



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

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**MMS to Hold Final Public Meeting to Explore Potential Pipeline Authority  
Pipeline Companies, Producers Encouraged to Provide Comments**

The Minerals Management Service is exploring potential new authority to ensure open and non-discriminatory access to oil and gas pipelines, and is gaining insights from the public through a series of public meetings. MMS will hold its final public meeting Friday in New Orleans.

The public meeting will provide an opportunity for industry representatives, the general public and other groups to comment on the bureau's potential implementation of pipeline authority for oil and natural gas.

A recent court order determined that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) did not have authority to require data submittals for certain natural gas pipelines in the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) and indicated the Interior Department may be the most appropriate federal regulator of pipeline access.

Companies engaged in the activity of moving oil and natural gas production on the Outer Continental Shelf may still be subject to the FERC's jurisdiction. However, if the FERC declares that a company's facilities perform a "gathering" function rather than a "transportation" function, then the facilities are exempt from the FERC's jurisdiction under the Natural Gas Act. As such, the FERC will not impose its ratemaking authorities (tariff calculation guidelines) on that facility. Ensuring open and nondiscriminatory access to these gathering pipelines may then fall to the MMS.

May 14, 2004 9:00 a.m. Public Meeting  
MMS Room 111  
1201 Elmwood Park Blvd  
New Orleans, LA

More information is available in the Federal Register notice online:

<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/14mar20010800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2004/04-8247.htm>

MMS, part of the Department of the Interior, manages the nation's oil, natural gas, and other mineral resources on the OCS in federal offshore waters. The agency 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\*\*\*