



NEWS RELEASE

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Minerals Management Service Schedules Public Meetings on Renewable Energy and Alternate Use on America's Outer Continental Shelf

WASHINGTON, DC – The Interior Department's Minerals Management Service (MMS) announced today in a Federal Register notice, it will hold public scoping meetings across the country during the months of May and June of 2006 to obtain comments from the American public on renewable energy projects and alternate use of facilities in Federal waters. The meetings are the first step in the preparation of a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the nation's Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Renewable Energy and Alternate Use Program.

"We welcome and encourage public participation in these important meetings, which will assist MMS in developing a Federal program to facilitate and manage renewable energy and alternate use projects on America's offshore public lands," said MMS Director Johnnie Burton. "Broad public input will ensure that MMS fully considers real and potential impacts of developing domestic offshore renewable energy sources and of permitting alternate use of facilities off our coasts."

MMS received authority for the OCS Renewable Energy and Alternate Use Program [under Section 388 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005](#). Under this authority, MMS will regulate renewable energy projects and alternate use of existing oil and gas platforms on the OCS. Renewable 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 for offshore operations and facilities.

The Programmatic EIS will assess generic impacts from development, operations and decommissioning of renewable energy or alternate use facilities and identify key issues and mitigation measures that should be considered by subsequent site-specific reviews.

Preparation of the Programmatic EIS is a multi-step process that will be completed in about 18 months and will include publication of a draft Programmatic EIS, a final Programmatic EIS and a Record of Decision.

The MMS will offer a second opportunity to comment during public hearings on the draft Programmatic EIS after it is published.

The scoping meetings will begin at 5:30 p.m. and will be held at the following locations:

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| May 18, 2006 | Washington DC Area
Days Hotel and Conference Center
2200 Centreville Road
Herndon, VA |
| May 23, 2006 | Trenton, New Jersey
Marriott Trenton at Lafayette Yard
1 West Lafayette Street
Trenton, New Jersey |
| May 23, 2006 | Austin, Texas
Hilton Austin Airport
9515 New Airport Drive
Austin, TX |
| May 24, 2006 | Long Island, New York Area
Melville Marriott
1350 Old Walt Whitman Road
Melville, New York |
| May 25, 2006 | Boston, Massachusetts Area
Holiday Inn Boston-Dedham Hotel and Conference Center
55 Ariadne Road
Dedham, MA |
| May 25, 2006 | Long Beach, California
Courtyard Long Beach Downtown
500 East First Street
Long Beach, CA |
| June 6, 2006 | Atlanta, Georgia
Atlanta Marriott Century Center
2000 Century Boulevard NE
Atlanta, GA |
| June 6, 2006 | Portland, Oregon
Holiday Inn Portland-Downtown
1441 NE 2 nd Avenue |

Portland, OR 97232

June 8, 2006

Orlando, Florida

Embassy Suites Hotel Orlando-International Drive
8978 International Drive
Orlando, FL 32819

June 8, 2006

San Francisco, California

The Presidio Officer's Club
50 Moraga Avenue
San Francisco, CA

MMS is also accepting written comments for the next 60 days electronically, using the online comment form available on the project website at ocsenergy.anl.gov or by mail:

MMS Renewable Energy and Alternate Use Programmatic EIS
Argonne National Laboratory
9700 S. Cass Avenue
Argonne, IL 60439.

Comments must be received by July, 5, 2006 and should specifically address factors related to the scope of the draft EIS, particularly the significant issues, alternatives, and mitigation measures that should be considered in the draft EIS.

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