



NEWS RELEASE

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MMS Proposes Extending Proprietary Term of Certain Geophysical Data

WASHINGTON - The Minerals Management Service (MMS) today published a proposed rule in the Federal Register that would revise 30 CFR Part 251 to extend the proprietary term of certain reprocessed geophysical information submitted to MMS under a geophysical exploration permit. Under the proposed rule, *Geological and Geophysical (G&G) Explorations of the Outer Continental Shelf—Changing Proprietary Term of Certain Geophysical Information*, permittees and third parties may apply to MMS for an extension of the 25-year proprietary term for geophysical information reprocessed 20 or more years after MMS issued the permit under which the originating data were collected.

Geological and Geophysical surveys and activities provide information and data used by government and industry to analyze and evaluate the potential for oil and gas resources and potential geological hazards of offshore areas. “Reprocessing” is the additional processing, other than ordinary processing, used to improve images of the subsurface, for example, when new geological information or mathematical algorithms become available.

To address industry concerns regarding release of geophysical information reprocessed near the end of its 25-year term, MMS proposes to extend for up to 5 years the proprietary term for geophysical information which was reprocessed within the last 5 years of its initial, 25-year term, or thereafter. The extension would provide incentives to permittees and third parties to reprocess, market, or in other ways use vintage geophysical information that may not otherwise be reprocessed without the term extension. The proprietary term of geophysical information that was processed or reprocessed up to 20 years after the date of the germane permit is not affected by this proposed rulemaking.

MMS is accepting comments on the proposed rule for 60 days. Comments may be submitted via the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions on the website for submitting comments.
- Email MMS at rules.comments@mms.gov. Use RIN 1010–AD41 in the subject line.
- Fax: 703-787-1546. Identify with the RIN, 1010–AD41.

- Mail or hand-carry comments to the Department of the Interior; Minerals Management Service; Attention: Regulations and Standards Branch (RSB); 381 Elden Street, MS-4024; Herndon, Virginia 20170-4817. Please reference “Changing Proprietary Term of Certain Geophysical Information, 1010–AD41” in your comments and include your name and return address.

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