

FACT SHEET

GULF OF MEXICO

Lease sales in the Western and Central Gulf of Mexico under the 2007-2012 program are currently scheduled to proceed in late 2011 or early 2012, after the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation, and Enforcement (BOEMRE) completes appropriate environmental analyses.

Interior will also soon begin public meetings and environmental analysis to inform decisions about when and where lease sales in portions of the Gulf of Mexico currently not under congressional moratorium will be held during 2012-2017.

Most of the Eastern Gulf of Mexico planning remains under a Congressionally-mandated drilling moratorium and is not proposed for leasing in either the 2007-2012 program or the 2012-2017 program.

ALASKA

Offshore drilling in Alaska is under careful review and consideration by the Department of the Interior and BOEMRE. These efforts include scientific and environmental studies, public meetings, and additional analysis of oil spill response capabilities in the Arctic.

BOEMRE will soon begin to hold public meetings in Alaska to gather important public input and information for an environmental impact statement that will help inform Secretary Salazar's decision on whether and where to schedule Alaska lease sales under the 2012-2017 program. The public meetings will cover the Beaufort, Chukchi, and Cook Inlet planning areas.

Decisions about the 2012-2017 program will be informed by an ongoing United States Geological Survey (USGS) assessment of resources, risks, and environmental sensitivities in Arctic areas, and input from other federal agencies, including the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Though no further lease sales in the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas will be held under the 2007-2012 program, BOEMRE will continue to honor existing leases in the Arctic. Currently, one application to drill (APD) in the Arctic is pending before BOEMRE. The APD, submitted by Shell, proposes to drill one exploratory well in the Beaufort Sea in the summer of 2011. BOEMRE is processing that permit request. The Bureau is preparing additional environmental analysis of the area in light of Shell's permit application. BOEMRE is working closely with other federal agencies that also must approve aspects of the proposed drilling activity, including NOAA and the Environmental Protection Agency.

If Shell's proposed drilling operation is approved, BOEMRE would have safety personnel on site throughout the drilling operation to monitor the operation and hold them accountable for compliance with BOEMRE's drilling safety and environmental regulations.

MID AND SOUTH ATLANTIC

Because the potential oil and gas resources in the Mid and South Atlantic are currently not well-known, Interior will move forward with an environmental analysis for potential seismic studies in the Mid and South Atlantic OCS to support conventional and renewable energy planning. No lease sales will be scheduled in the Atlantic in the 2007-2012 program or in the 2012-2017 program.

For more information about the offshore oil and gas strategy announced today, visit www.doi.gov.

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