

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE'S
SAND AND GRAVEL PROGRAM AND THE NEED TO ADEQUATELY FUND
THE PROGRAM**

On this 22nd day of JUNE 2005, IN CONSIDERATION of the duty of the Outer Continental Shelf Policy Committee to provide policy guidance to the Secretary of the Interior on issues related to management and development of mineral resources on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS):

IT IS RESOLVED THAT:

WHEREAS, the purpose of the OCS Policy Committee is to provide the Secretary of the Interior with advice related to the agency's discretionary functions under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, including leasing, exploration, development and protection of OCS resources; and

WHEREAS, the OCS Policy Committee has established a Subcommittee on the OCS Hard Minerals Leasing Program to advise the Department of the Interior on the identification and development of marine mineral resources in an environmentally sound manner; and

WHEREAS, since much of the U.S. coastline is experiencing erosion, beach and coastal restoration, and wetland protection continue to be critical issues for coastal states and communities; and

WHEREAS, as the demand for sand for shoreline protection and mitigation increases, OCS sand and gravel has become an increasingly important resource to coastal states and communities to forestall erosion, mitigate damage, protect shoreline infrastructure, provide improved recreation; and protect valuable wetland resources; and

WHEREAS, since 1995 the MMS has provided over 23 million cubic yards of OCS sand for 16 coastal projects, restoring over 90 miles of the Nation's coastline to protect critical military installations, National parklands and billions of dollars in infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the Marine Minerals Program of the MMS, continues to focus on collecting and analyzing geologic and environmental information, developed through partnerships with 14 coastal states, to identify and make available OCS sand deposits suitable for beach restoration and wetlands protection; and

WHEREAS, these state/federal partnerships are critical to assist states and local communities in identifying sand resources and evaluating the environmental impacts of using these resources; and

WHEREAS, the MMS has spent over \$11 million for marine mineral environmental studies and is at the cutting edge of adopting new technologies for understanding sand and gravel resources, and is a leader in providing information for understanding the consequences to shorelines from using OCS sands; and

WHEREAS, the sand and gravel program, over the last several years, has been funded at \$2.5 to \$3.0 million annually from general MMS funds; and

WHEREAS, because of budget constraints, continued funding for the sand and gravel program maybe in jeopardy; and

WHEREAS, adequate funding for the sand and gravel program is critical to the success of the program and state and local restoration and protection projects;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT:

1. The OCS Policy Committee urges the Secretary of the Department of the Interior to recognize that the sand and gravel program should be a priority of the Department as part of its core mission.
2. The sand and gravel program should be funded at level funding or a minimum of \$3.0 million in FY 2006.
3. The Secretary of the Interior, through legislative staff, advises Congressional members, and especially the members of the Conference Committee of the importance of the OCS sand and gravel program.
4. The Secretary through the Minerals Management Service should include the sand and gravel program as a specific line item in the Department's Fiscal Year 2007 budget request.
5. The Secretary through the Minerals Management Service should determine adequate funding to meet the needs of coastal states and communities, and request those funds in Fiscal Year 2007 budget. However, funding should not be less than \$3.0 million for the sand and gravel program in Fiscal Year 2007.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT a copy of this resolution is forwarded to the Secretary of the Interior and to each member of Congress.

Resolution passed unanimously.