

would submit this ICR to OMB for approval. We received no comments in response to that initial notice. If you wish to comment in response to this notice, send your comments directly to the offices listed under the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice. The OMB has up to 60 days to approve or disapprove the information collection but may respond after 30 days. Therefore, to ensure maximum consideration, OMB should receive public comments by January 16, 2001.

MMS Information Collection Clearance Officer: Jo Ann Lauterbach, (202) 208-7744.

Dated: October 27, 2000.

John V. Mirabella,

Acting Chief, Engineering and Operations Division.

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BILLING CODE 4310-MR-U

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Minerals Management Service

Environmental Assessment Preparation for Proposed Lease Sale 180 in the Western Gulf of Mexico (2001)

AGENCY: Minerals Management Service.

ACTION: Preparation of an environmental assessment.

SUMMARY: The Minerals Management Service (MMS) is beginning preparation of an environmental assessment (EA) for proposed Lease Sale 180 (scheduled for August 2001) in the Western Gulf of Mexico Planning Area. In January 1997, MMS issued a Call for Information and Nominations/Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS (Call/NOI) for the four proposed Western Gulf of Mexico sales in the current 5-year leasing program. In 1998, MMS prepared a single Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for all four sales. The multisale Final EIS, filed in May 1998, included an analysis of a single, typical sale, and a cumulative analysis that included the effects of holding all four sales, as well as the cumulative effects of the long-term development of the planning area. The MMS stated in the EIS that an EA would be prepared for each lease sale after the first sale covered in the EIS (Sale 171).

The preparation of this EA is the first step in the prelease decision process for Sale 180. The proposal and alternatives for Sale 180 were identified by the Director of MMS in January 1997 following the Call/NOI and were analyzed in the Western Gulf multisale EIS, which is available from the Gulf of Mexico OCS Region's Public

Information Office at 1-800-200-GULF. The proposed action analyzed in the multisale EIS was the offering of all available unleased acreage in the Western Gulf of Mexico Planning Area, with the following exceptions: Blocks A-375 (East Flower Garden Bank) and A-398 (West Flower Garden Bank) in the High Island Area, East Addition, South Extension, designated as a national marine sanctuary; and Blocks 793, 799, and 816 in the Mustang Island Area, identified by the Navy as needed for testing equipment and for training mine warfare personnel. The proposal to be addressed in this EA has been revised to the following extent: two additional blocks or portions of these blocks (High Island Area, East Addition, South Extension, Block A-401 and High Island, South Addition, Block A-513), which lie partially within the Flower Gardens National Marine Sanctuary, are deferred from the proposed action in light of the President's June 1998 withdrawal of all Marine Sanctuaries from oil and gas leasing. The proposed action includes existing regulations and proposed lease stipulations designed to reduce environmental risks. The EA will also analyze alternatives to exclude blocks near biologically sensitive topographic features, as well as the no action alternative. The analysis in the EA will reexamine the potential environmental effects of the proposal and alternatives based on any new information regarding potential impacts and issues that was not available at the time the Final EIS was prepared.

The MMS requests interested parties to submit comments regarding any such new information or issues that should be addressed in the EA to Minerals Management Service, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, Office of Leasing and Environment, Attention: Regional Supervisor (MS 5400), 1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard, New Orleans, Louisiana 70123-2394 by January 19, 2001. After completion of the EA, MMS will determine whether to prepare a Finding of No New Significant Impact (FONNSI) or a supplemental EIS. The MMS will then prepare and send consistency determinations to the affected States to determine whether the proposed sale is consistent with federally-approved State coastal zone management programs, and will send a proposed Notice of Sale to the Governors for their comments on the size, timing, and location of the proposed sale. The tentative schedule for the steps in the prelease decision process for Sale 180 are listed below:

Comments due to MMS, January 19, 2001;

EA/FONNSI or Supplemental EIS, March 2001;
Proposed Notice of Sale sent to Governors, March 2001;
Consistency Determinations sent to States, March 2001;
Final Notice of Sale in **Federal Register**, July 2001;
Sale, August 2001.

If you wish to comment, you may mail or hand-carry written comments to the Department of the Interior, Minerals Management Service, Regional Director (MS-5410), Minerals Management Service, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, 1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard, New Orleans, Louisiana 70123-2394. Our practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review during regular business hours. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home address from the rulemaking record, which we will honor to the extent allowable by law. There may be circumstances in which we would withhold from the rulemaking record a respondent's identity, as allowable by the law. If you wish us to withhold your name and/or address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. However, we will not consider anonymous comments. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Minerals Management Service, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, 1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard, New Orleans, Louisiana 70123-2394, Mr. Dennis Chew, telephone (504) 736-2793.

Dated: December 11, 2000.

Chris C. Oynes,

Regional Director, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region.

[FR Doc. 00-31964 Filed 12-14-00; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Concession Contract Negotiations; AK

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior.

ACTION: Public Notice.

SUMMARY: The National Park Service proposes to offer a concession contract authorizing lodging, food and beverage, gifts and merchandise, rental of outdoor recreation equipment, ground transportation and other services for the public at Katmai National Park &