



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **MMS Seeks Comments on Alternate Energy-Related Uses on the OCS**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking published today in the Federal Register, the Minerals Management Service requests comments on the development of a regulatory program to implement Section 388 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 – Alternate Energy-Related Uses on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS).

Enacted August 8, 2005, the Energy Policy Act amended section 8 of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA) (43 U.S.C. 1337) to authorize the Department of the Interior to grant leases, easements or rights-of-way on the OCS for the development and support of energy resources from sources other than oil and gas and to allow for alternate uses of existing facilities on the OCS. The Act also directed DOI, specifically MMS, to develop by mid-2006, a comprehensive program and regulations to implement the new authority.

Today's ANPR is the first step in the development of this regulatory program. Objectives of the new regulatory program are to provide access to the OCS in a way that balances competing and complementary uses of offshore acreage; ensures consultation with affected states and local governments; takes into account the evolving nature of the energy industry; and provides a fair return to the United States for access to the OCS.

MMS is requesting comments on the following five major areas integral to the development of the new Alternate Energy-Related Uses program:

- Access to OCS lands and resources
- Environmental information, management, and compliance
- Operational activities
- Payments and revenues
- Coordination and consultation

There is a 60 day comment period ending February 28, 2006. Comments may be submitted electronically through MMS's online commenting system, Public Connect, at <https://ocsconnect.mms.gov> or through the federal eRulemaking portal at:

<http://WWW.regulations.gov>. Specific directions for submission of comments as well as alternative means of submission are detailed in the ANPR --Alternate Energy-Related Uses on the Outer Continental Shelf – 1010-AD30.

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 OCS 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](http://www.mms.gov)**

**\* \* \* MMS: Securing Ocean Energy and Economic Value for America \* \* \***