

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
Washington

ORDER NO. 3282

SIGNATURE DATE: January 16, 2009

Subject: Department of the Interior Oil and Gas and Alternative Energy Authorizations in Alaska

Sec. 1 **Purpose.** This Order authorizes the development of Memorandums of Agreement (MOA) to facilitate processing of permits for oil and gas and alternative energy activities in Alaska; and establishment of an Arctic Permitting Office (APO) to perform major permitting and administrative responsibilities related to oil and gas and alternative energy projects on Federal lands.

Sec. 2 **Background.** The MOA is the most effective means to clearly define Department of the Interior (DOI) and other Federal and State responsibilities that are critical to the efficient workflow and efficient permitting at this time. The MOA will provide common understandings of roles and responsibilities of DOI bureaus and offices, as well as Federal and State agencies; describe how the organizations will work together to implement their responsibilities; and provide a framework to cooperatively manage the authorizations in a timely manner. Establishing an office for processing applications for oil and gas projects on Federal lands in Alaska will provide a consolidated organizational structure for DOI and Federal and State agencies to cooperatively manage the authorizations and facilitate evaluating the potential for processing permits for alternative energy on Federal lands in Alaska.

Sec. 2 **Authority.** This Order is issued under the authority of Section 2 of Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1950 (64 Stat. 1262).

Sec. 3 **Responsibilities.**

a. The Assistant Secretaries for Land and Minerals Management and Fish and Wildlife and Parks will oversee and direct development of the DOI and Interagency MOA, and establishment of the APO.

b. The Director, Minerals Management Service will coordinate the development of the DOI MOA and establishment of the APO.

Sec. 4 **The Memorandums of Agreement.**

- a. An MOA will be developed for DOI bureaus and offices that will:
- (1) Provide opportunities to share resources, coordinate projects, and cooperatively develop mitigation measures;
 - (2) Identify bureau and office roles and responsibilities, regulatory schedules, and opportunities to effectively coordinate and process agency permits; and

(3) Identify where non-DOI agencies (Federal and State) interrelate with DOI and where opportunities exist to further coordinate the timely processing of permits among all affected agencies.

b. The Department shall enter into negotiations with other appropriate Federal and State agencies to provide for an integrated multi-agency process for oil and gas and alternative energy authorizations in Alaska.

Sec. 5 Arctic Permitting Office. The Director, MMS will coordinate with the Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Solicitor to establish the APO.

a. The APO will be established at such a time that the number of Alaska permits and workloads warrant the new office.

b. The APO will facilitate co-locating and consolidating in one office DOI and other Federal and State employees performing major permitting and administrative responsibilities for oil and gas and alternative energy projects on Federal lands in Alaska. All employees located at the APO will continue to report to and be supervised by their respective organization.

Sec. 6 Permitting Standards.

a. The processing and permitting of oil and gas and alternative energy activities in Alaska will comply with all laws and regulations, including compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the Council on Environmental Quality and DOI National Environmental Policy Act regulations.

b. Any and all permits, licenses, or other governmental authorizations regarding oil and gas or alternative energy processed through or in cooperation with the APO will be issued by the agency with statutory authority for such actions, or, where a statute places authority with the Department, the approval authority within the Department will not be affected by any MOA developed pursuant to this Order.

Sec. 7 Delegation. The Assistant Secretaries for Land and Minerals Management and Fish and Wildlife and Parks are delegated the authority to carry out the responsibilities of this Order. The authority delegated under this Order may be further delegated. However, authority delegated in this Order does not supersede any authority previously delegated to the Assistant Secretaries for Land and Minerals Management and Fish and Wildlife and Parks.

Sec. 8 Implementation. The Assistant Secretaries for Land and Minerals Management and Fish and Wildlife and Parks are responsible for ensuring implementation of the responsibilities and requirements in this Order.

Sec. 9 Expiration Date. This Order is effective immediately. It will remain in effect until the Departmental MOA is executed. In the absence of the foregoing action, the provisions of this Order will terminate and be considered obsolete on October 1, 2009.

/s/ DIRK KEMPTHORNE
Secretary of the Interior