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***NEWS RELEASE***

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**MMS Director Cynthia Quarterman Announces Resignation**

Director of Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS), Cynthia Quarterman today announced her resignation from federal service. Ms. Quarterman was appointed by President Clinton in 1993 as Deputy Director of MMS and later appointed Director in March 1995. Her resignation becomes effective February 1999.

"Ms. Quarterman has ably served the President, the Department and the American people with professionalism and a deep commitment for efficiency in government," said Babbitt. "It is with a sense of regret and tremendous respect that I accept her decision. I am proud of her dedication and the work she has done for the Department and the Administration."

Under Ms. Quarterman's leadership, the MMS has had a number of notable accomplishments and achievements. She revised the MMS organizational structure by streamlining operations, and cutting cost and working smarter. She steadfastly accomplished the mission without an increase in the MMS budget for four years. She made the tough decisions and led the Service through reengineering its operations, and won the Vice President's Hammer Award for Innovations, as well as many other Presidential awards for quality improvement and environmental protection; negotiated agreements to settle billions of dollars in claims on leases subject to moratoria offshore Alaska and Florida; built consensus on offshore leasing issues making it possible to schedule a lease sale in one planning area, and hold an offshore lease sale in another planning area for the first time in 15 long years; fulfilled the MMS trust responsibility to Indian tribes and allottees by creating more cooperative audit programs and internships with Indian tribes; established a three-bureau minerals allottee service office in Farmington, New Mexico, resolving numerous long festering policy disputes.

"My experiences here have been the most fulfilling and fascinating in my professional life," Quarterman noted in a letter to Babbitt. "I have been privileged to work with a team of gifted federal employees,

devoted to safeguarding the nation's mineral resources. Nonetheless, even the best things must end. This ending for me leaves MMS in good stead and well prepared for the new millennium."

Ms. Quarterman has no immediate plans for the future.

**-MMS-**

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