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Contact: Nicolette Nye
(202) 208-2985

Florida's Brevard County Beaches Get Help from MMS

Several beaches in Brevard County are getting a helping hand after 2004's devastating hurricane season. Under two newly signed agreements; the Minerals Management Service will provide sand from the federal outer continental shelf (OCS) to restore coastal areas damaged by Hurricanes Charley, Frances and Jeanne.

The first agreement is in the form of a noncompetitive lease. Brevard County Officials and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will use about 2 million cubic yards of federal sand to restore damaged shoreline along the North and South Reach areas of the county.

MMS also signed a memorandum of agreement with the U.S. Air Force to provide up to 350,000 cubic yards of federal sand to restore the Atlantic shoreline of Patrick Air Force Base, also in Brevard County.

"The 2004 hurricane season was devastating to the State of Florida," said MMS Director Johnnie Burton. "In keeping with our stewardship responsibilities and our obligation to protect the environment, MMS is working closely with State officials to restore their beautiful shoreline."

The sand will be dredged from Canaveral Shoals, then transported to the project sites and hydraulically pumped from the dredge ship to the beach nourishment handling areas.

Information and analyses from MMS's cooperative study efforts with the State of Florida have been critical to repairing these beaches. MMS provided Patrick Air Force base with about 600,000 cubic yards of OCS sand to renourish its shoreline in 2000. In 2001 MMS provided OCS sands that renourished the North Reach portion of the Brevard County Federal Shore Protection Project. A total of 2.8 million cubic yards of OCS sand was placed on 9.4 miles of shoreline from the south jetty at Canaveral Harbor to the northern limit of Patrick Air Force Base. In 2002 MMS provided 1.4 million cubic yards of OCS sand for the South Reach portion of the County's project, restoring 3.4 miles of beach along the Florida towns of Indialantic and Melbourne Beach.

Over a decade ago, MMS and coastal states recognized that sand resources from the OCS are a viable and critical source for protection of the nation's shores and wetlands. The MMS established state cooperatives and identified over 2 billion cubic yards of OCS sand resources, and has conveyed more than 20 million cubic yards of sand for 14 shore protection projects.

Partnering with coastal states, MMS's Marine Minerals Branch locates and characterizes OCS sand resources and conducts the environmental studies and analysis necessary to ensure that the sand can be removed without significant impact to the environment and match the sand type already on the beach.

In addition to Florida, MMS has cooperative agreements with Alabama, California, Delaware, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas and Virginia.

MMS, a bureau of the U.S. Department of the Interior, oversees 1.76 billion acres of the Outer Continental Shelf, managing offshore energy and minerals while protecting the human, marine, and coastal environments through advanced science and technology research. The OCS provides 30 percent of oil and 23 percent of natural gas produced domestically, and sand used for coastal restoration. MMS collects, accounts for, and disburses mineral revenues from Federal and American Indian lands, with fiscal year 2004 disbursements of around \$8 billion and more than \$143 billion since 1982. The Land and Water Conservation Fund, which pays for acquisition of state and federal park and recreation land, gets nearly \$1 billion a year.

**MMS Main Website: www.mms.gov
Gulf of Mexico Website: www.gomr.mms.gov**

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