



NEWS RELEASE

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MMS Publishes Final Rule on Protection of Marine Mammals and Threatened and Endangered Species

Compliance with Endangered Species Act and Marine Mammal Protection Act Stressed

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) has issued a final rule amending 30 CFR part 250, subpart B-Plans and Information - Protection of Marine Mammals and Threatened and Endangered species. The rule, published in the [Federal Register](#), requires Federal oil and gas lessees in the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) to provide information on how their activities will conform to the requirements of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA).

The rule clarifies environmental, monitoring, and mitigation information that lessees must submit with plans for exploration, development, and production, including protected species information. These requirements will help ensure that lessees conduct their activities in a manner consistent with the provisions of ESA and MMPA. Specific requirements are detailed in the Final Rule.

MMS published a proposed rule on the subject on September 6, 2005, with a comment period that was extended through January 6, 2006, due to operational impacts of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. MMS received comments from the Fish and Wildlife Service, Humane Society of the United States, Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission, Center for Regulatory Effectiveness, ConocoPhillips Alaska Inc., and ExxonMobil. The comments and MMS's responses are included in the Final Rule.

-- MMS --

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