

## **“Mapping Federal Submerged Lands: The OCS Marine Cadastre”**

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The Minerals Management Service (MMS) was established in 1982 to manage the outer continental shelf (OCS). The Bureau of Land Management handles onshore resources and MMS manages offshore activities. Together, this accounts of 2.3 billion acres on and offshore managed in the U.S.

OCS manages to 200 miles out, generally. Key programs include: oil and gas, alternative energy, sand and gravel, coastal impact assistance, and other revenue sharing (with states). They are responsible for 1.76 billion acres; on which they issue leases.

Note that 30% of our domestic oil and 20% of our natural gas come from the offshore area; this represents roughly \$8 billion in annual revenue.

MMS works primarily in the Gulf of Mexico, the Pacific, and Alaska regions. They now have the ability to operate in deeper waters, which opens up new areas of exploration.

The agency’s operational focus, with regard to leases, is: safety, environmental protection, and at a fair market value.

Mr. Kopach made the point that large areas of the U.S. are not currently utilized.

The Mapping and Boundary Branch determines federal and state jurisdiction under the Submerged Lands Act. He referenced the “National Spatial Data Infrastructure” project, as follows:

- Data Themes: Baseline determinations; Offshore (Cadastral); Marine Boundaries; Offshore Minerals; Outer Continental Shelf Submerged Lands
- Develop maps and diagrams
- Use Universal Transfer Mercator Grid System (UTM)
  - o Discussed OCS Blocks, 4800 meters per side
- Products : planning area maps, leasing maps, supplemental official block diagrams (where needed)
- Submerged Land Act boundaries to 200 nautical miles out are mapped
- Considerations: marine sanctuaries are marked (but not completed); definitions still problematic

A new development/response is the OCS 5-year Oil & Leasing Program; specifically incorporates alternative energy. He noted the Mid-Atlantic planning area off the Eastern Shore. New leasing areas outside the 25-mile buffer are under discussion by Congress. A lease sale is scheduled for 2011.

Other areas of agency focus:

- Alternative energy uses of OCS and their role in permitting and regulations. New, energy alternatives may be able to use former platforms, for example. See website for new activities.

- Interagency work group on ocean and coastal mapping; an inventory has been established.
- Marine Boundary Working Group is trying to standardize things, best practices for boundary making, etcetera.