



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. Department of the Interior
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NEWS MEDIA CONTACT
Caryl Fagot, 504-736-2590
Eileen Angelico, 504-736-2595

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MMS Issues Proposed Notice of Central Gulf Lease Sale

New area to be offered will provide revenue to Gulf producing states.

NEW ORLEANS – The Department of the Interior’s Minerals Management Service (MMS) has proposed that oil and gas Lease Sale 208 for the Central Gulf of Mexico Planning Area be held March 18, 2009. The Notice of Availability of the Proposed Notice of Sale (PNOS) was published in the *Federal Register* on Friday, October 3.

The proposed sale encompasses approximately 6,200 unleased blocks covering more than 33.5 million acres offshore Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. This area includes 5.8 million acres, known as the 181 South Area, that will be offered for lease for the first time since 1988.

“What makes Sale 208 noteworthy is the addition of the 181 South Area,” said MMS director Randall Luthi. “The states of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas will share in all revenue from leases in this new area.”

The Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006 mandated that the 181 South Area, approximately 5.8 million acres located in the southeastern part of the Central Planning Area, be offered for lease, and that the four Gulf producing states share in the revenues.

MMS estimates that the proposed lease sale could result in production of approximately 0.807 to 1.336 billion barrels of oil and 3.365 to 5.405 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. The acreage is located from three to 230 miles offshore in water depths of about 10 feet (three meters) to more than 11,200 feet (3,400 meters).

Terms and conditions for Central Sale 208 are detailed in the PNOS information package on the MMS Website at <http://www.gomr.mms.gov/homepg/lseale/208/cgom208.html>. Copies can be requested from the MMS Gulf of Mexico Region’s Public Information Unit, 1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard, New Orleans, LA 70123, phone (504) 736-2519, toll free 1-800-200-GULF.

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