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NEWS RELEASE

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**MMS Honors Excellence in Offshore Minerals Revenue Collection**

From a field of more than 1,600 companies who report production and pay royalties to the Minerals Management Service, Exxon Mobil Corporation and Noble Energy, Inc. have been selected as recipients of the 2003 Stewardship Award winners.

“MMS is pleased to recognize Exxon Mobil Corporation and Noble Energy, Inc.,” said MMS Director Johnnie Burton. “It is clear that both companies maintain high standards as evidenced by their quality royalty reports and payments to MMS in 2003. We applaud the dedicated efforts of these companies.”

The award was established in 1987 to recognize exceptional performance by companies that report production and pay royalties for federal and Indian minerals leases to MMS.

Criteria for receiving the award include overall accuracy and timeliness of payments and reports and noteworthy cooperation and responsiveness with MMS in resolving reporting, compliance and enforcement issues.

Winners of the 2003 MMS Stewardship Award are:

**Exxon Mobil Corporation**

In Fiscal Year 2003, Exxon Mobil submitted more than 180,000 lines of royalty and production data and paid \$283.1 million in royalties to MMS. Their royalty reporting accuracy rate was a near-perfect 99.1 percent and their production reporting accuracy rate was 94.1 percent. Exxon Mobil Corporation has also been a valued partner with MMS and the Department of Energy in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve fill initiative, developing unique arrangements to deliver oil directly to the SPR.

**Noble Energy, Inc.**

In Fiscal Year 2003, Noble Energy, Inc. submitted more than 53,000 lines of royalty and production data and paid \$60.3 million in royalties to the MMS. Their electronic reports and payments level of accuracy was 99.2 percent for royalty reporting and 96.8 percent for production reporting. Their quality performance was underscored by Noble Energy’s noteworthy responsiveness in resolving reporting, compliance and enforcement issues.

In 2003, MMS distributed more than \$8 billion to states, the U.S. Treasury, Indian tribes and to individual Indian mineral owners, and special-use funds.

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Last year, nearly \$1 billion in revenue collected from energy companies – such as Exxon Mobil Corporation and Noble Energy – went into the federal government’s Land and Water Conservation Fund for the acquisition and development of state and federal park and recreation lands. More than \$1 billion was disbursed to the states and more than \$5 billion went to the U.S. Treasury.

The MMS Stewardship awards, along with the other 2003 energy industry awards, will be presented on Tuesday, April 27, 2004 at the Intercontinental Hotel, in Houston, Texas. For more information, contact Mary Lou Miller at (303) 231-3386, or Patrick Etchart at (303) 231-3162.

MMS manages the nation’s oil, natural gas, and other mineral resources on the Outer Continental Shelf in federal offshore waters. MMS also collects, accounts for, and disburses mineral revenues from federal and American Indian lands. Between 1982 and 2003, MMS distributed more than \$135 billion in revenues from onshore and offshore lands, an average of more than \$6 billion per year, to the Nation, States and American Indians. Nearly \$1 billion from those revenues go into the Land and Water Conservation Fund annually for the development of State and federal park and recreation lands.

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

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