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Central Gulf of Mexico Sale 190 Nets \$364,024,583 in High Bids

Following the completion of an extensive two-phase bid evaluation process to ensure that the Federal government receives a fair monetary return for the public mineral resources it makes available, the U.S. Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) announced the results of Oil and Gas Lease Sale 190 held March 17, 2004.

Of the 557 tracts receiving bids, MMS rejected 14 high bids totaling \$4,537,449 as insufficient for fair market value. In addition, one high bid at \$201,450 was deemed unacceptable by MMS because it was below the required minimum bid amount stated in the Final Notice of Sale. MMS accepted the high bids on 542 tracts for a net amount of \$364,024,583.

The monies collected are distributed to the general fund of the U.S. Treasury, shared with the affected States, and set aside for special uses that benefit all 50 states.

The highest bid accepted on a tract was \$35,290,892 by Amerada Hess Corporation for Green Canyon 468. This top bid of the sale was in 800-1,599 meters water depth and received five bids. The second and third highest bids accepted were for \$31,088,000 by Union Oil Company of California, Anadarko Petroleum Corporation, Nexen Petroleum Offshore, U.S.A., and BHP Billiton Petroleum (Deepwater) Inc. on Green Canyon Blocks 512, and \$8,213,415 by EnCana Gulf of Mexico LLC on Walker Ridge 969 in 1,600 meters or greater water depth.

This sale indicates the continued strong interest of major and independent oil and gas companies in the Gulf. The results of the sale also indicate a continuing interest in shallow-water areas, with sixty-one percent of the tracts receiving bids in less than 200 meters of water.

The top five companies participating in the highest number of accepted high bids for Sale 190 are the following:

Company	Number of Accepted High Bids	Sum of Accepted High Bids
1. Magnum Hunter Production, Inc.	53	\$ 8,045,956
2. BHP Billiton Petroleum (Deepwater) Inc.	32	\$18,496,331
3. Chevron U.S.A. Inc.	29	\$10,032,218
4. BP Exploration & Production Inc.	24	\$ 8,162,608
5. Noble Energy, Inc.	24	\$ 6,121,204

The top five companies with the highest total bonus accepted are the following:

Company	Number of Accepted High Bids	Sum of Accepted High Bids
1. Amerada Hess Corporation	17	\$40,710,005
2. BHP Billiton Petroleum (Deepwater) Inc.	32	\$18,496,331
3. Stone Energy Corporation	8	\$15,544,000
4. Pogo Producing Company	14	\$12,472,000
5. Tana Exploration Company LLC	8	\$11,124,292

The Minerals Management Service is the federal agency in the U.S. Department of the Interior that manages the nation's oil, natural gas, and other mineral resources on the Outer Continental Shelf in Federal offshore waters. The agency also collects, accounts for, and disburses mineral revenues from Federal and American Indian lands. MMS disbursed more than \$8 billion in FY 2003 and more than \$135 billion since the agency was created in 1982. Nearly \$1 billion from those revenues go into the Land and Water Conservation Fund annually for the acquisition and development of state and Federal park and recreation lands.

MMS Main Website: www.mms.gov
Gulf of Mexico Website: www.gomr.mms.gov

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