

Innovation #25



Innovative Achievements

FOR RELEASE: May 4, 1998

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MMS DEVELOPS AUTOMATED PIPELINE MAPPING SYSTEM

The U.S. Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) announced today the availability of digital coordinate data of all natural gas and oil pipelines in the Gulf of Mexico - more than 20,000 miles - in Federal OCS waters. The new automated pipeline mapping system allows the MMS to offer the most up-to-date pipeline information ever available in the Gulf of Mexico Region.

MMS Director Cynthia Quarterman explained, "This new mapping system was created to take advantage of rapidly increasing innovations in automation technology and to keep up with customer demands. With this system we can provide better customer service by completing requests on a daily basis. Moreover, we're producing a better product."

Each year, MMS receives about 10,000 requests for maps from the public and other government agencies. The processing time for maps had been backlogged by as much as eight weeks and the manually hand-drawn mapping process was slow and limited. The system comprised 908 grid maps drawn by hand with daily updating done by calculating each pipeline coordinate, inking the coordinates one by one on the maps, and then lettering the text.

Lengthy pipelines, especially deepwater pipelines, would sometimes take an entire workday to draft by hand and sometimes cover as many as seven grid maps. The originals would have to be sent for reproduction when maps were ordered by the public.

The new system allows these same coordinates to be downloaded by the customer in less than 20 minutes. It can be viewed on the computer monitor by MMS, or a high quality color hard copy can be produced in less than an hour. Money is saved because the cartographic technicians' productivity has quadrupled, and loading this coordinate data onto their computer system gives customers immediate access.

The new system also allows customers to order one map to cover a wide range of pipelines. Maps can range from an 8½ x 11 laser jet print to a standard 6 to 9 block cell map. The new maps are color-coded and line-typed for easy recognition of the production and status of each line. Customized maps with areas of interest chosen by blocks, longitude and latitude, or an area name can be created. The entire Gulf of Mexico can be mapped featuring the major pipelines.

Pipeline location data in ASCII format can conveniently be obtained from the Internet free of charge. Customers may also order data (on a diskette) of proposed or as-built pipelines through the Public

Information Office. With this innovation, the number of hard copy maps will be reduced by more than 50%.

Contact the Public Information Unit of the Minerals Management Service by telephone at (504) 736-2519 or (800) 200-GULF, or by written request to:

Minerals Management Service
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region
Attn.: Public Information Unit (MS 5034)
1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard
New Orleans, Louisiana 70123-2394
Fax (504) 736-2620.

MMS is the Federal agency that manages the Nation's oil and gas and other mineral resources on the OCS and collects, accounts for, and last year disbursed about \$6 billion in revenues from Federal offshore leases and Federal and Indian onshore mineral leases.

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MMS Internet website address: <http://www.boem.gov>
24 hour Fax-on-Demand Service:(202) 219-1703