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Alternate Energy-Related Uses on the Outer Continental Shelf

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 amended the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA) to give the Secretary of the Interior, and through the Secretary's delegation the Minerals Management Service (MMS), authority to grant leases for alternative energy activities on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS), as well as for activities that involve the alternate use of OCS facilities such as existing oil and gas platforms. Through this new authority, MMS has established an Alternative Energy and Alternate Use (AEAU) Program. Alternative energy includes wind, wave, solar, underwater current and generation of hydrogen. Alternate uses of existing facilities may include, but are not limited to aquaculture, research, education, recreation and support of offshore operations and facilities.

This new authority under OCSLA provides that MMS will, among other things:

- Issue leases, easements or rights-of-way on the OCS for alternate energy and alternate use activities on a competitive basis, unless it is determined that no competitive interest exist;
- coordinate and consult with affected state and local governments;
- pursue appropriate enforcement actions in the event violations occur;
- require appropriate financial surety to ensure that facilities constructed are properly removed at the end of their economic life;
- regulate, monitor alternate energy and a alternate use activities; and
- determine fair return to the Nation.

Completion of Programmatic Environmental Analysis

The MMS published a final programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the AEAU Program in November 2007. A Record of Decision formally establishing the AEAU Program was issued January 10, 2008. The AEAU programmatic EIS assesses potential impacts from development, operations and decommissioning of renewable energy or alternate use facilities and identifies key issues and mitigation measures that will be considered in subsequent site-specific reviews.

Alternative Energy Projects Under Review

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 also gave the Secretary of the Interior responsibility to evaluate existing offshore alternative energy projects, the Cape Wind project offshore Massachusetts in Nantucket Sound and the Long Island Offshore Wind Park in New York. The MMS is reviewing each project's application and is preparing environmental evaluations as required by law.

MMS has received 43 nominations for offshore alternative energy resource assessment and technology testing activities on the OCS. The nominations were received in response to an announcement by MMS in the *Federal Register* on November 6, 2007.



Cape Wind Energy Project:

Cape Wind Associates has proposed to construct an offshore wind park located on Horseshoe Shoal in Nantucket Sound, Massachusetts, 4.7 miles offshore. The purpose of the project is to provide a utility-scale renewable energy facility project providing electricity to the New England Power grid. The proposed wind park will consist of 130 offshore wind turbine generators arranged to maximize the park's maximum potential electric output of approximately 468 megawatts. The MMS issued a DEIS for the project in January 2008. The remaining steps in the Cape Wind EIS process anticipated for 2008 include public hearings, issuance of a final EIS and a Record of Decision.

January 2008

Long Island Offshore Wind Park project (LLOWP):

The Long Island Power Authority (LIPA) and Florida Power & Light (FPL) have proposed an offshore wind park located about 3-4 miles off the South Shore of Long Island, New York. The proposed wind park would entail installation of 40 turbines to produce 140 megawatts of electricity for use in Long Island communities. The MMS review of the LLOWP projects has been placed on hold pending a decision on the future of the project by LIPA.

For more information on the Minerals Management Service, go to www.mms.gov.

MMS manages offshore oil and gas exploration and development as well as renewable and alternative energy sources such as wind, wave, and current on 1.76 billion acres of the Outer Continental Shelf while protecting the human, marine, and coastal environments. MMS also collects, accounts for, and disburses mineral revenues from Federal and American Indian lands, sharing revenues with states, American Indians and individual lease holders, and the U.S. Treasury. The revenues are also contributed to the Land and Water Conservation Fund and other special use funds. In Fiscal Year 2007, MMS disbursed approximately \$11.7 billion, totaling more than \$176 billion since 1982.

People Promoting Energy, the Environment and the Economy