
Argonne National Laboratory
9700 S. Cass Avenue
Argonne, IL 60439

Comments should specifically address factors related to the scope of the draft EIS, particularly the significant issues, alternatives, and mitigation measures that should be considered in the draft EIS.

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The Programmatic EIS will assess generic impacts from development, operations and decommissioning of renewable energy or alternate use facilities and identify key issues and mitigation measures that should be considered by subsequent site-specific reviews. Preparation of the Programmatic EIS is a multi-step process that will be completed in about 18 months and will include publication of a draft Programmatic EIS, a final Programmatic EIS and a Record of Decision. The MMS will offer a second opportunity to comment during public hearings on the draft Programmatic EIS after it is published.

MMS received authority for the OCS Renewable Energy and Alternate Use Program [under Section 388 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005](#). Under this authority, MMS will regulate renewable energy projects and alternate use of existing oil and gas platforms on the OCS. Renewable energy includes wind, wave, solar, underwater current and generation of hydrogen. Alternate uses of existing facilities may include, but are not limited to aquaculture, research, education, recreation and support for offshore operations and facilities.

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