

# MMS Fast Facts

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May 2009

### Geological and Geophysical (G&G) Seismic Activity

The Minerals Management Service (MMS), an agency created in 1982 within the U.S. Department of the Interior, manages the Nation's energy and mineral resources on the 1.7 billion offshore acres of the Federal Outer Continental Shelf (OCS), and the collection and distribution of mineral revenues generated from bonuses, rents and royalties from the Federal OCS and Federal and Indian lands onshore.

On January 21, 2009, MMS published a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register* to prepare a programmatic environmental impact statement (PEIS) to evaluate geological and geophysical (G&G) seismic activity on the Atlantic OCS. This initiates the scoping process for the programmatic impact statement and seeks interest from other Federal agencies, State, tribal and local governments to consider becoming cooperating agencies in the preparation of the environmental impact statement. MMS will be holding scoping meetings sometime this summer. The PEIS will evaluate the environmental impacts of multiple G&G activities in the Atlantic OCS. Industry has expressed interest in expanding activities into the Atlantic offshore waters and has submitted multiple applications for permits to MMS. The PEIS will determine whether significant impacts to Atlantic resources could occur as a result of G&G activities and where needed, outline mitigation and monitoring measures that will reduce or eliminate the potential for impacts to the environment.

MMS requires a geological/geophysical (G&G) permit application be submitted for all exploration activities that occur on non-leased acreage or acreage leased by someone other than the company initiating the activity. G&G permit applications are reviewed for completeness of required information and compliance with all existing laws, such as the National Environmental Protection Act, Marine Mammals Protection Act, Endangered Species Act, Coastal Zone Management Act and the several other relevant laws, prior to permit issuance.

MMS has received ten permit applications from six geophysical companies to acquire seismic data on the Atlantic OCS. The applications total over 270,000 line miles of 2-D data, covering all or part of the three Atlantic Planning Areas from Maine to Florida. There is a concentration of overlapping surveys, primarily in the mid and south Atlantic areas.

For further information on G&G technology and how it is deployed and used and information regarding the Atlantic OCS G&G Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, please visit the MMS website at <http://www.gomr.mms.gov/homepg/offshore/atlocs/gandg.html>.

To find out more information on the Offshore Energy and Minerals Management Program, visit the MMS website at <http://www.mms.gov/offshore> or <http://www.mrm.mms.gov> for information on the MMS Mineral Revenue Management Program or call the MMS Office of Congressional Affairs at (202) 208-3502.

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