

Gulf of Mexico Physical Oceanography Program Final Report: Year 5

Volume III: Data Products Summary

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**U.S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region**

Gulf of Mexico Physical Oceanography Program Final Report: Year 5

Volume III: Data Products Summary

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GULF OF MEXICO PHYSICAL OCEANOGRAPHY STUDY DATA PRODUCTS SUMMARY

1.0 Introduction

In October 1982, MMS initiated a multi-year, regionally phased physical oceanographic field program with the long-term goal of developing an improved understanding of the characteristics and influence of circulation patterns and processes in and adjacent to the deeper regions of the Gulf of Mexico. In keeping with this objective the majority of measurements have been made offshore of or proximate to the shelf break.

The multivariate observational data base has been and should continue to be used by oceanographers to describe current patterns and where possible to relate these to causative mechanisms. Three general areas of the Gulf of Mexico have been studied. During Years 1, 2 and 4, consecutive and continuous measurements were made in the eastern Gulf, primarily from the middle of the west Florida shelf, seaward across the slope and into and under the Loop Current (LC) and in the deep Gulf. A key objective was to understand better the slope and rise circulation patterns and the influence these had on the adjacent shelf. To resolve Loop Current effects required an evaluation of other mechanisms forcing water motion on the middle and outer shelf.

Measurements, analysis and interpretation in Program Year 3 emphasized the western Gulf of Mexico with particular attention given to major anticyclonic eddies which separate from the Loop Current and move westward to interact eventually with the western Gulf slope. These eddies appear to be a primary influence on circulation and conditions in deeper portions of the central and western Gulf, over the adjacent slope, and in some cases the outer shelf.

In Program Year 5, the objectives were to look at physical oceanographic conditions along 92°W extending from the inner shelf to the deep Gulf offshore of Louisiana.

1.1 Report Objective

Material contained in this microfiche report are data products created during the five program years of the MMS-funded Gulf of Mexico Physical Oceanography Study conducted by Science Applications International Corporation under contracts 14-12-0001-29158 and 14-12-0001-30289. The report has been created to make available many of those data products which were not presented in the various Final Reports. As can be imagined, these measurement and analysis efforts created a large number of data products which provided the program principals with analysis results. In turn, the PI's chose to incorporate only selected or representative graphics in the Final Reports. In addition some data products were intermediate in the analysis continua.

The same final and intermediate products were not created during each program year as a result of differing measurements and PI requests. In addition, the internal SAIC processing procedures were continuously updated and optimized throughout the study so that the number of intermediate "hard" plots was reduced. Finally, while most products were located, we are sure that during the various sorting and removal for reports, presentations and papers, some figures and analyses have been misplaced.

1.2 Material Organization

In this microfiche report, SAIC has attempted to maintain a fairly consistent presentation which is illustrated in the outline of this report. Generally, the material is divided by year and within years by data type, analysis type, and time. The report outline should allow the reader to identify easily the individual microfiche page where the desired data might be expected. When no data products are included for a particular outline topic, a "No Data Products Available" page has been inserted to indicate this.

In addition, for each program year we have included overview material which includes the Executive Summary for the Final Report as well as figures and tables showing timelines and major program cruise identifiers. This will help provide the reader with a general overview

of activities, tasks and key personnel for that year. Most graphics should have the necessary information needed to identify what the figure represents. Most data products have been reviewed for data quality. However, some are intermediate products (e.g. raw data plots and some 3-HLP time series plots) and may have had corrections or adjustments applied. Final products such as spectra and 40-HLP data should reflect data which has been quality controlled.

1.3 Types of Field Data Taken

The data included in this summary consists of four basic types (1) moored instrument Data; (2) hydrographic station data; (3) Lagrangian drifter data; and, (4) ancillary data. The first category (moored instrument data) consists of all current meter, transmissometer (Year 5 only) and inverted echo sounder (IES) (Year 5 only) data collected during the program. The current meter data sets represent u- and v-components of the current field, temperature and where available pressure (instrument depth). The transmissometer data consists of percent light transmission, while the IES returns travel time information. The hydrographic station data consists of XBT, AXBT, CTD and water chemistry (bottle samples) profiles of the water column during each respective cruise. The third category (Lagrangian drifter data) consists of all drifting buoys deployed and tracked through Service ARGOS during the program. Since the duration of a given buoy deployment is highly variable, a drifter deployed in Program Year 1 may overlap into the next program year. In this situation, all the data products are archived in the initial program year. The final category, Ancillary Data, is representative of all the National Weather Service (NWS), National Ocean Service (NOS) and National Data Buoy Center (NDBC) information which was obtained in conjunction with the Program. Primarily, these data consist of land-based meteorological data, water level information and Coastal-Marine Automated Network (C-MAN) data, respectively.

1.4 Current Meter Identification Scheme

In identifying individual instruments for the time series and spectral plots, SAIC has

instituted the following nomenclature. The time series identifier (ID) is generally either a four or five character word. The initial character is the Program Identifier, which is "M" for this study. The next two characters are reserved for identifying the individual mooring. In Program Years 1, 2 and 4, moorings "A" through "H" were deployed, while in Year 3, moorings "P" through "T" were deployed. For these four years, the mooring letter (i.e. "A") was preceded by a zero. However, during Year 5 of the program, moorings "AA" through "GG" were deployed and no preceding zero was required.

When a four-character ID is used, the fourth and final character represents the placing of the instrument in the vertical on a particular mooring, with 1 being closest to the surface and "N" being closest to the bottom. For example, the ID for the third instrument down on Mooring A for Year 4 would be listed as follows M0A3. Similarly, the ID for the third instrument down on Mooring C for Year 5 would be listed as follows MCC3. When a five-character ID is used, then the fourth character represents the individual deployment of the instrument and the fifth and final character represents the vertical placing as described above. For example, the ID for the third instrument down during the first deployment of Mooring C for Year 1 would be listed as follows M0C13. For more details on nomenclature, the user is referred to the individual Final Reports for each program year.

1.5 Station Data Identification Scheme

For each individual Ship-of-Opportunity Program (SOOP) and major program cruise a unique cruise identifier has been created. The identifier contains two pieces of information (1) vessel name, and, (2) consecutive annual cruise number. For example, the third cruise in 1983 by the SOOP vessel, M/V EDGAR M. QUEENY, would be listed as QUEENY 83-03. The major exception to this nomenclature is for Program Years 1 and 2, where the three major cruises were labeled as (1) MMS/SAI/SKIO CRUISE 1; (2) MMS/SAI/SKIO CRUISE 2; and, (3) MMS/SAI/SKIO CRUISE 3. Again, for more specific information regarding the individual cruises, the user is referred to the Final Reports for each program year.

1.6 Lagrangian Data Identification Scheme

Each drifting buoy contained in this report can be identified by a four digit identifier (e.g. 3345).

**GULF OF MEXICO PHYSICAL OCEANOGRAPHY STUDY
DATA PRODUCTS SUMMARY**

Microfiche
Page No.

I.	EASTERN GULF OF MEXICO (Program Years 1, 2 & 4)	2
	A. Year 1 (January 1983 - January 1984)	2
	A.1 Introduction	2
	A.1.1 Executive Summary from Final Report	2
	A.1.2 Listing of Major Hydrographic Cruises	2
	A.1.3 Timeline for Moored Instrumentation	2
	A.2 Moored Instrumentation Data	3
	A.2.1 Raw Data	3
	A.2.1.1 Deployment 1	3
	A.2.1.2 Deployment 2	3
	A.2.1.3 Deployment 3	3
	A.2.1.4 Deployment 4	3
	A.2.1.5 Concatenated Analyses	3
	A.2.2 3-Hour Low Pass (3-HLP) Data	3
	A.2.2.1 Deployment 1	3
	A.2.2.2 Deployment 2	3
	A.2.2.3 Deployment 3	3
	A.2.2.4 Deployment 4	3
	A.2.2.5 Concatenated Analyses	3
	A.2.3 40-Hour Low Pass (40-HLP) Data	3
	A.2.3.1 Deployment 1	3
	A.2.3.2 Deployment 2	3
	A.2.3.3 Deployment 3	3
	A.2.3.4 Deployment 4	4
	A.2.3.5 Concatenated Analyses	4
	A.2.4 Miscellaneous Time Series Information	4
	A.2.4.1 Deployment 1	4
	A.2.4.2 Deployment 2	5

A.2.4.3	Deployment 3	5
A.2.4.4	Deployment 4	6
A.2.4.5	Concatenated Analyses	6
A.2.5	Power Spectra and Phase/Coherence Analyses	6
A.2.5.1	Deployment 1	6
A.2.5.2	Deployment 2	8
A.2.5.3	Deployment 3	9
A.2.5.4	Deployment 4	12
A.2.5.5	Concatenated Analyses	13
A.2.6	Statistical Summaries	13
A.2.6.1	Deployment 1	13
A.2.6.2	Deployment 2	14
A.2.6.3	Deployment 3	14
A.2.6.4	Deployment 4	15
A.2.6.5	Concatenated Analyses	15
A.3	Station Data	16
A.3.1	Major Program Cruises	16
A.3.1.1	MMS/SAI/SKIO Cruise 1	16
A.3.1.2	MMS/SAI/SKIO Cruise 2	17
A.3.2	Ship-of-Opportunity-Program (SOOP) Cruises	18
A.3.2.1	OYSTER BAY	18
A.3.2.2	LION HEART	19
A.3.2.3	NORDIC WASA	19
A.3.2.4	E.M. QUEENY	19
A.3.2.5	BELLOWS	21
A.3.2.6	JUNE BOLLINGER	21
A.3.2.7	OREGON II	22
A.3.2.8	PRIME IV	22
A.3.2.9	RESEARCHER	22
A.3.2.10	ROME IV	22
A.3.2.11	SEAMAP	22
A.3.2.12	SUNCOASTER	22

A.4	Surface Lagrangian Data	23
A.4.1	Drifter 1599	23
A.5	Miscellaneous Data	24
A.5.1	Meteorological/Water Level Data	24
A.5.1.1	Time Series Plots	24
A.5.1.2	Spectra and Phase/Coherence Analyses	24
A.5.1.3	Statistical Summaries	28

B.	Year II (January 1984 - January 1985)	29
B.1	Introduction	29
	B.1.1 Executive Summary from Final Report	29
	B.1.2 Listing of Major Hydrographic Cruises	29
	B.1.3 Timeline for Moored Instrumentation	29
B.2	Moored Instrumentation	30
	B.2.1 Raw Data	30
	B.2.1.1 Deployment 1	30
	B.2.1.2 Deployment 2	30
	B.2.1.3 Deployment 3	30
	B.2.1.4 Deployment 4	30
	B.2.1.5 Concatenated Analyses	30
	B.2.2 3-Hour Low Pass (3-HLP) Data	30
	B.2.2.1 Deployment 1	30
	B.2.2.2 Deployment 2	30
	B.2.2.3 Deployment 3	30
	B.2.2.4 Deployment 4	30
	B.2.2.5 Concatenated Analyses	30
	B.2.3 40-Hour Low Pass (40-HLP) Data	30
	B.2.3.1 Deployment 1	30
	B.2.3.2 Deployment 2	30
	B.2.3.3 Deployment 3	30
	B.2.3.4 Deployment 4	31
	B.2.3.5 Concatenated Analyses	31
	B.2.4 Miscellaneous Time Series Information	32
	B.2.4.1 Deployment 1	32
	B.2.4.2 Deployment 2	32
	B.2.4.3 Deployment 3	32
	B.2.4.4 Deployment 4	32
	B.2.4.5 Concatenated Analyses	33

B.2.5	Power Spectra and Phase/Coherence Analyses	33
B.2.5.1	Deployment 1	33
B.2.5.2	Deployment 2	35
B.2.5.3	Deployment 3	37
B.2.5.4	Deployment 4	41
B.2.5.5	Concatenated Analyses	45
B.2.6	Statistical Summaries	46
B.2.6.1	Deployment 1	46
B.2.6.2	Deployment 2	46
B.2.6.3	Deployment 3	47
B.2.6.4	Deployment 4	47
B.2.6.5	Concatenated Analyses	48
B.3	Station Data	49
B.3.1	Major Program Cruises	49
B.3.1.1	MMS/SAI/SKIO Cruise 3 (CF-84-05)	49
B.3.1.2	Year 2 AXBT Survey	51
B.3.2	Ship-of-Opportunity-Program (SOOP) Cruises	52
B.3.2.1	BELLOWS	52
B.3.2.2	GYRE	52
B.3.2.3	SUNCOASTER	52
B.3.2.4	YUCA I	53
B.3.2.5	NESTOR I	53
B.3.2.6	NORDIC WASA	54
B.3.2.7	E.M. QUEENY	54
B.4	Surface Lagrangian Data	56
B.4.1	Drifter 3350	56
B.5	Miscellaneous Data	57
B.5.1	Meteorological/Water Level Data	57
B.5.1.1	Time Series Plots	57

Microfiche
Page No.

B.5.1.2 Spectra and Phase/Coherence Analyses	60
B.5.1.3 Statistical Summaries	61

C.	Year IV (January 1985 - January 1986)	62
C.1	Introduction	62
	C.1.1 Executive Summary from Final Report	62
	C.1.2 Listing of Major Hydrographic Cruises	62
	C.1.3 Timeline for Moored Instrumentation	62
C.2	Moored Instrumentation	63
	C.2.1 Raw Data	63
	C.2.1.1 Deployment 1	63
	C.2.1.2 Deployment 2	63
	C.2.1.3 Deployment 3	63
	C.2.1.4 Concatenated Analyses	63
	C.2.2 3-Hour Low Pass (3-HLP) Data	63
	C.2.2.1 Deployment 1	63
	C.2.2.2 Deployment 2	63
	C.2.2.3 Deployment 3	63
	C.2.2.4 Concatenated Analyses	63
	C.2.3 40-Hour Low Pass (40-HLP) Data	63
	C.2.3.1 Deployment 1	63
	C.2.3.2 Deployment 2	63
	C.2.3.3 Deployment 3	64
	C.2.3.4 Concatenated Analyses	64
	C.2.4 Miscellaneous Time Series Information	64
	C.2.4.1 Deployment 1	64
	C.2.4.2 Deployment 2	65
	C.2.4.3 Deployment 3	65
	C.2.4.4 Concatenated Analyses	65
	C.2.5 Power Spectra and Phase/Coherence Analyses	65
	C.2.5.1 Deployment 1	65
	C.2.5.2 Deployment 2	69

C.2.5.3	Deployment 3	71
C.2.5.4	Concatenated Analyses	76
C.2.6	Statistical Summaries	76
C.2.6.1	Deployment 1	76
C.2.6.2	Deployment 2	76
C.2.6.3	Deployment 3	77
C.2.6.4	Concatenated Analyses	78
C.3	Station Data	80
C.3.1	Ship-of-Opportunity-Program (SOOP) Cruises	80
C.3.1.1	NESTOR I	81
C.3.1.2	STENA HISPANIA	81
C.3.1.3	AMBASSADOR	81
C.3.1.4	E.M. QUEENY	83
C.3.1.5	ERICA	85
C.3.1.6	NAT CO 6	85
C.3.1.7	SUNCOASTER	85
C.4	Surface Lagrangian Data	86
C.4.1	Drifter 3354	86
C.5	Miscellaneous Data	87
C.5.1	Meteorological/Water Level Data	87
C.5.1.1	Time Series Plots	87
C.5.1.2	Spectra and Phase/Coherence Analyses	87
C.5.1.3	Statistical Summaries	87

II.	WESTERN GULF OF MEXICO (Program Year 3)	88
A.	Year 3 (June 1985 - May 1986)	88
A.1	Introduction	88
	A.1.1 Executive Summary from Final Report	88
	A.1.2 Listing of Major Hydrographic Cruises	88
	A.1.3 Timeline for Moored Instrumentation	88
A.2	Moored Instrumentation Data	89
	A.2.1 Raw Data	89
	A.2.1.1 Deployment 1	89
	A.2.1.2 Deployment 2	89
	A.2.1.3 Concatenated Analyses	89
	A.2.2 3-Hour Low Pass (3-HLP) Data	89
	A.2.2.1 Deployment 1	89
	A.2.2.2 Deployment 2	89
	A.2.2.3 Concatenated Analyses	90
	A.2.3 40-Hour Low Pass (40-HLP) Data	90
	A.2.3.1 Deployment 1	90
	A.2.3.2 Deployment 2	91
	A.2.3.3 Concatenated Analyses	92
	A.2.4 Miscellaneous Time Series Information	92
	A.2.4.1 Deployment 1	92
	A.2.4.2 Deployment 2	92
	A.2.4.3 Concatenated Analyses	92
	A.2.5 Power Spectra and Phase/Coherence Analyses	92
	A.2.5.1 Deployment 1	92
	A.2.5.2 Deployment 2	95
	A.2.5.3 Concatenated Analyses	98

A.2.6 Statistical Summaries	98
A.2.6.1 Deployment 1	98
A.2.6.2 Deployment 2	98
A.2.6.3 Concatenated Analyses	98
A.3 Station Data	99
A.3.1 Major Program Cruises	99
A.3.1.1 R/V PELICAN Cruise 85-02	99
A.3.1.2 R/V B.O. ALTAIR Cruise 86-01	99
A.3.1.3 Year 3 AXBT Survey	101
A.3.2 Ship-of-Opportunity-Program (SOOP) Cruises	102
A.3.2.1 B.O. ALTAIR	102
A.3.2.2 EXXON JAMESTOWN	103
A.3.2.3 HO-2	103
A.4 Surface Lagrangian Data	104
A.4.1 Drifter 3378	104
A.4.2 Drifter 5495	105
A.4.3 Drifter 5680	105
A.4.4 Drifter 5682	105
A.4.5 Drifter 3354	105
A.4.6 Drifter 5683	105
A.4.7 Drifter 5678	105
A.4.8 Drifter 3353	105
A.4.9 Drifter 3379	106
A.5 Miscellaneous Data	108
A.5.1 Meteorological/Water Level Data	108
A.5.1.1 Time Series Plots	108
A.5.1.2 Spectra and Phase/Coherence Analyses	109
A.5.1.3 Statistical Summaries	109

III.	CENTRAL GULF OF MEXICO (Program Year 5)	110
A.	Year 5 (April 1987 - November 1988)	110
A.1	Introduction	110
A.1.1	Executive Summary from Final Report	110
A.1.2	Listing of Major Hydrographic Cruises	110
A.1.3	Timeline for Moored Instrumentation	110
A.2	Moored Instrumentation Data	111
A.2.1	Raw Data	111
A.2.1.1	Deployment 1	111
A.2.1.2	Deployment 2	111
A.2.1.3	Deployment 3	111
A.2.1.4	Deployment 4	111
A.2.1.5	Deployment 5	111
A.2.1.6	Deployment 6	111
A.2.1.7	Concatenated Analyses	111
A.2.2	3-Hour Low Pass (3-HLP) Data	111
A.2.2.1	Deployment 1	111
A.2.2.2	Deployment 2	111
A.2.2.3	Deployment 3	111
A.2.2.4	Deployment 4	111
A.2.2.5	Deployment 5	111
A.2.2.6	Deployment 6	111
A.2.2.7	Concatenated Analyses	111
A.2.3	40-Hour Low Pass (40-HLP) Data	111
A.2.3.1	Deployment 1	111
A.2.3.2	Deployment 2	111
A.2.3.3	Deployment 3	112
A.2.3.4	Deployment 4	112
A.2.3.5	Deployment 5	112
A.2.3.6	Deployment 6	112
A.2.3.7	Concatenated Analyses	112

A.2.4	Miscellaneous Time Series Information	114
A.2.4.1	Deployment 1	114
A.2.4.2	Deployment 2	114
A.2.4.3	Deployment 3	114
A.2.4.4	Deployment 4	114
A.2.4.5	Deployment 5	114
A.2.4.6	Deployment 6	114
A.2.4.7	Concatenated Analyses	114
A.2.5	Power Spectra and Phase/Coherence Analyses	115
A.2.5.1	Deployment 1	115
A.2.5.2	Deployment 2	116
A.2.5.3	Deployment 3	117
A.2.5.4	Deployment 4	117
A.2.5.5	Deployment 5	117
A.2.5.6	Deployment 6	117
A.2.5.7	Concatenated Analyses	117
A.2.6	Statistical Summaries	118
A.2.6.1	Deployment 1	118
A.2.6.2	Deployment 2	118
A.2.6.3	Deployment 3	118
A.2.6.4	Deployment 4	119
A.2.6.5	Deployment 5	119
A.2.6.6	Deployment 6	119
A.2.6.7	Concatenated Analyses	119
A.3	Station Data	120
A.3.1	Major Program Cruises	120
A.3.1.1	R/V PELICAN Cruise 87-13	120
A.3.1.2	R/V PELICAN Cruise 87-15	120
A.3.1.3	R/V PELICAN Cruise 88-03	120
A.3.1.4	R/V PELICAN Cruise 88-14	121
A.3.1.5	R/V PELICAN Cruise 88-20	121
A.3.1.6	R/V PELICAN Cruise 88-23	121
A.3.1.7	R/V PELICAN Cruise 89-03	121
A.3.1.8	R/V PELICAN Cruise 89-13	122

A.3.1.9	Year 5 AXBT Survey 1	122
A.3.1.10	Year 5 AXBT Survey 2	122
A.3.2	MMS-Sponsored ARGOS Drifter Deployment Cruises	123
A.3.2.1	R/V PELICAN Cruise 87-11	123
A.3.2.2	R/V SEAWARD EXPLORER Cruise 87-29	123
A.3.2.3	R/V PELICAN Cruise 89-11	123
A.3.3	Ship-of-Opportunity-Program (SOOP) Cruises	123
A.3.3.1	SENATOR	123
A.3.3.2	AMBASSADOR	125
A.3.3.3	E.M. QUEENY	125
A.3.3.4	SUNCOASTER	126
A.3.3.5	GYRE	126
A.3.3.6	JUSTO SIERRA	127
A.3.4	Year 5 Composite Horizontal Contour Maps	129
A.3.4.1	Composite 1 (PN87-13, QU87-05, SN87-09, 87-G-04, JS87-01)	129
A.3.4.2	Composite 2 (JS87-02, 87-G-10, SN87-26, SE87-29, PN88-14, 87-G-11)	129
A.3.4.3	Composite 3 (JS88-01, PN89-03, AXBT1)	129
A.3.4.4	Composite 4 (88-G-05, PN89-11, AXBT2, PN89-13)	129
A.4	Surface Lagrangian Data	130
A.4.1	Drifter 3352	130
A.4.2	Drifter 7234	130
A.4.3	Drifter 5837	130
A.4.4	Drifter 5839	131
A.4.5	Drifter 3348	131
A.4.6	Drifter 3344	131
A.4.7	Drifter 1392	132
A.4.8	Drifter 1396	132
A.4.9	Drifter 3353	132
A.4.10	Drifter 3345	133
A.4.11	Drifter 3347	135

A.5	Miscellaneous Data	136
A.5.1	Meteorological/Water Level Data	136
A.5.1.1	Time Series Plots	136
A.5.1.2	Spectra and Phase/Coherence Analyses	137
A.5.1.3	Statistical Summaries	137



The Department of the Interior Mission

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.



The Minerals Management Service Mission

As a bureau of the Department of the Interior, the Minerals Management Service's (MMS) primary responsibilities are to manage the mineral resources located on the Nation's Outer Continental Shelf (OCS), collect revenue from the Federal OCS and onshore Federal and Indian lands, and distribute those revenues.

Moreover, in working to meet its responsibilities, the **Offshore Minerals Management Program** administers the OCS competitive leasing program and oversees the safe and environmentally sound exploration and production of our Nation's offshore natural gas, oil and other mineral resources. The MMS **Minerals Revenue Management** meets its responsibilities by ensuring the efficient, timely and accurate collection and disbursement of revenue from mineral leasing and production due to Indian tribes and allottees, States and the U.S. Treasury.

The MMS strives to fulfill its responsibilities through the general guiding principles of: (1) being responsive to the public's concerns and interests by maintaining a dialogue with all potentially affected parties and (2) carrying out its programs with an emphasis on working to enhance the quality of life for all Americans by lending MMS assistance and expertise to economic development and environmental protection.