

Feb 24 1998

Memorandum

To: Associate Director for Offshore Minerals Management (MS 4000)

From: Regional Director

Subject: BP Exploration (Alaska), Inc.'s (BPXA) Development and Production Plan (DPP)  
for the Liberty Project in the Beaufort Sea Sale 144 Area

The Alaska OCS Region has received a DPP and associated Oil Spill Contingency Plan for the Liberty Project in the Beaufort Sea Sale 144 area. The plan of development proposed by BPXA for the Liberty Project consists of a self-contained offshore drilling and production facility on a conventional gravel island located in Foggy Island Bay about 5 miles from shore and includes associated subsea pipelines. The plan was deemed submitted, in accordance with 30 CFR 250.34(f) as of February 19, 1998.

Copies of the DPP have been forwarded to the State of Alaska, Federal and State agencies, the North Slope Borough, and local governments within the area of activity, as well as notices sent out to the public (see attached distribution list). We are proceeding to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which constitute the basis for MMS's NEPA obligations for an OCS DPP under 30 CFR 250.34(j). The draft EIS is scheduled to be available in October 1998. Scoping meetings are scheduled in mid-March in Barrow, Nuiqsut, Kaktovik, and Anchorage to identify community concerns which will be analyzed in the EIS.

By copy of this memorandum, copies of the DPP are being sent to the Solicitor's Office, Engineering Operations Division, and the Branch of Environmental Assessment. We do not expect the State of Alaska to initiate the coastal zone management consistency time clock until all necessary data and information has been submitted pursuant to 15 CFR Part 930.77(b). At this time, we understand there is a mutual agreement by BPXA and the State to defer the coastal zone management program analysis pursuant to 43 U.S.C. 1351(f) until a later time, most likely to coincide with the draft EIS publication date. The Alaska OCS Region will continue to coordinate with the State and BPXA regarding regulatory, NEPA and Coastal Zone Management Act review periods.

If you have any questions, please contact Jeff Walker at (907) 271-6190.

cc: Elmer Danenberger (MS 4020)  
George Valiulis (MS 4042)  
Milo Mason, Solicitor's Office (MS 6313-MIB)