



NEWS RELEASE

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MMS Announces Preliminary Nominations for Limited Alternative Energy Leases on the Outer Continental Shelf

The Minerals Management Service (MMS) has received 43 nominations for offshore alternative energy resource assessment and technology testing activities on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). The nominations were received in response to an announcement by MMS in the Federal Register on November 6, 2007.

“We are excited about the level of response and the number of areas nominated for potential development,” said MMS Director Randall B. Luthi. “This confirms there is tremendous interest in tapping the wealth of renewable energy resources offshore.”

Under the interim policy, MMS may issue limited-term leases authorizing data collection and technology testing on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) including meteorological or marine data collection facilities that will be used to assess alternative energy resources (e.g., wind, wave, tidal, and ocean current) or to test alternative energy technology. Since wind turbine technology is reasonably well established offshore wind turbine technologies will not be authorized for technology testing through the interim policy.

Most of the nominations received on the Atlantic Coast are for meteorological and oceanographic data collection facilities that would support wind generation projects off Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina, and Georgia. Nominations for areas off Florida focused on ocean current information collection and technology. On the Pacific Coast, the main interest is in wave energy, and nominations were received off California, Oregon and Washington. Regarding Alaska, the single nomination received is for Cook Inlet and relates to tidal power.

“We look forward to enabling the interested companies to gather information that will lay the groundwork for generating power for regional and national use in a safe, clean, and environmentally responsible manner,” said Luthi.

In addition to the nominations, MMS received and is reviewing comments on the interim policy from individual companies, interest groups, and federal, state, and local governments. Individual comments are available for public review on the MMS internet website at (www.mms.gov).

MMS is charged with managing energy resources of the OCS, including traditional forms such as oil and gas.

MMS will review the comments and determine the next steps under the interim policy, including communicating with the nominators to refine and clarify their nominations and to verify their qualifications to acquire a limited lease. MMS will then publish a *Federal Register* notice to announce the nominations, identify those on which it will proceed, and request information to determine whether there is competing interest in any of the nomination areas.

The interim policy would be in effect until MMS issues final rules for the OCS Alternative Energy and Alternate Use Program, expected by the end of 2008. Parties wishing to obtain limited leases under the policy may continue to submit nominations until then.

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