



NEWS

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Secretary Kempthorne Approves 2007-2012 Offshore Oil and Gas Leasing Program Program Becomes Effective July 1, 2007

WASHINGTON - Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne today approved the Minerals Management Service's 2007-2012 Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Program.

The program, which becomes effective July 1, 2007, schedules 21 lease sales in eight planning areas. The Minerals Management Service estimates that the program could produce 10 billion barrels of oil and 45 trillion cubic feet of natural gas over 40 years, generating almost \$170 billion, in today's dollars, in net benefits for the nation.

"This energy production will create jobs, provide greater economic and energy security for America and can be accomplished in a safe and environmentally sound manner," Kempthorne said. "The approval and implementation of this new program mark the culmination of almost two years of extensive consultation by the Department of the Interior with coastal states, the public at large, the environmental community and the natural gas and oil industry. The new program balances the critical need for domestic energy resources with protection of human, marine and coastal environments."

The final program is identical to the proposed final program announced by Secretary Kempthorne on April 30, 2007. Twelve sales are slated for the Gulf of Mexico, eight off the coast of Alaska and, at the request of the Commonwealth of Virginia, one in the Mid-Atlantic Planning Area, which would be at least 50 miles off the coast of Virginia. This sale would only take place if the presidential withdrawal is modified and the congressional moratorium discontinued in the Mid-Atlantic Planning Area. The department will conduct additional environmental reviews and consultations before deciding whether to proceed with each sale.

A table listing the schedule of 2007-2012 oil and gas lease sales, maps of the program areas and the complete final program are available online at:

<http://www.mms.gov/5-year>.

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