

MMS ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES PROGRAM: ONGOING STUDIES

Region: Alaska

Planning Areas: All Alaska Planning Areas

Title: Minerals Management Service/University of Alaska-Fairbanks/State of Alaska/Coastal Marine Institute – Management (AK-93-48-50)

MMS Information Needs to be Addressed: By adopting this cooperative agreement, improved leasing decisions and EIS analyses pertinent to lease sales in the Beaufort Sea, Cook Inlet, Gulf of Alaska, and Chukchi Sea/Hope can be made. Final reports will be available for lease sales and post-sale decisions; interim data products and inputs will be used to address information needs. Topical areas to be addressed under the Coastal Marine Institute have been identified through this Annual Study Plan, previous Alaska Region study plans, and the Framework Issues. The study also will develop information that addresses public concerns raised during outreach efforts.

Total Cost: \$563,000

Period of Performance: FY 2003-2008

Conducting Organization: CMI, UAF

MMS Contact: [Chief, Alaska Environmental Studies Section](#)

Description:

Background This study provides management of a large ongoing program of scientific research into framework issues related to lease sales identified in the MMS *Final Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program 2002-2007*. It is a cooperative program between MMS and the University of Alaska, with State of Alaska participation. The Coastal Marine Institute (CMI) is expected to leverage additional scientific results and logistics capability at levels comparable to the MMS contribution. The Coastal Marine Institute will update and expand our understanding of OCS environmental information and address future needs related to the offshore oil and gas program in Alaska.

Objectives The purpose of the CMI is to generate scientific information for MMS and State of Alaska decision makers that is consistent with the needs outlined by the Framework Issues. The Framework Issues are:

- Scientific studies for better understanding marine, coastal or human environments affected or potentially affected by offshore oil and gas or other mineral exploration and extraction on the OCS.
- Modeling studies of environmental, social, economic, or cultural processes related to OCS gas and oil activities in order to improve scientific predictive capabilities.
- Experimental studies for better understanding of environmental processes, or the causes and effects of OCS activities.
- Projects which design or establish mechanisms or protocols for sharing data or scientific

information regarding marine or coastal resources or human activities in order to support prudent management of oil, gas and marine mineral resources.

- Synthesis studies of scientific environmental or socioeconomic background information relevant to the OCS gas and oil program.

Methods A proposal process is initiated each year with a request for letters of intent to address one or more of the Framework Issues. The proposals are requested from university researchers and other scientific researchers in State agencies. A Technical Steering Committee made up of scientific representatives of the cooperators reviews letters of intent and proposals to be evaluated for possible funding. External peer reviews may be requested for new projects. Principal investigators give presentations at ITMs, scientific conferences, and various public meetings.

Current Status: Cooperative Agreement was extended to 6/30/08

Final Report Due: N/A

Publications Completed:

Alexander, V. (Director). 2007. University of Alaska Coastal Marine Institute Annual Report No. 11. OCS Study MMS 2005-055, University of Alaska Fairbanks and USDO, MMS, Alaska OCS Region <http://www.gomr.mms.gov/PI/PDFImages/ESPIS/3/3335.pdf>

Affiliated WWW Sites: <http://www.sfos.uaf.edu/cmi/>
<http://www.mms.gov/alaska/>

Revised Date: March 2008