

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE
GULF OF MEXICO OCS REGION**

NTL No. 98-12

Effective Date: August 10, 1998

NOTICE TO LESSEES AND OPERATORS OF FEDERAL OIL, GAS, AND SULPHUR
LEASES IN THE OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF, GULF OF MEXICO OCS REGION

**Implementation of Consistent Biological Stipulation
Measures in the Central and Western Gulf of Mexico**

This notice supersedes Notice to Lessees and Operators No. 89-01, effective August 1, 1989, and makes minor technical amendments and includes a statement regarding the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

Introduction and Background

Oil and gas exploration and development activities in the vicinity of sensitive biological habitats associated with topographic features on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) (e.g., coral reefs) may cause deleterious impacts to those habitats in several ways, including toxic and smothering effects from drilling and production effluent, and mechanical damage from rig, platform and anchor emplacement. A stipulation to protect such habitats has been made a part of appropriate OCS oil and gas leases since 1973. The Topographic Features Stipulation of the Central and Western Gulf of Mexico Planning Area has been revised slightly from time to time to incorporate findings of research and monitoring. Beginning with Lease Sales 110 (Central Gulf) and 112 (Western Gulf) held in 1987, however, the provisions of this stipulation constituted a more substantial revision.

Purpose and Scope

1. In order to provide necessary and sufficient protection for the sensitive biological habitats of the topographic features of the Central and Western Gulf Planning Areas, it is necessary to require measures based on the latest and best available scientific information. The leases resulting from Sales 110, 112, and all subsequent sales contain the revised stipulation. Operators of leases on affected blocks issued prior to 1987 now have two options. You may elect to conduct your operations in conformance with this latest version of the stipulation, or you may elect to comply with the stipulation in your lease document.

2. Attachment 1 lists the blocks affected by the Topographic Features Stipulation. Attachment 2 provides the text of the stipulation as it is currently applied and lists the topographic features.

Implementation

1. Beginning August 1, 1989, operators of leases in the Central and Western Gulf of Mexico Planning Areas issued prior to 1987 on blocks listed in Attachment 1 may comply with either the provisions of Attachment 2 of this notice or with the provisions of the biological topographic features stipulation contained in their lease.

2. Plans of Exploration and Development Operations Coordination Documents submitted for leases issued prior to 1987 on blocks listed in Attachment 1 must explicitly declare which version of the Topographic Features Stipulation will be followed.

3. This notice affects only the stipulation in the lease designed to protect biological resources on the topographic features (Topographic Features Stipulation) in the Central and Western Gulf of Mexico Planning Areas. All other stipulations and lease provisions remain unchanged.

Exception

The provisions of this notice must not be construed to modify or cancel any biological monitoring plan that has been approved by the Gulf of Mexico OCS Region.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement

The information collection provisions of this notice are intended to provide clarification, description, or interpretation of requirements contained in lease stipulations and 30 CFR 250, Subpart B. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved the information collection requirements for Subpart B and has assigned OMB Control Number 1010-0049. This notice does not impose additional information collection requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.



Chris C. Oynes
Regional Director

Attachments

ATTACHMENT 1

Central Gulf of Mexico

The Topographic Features Stipulation affects a total of 167 blocks in the Central Gulf.

<i>Block</i>	<i>Bank</i>	<i>Block</i>	<i>Bank</i>
West Cameron, South Addition		East Cameron, South Addition	
569	29 Fathom	361	McGrail
570	29 Fathom	362	McGrail
589	29 Fathom	363	McGrail
590	29 Fathom	377	McGrail
591	29 Fathom	378	McGrail
592	29 Fathom	379	McGrail
611	29 Fathom		
612	29 Fathom and MacNeil		
613	MacNeil	Vermilion, South Addition	
614	MacNeil		
633	MacNeil	284	Sonnier
634	Rankin	285	Sonnier
635	Rankin	286	Sonnier
636	Bright	297	Sonnier
637	Bright	298	Sonnier
638	Bright	299	Sonnier
645	Geyer	300	Sonnier
646	Geyer	303	Sonnier
648	Bright	304	Sonnier
649	Bright	305	Sonnier
650	Bright	306	Sonnier
651	Bright	317	Sonnier
652	Rankin and Bright	318	Sonnier
653	Rankin	319	Sonnier
654	Rankin	320	Sonnier
655	Rankin and Bright	361	Bouma
656	Bright	362	Bouma
657	Bright	363	Bouma
658	Bright	369	Bouma
659	Bright	370	Bouma
660	Bright	371	Bouma
661	Bright	372	Bouma
662	Bright and Rankin	382	Bouma and Rezak
663	Rankin	383	Bouma and Rezak
		384	Bouma

385 Bouma

Block Bank

Vermilion Area, South Addition

387 McGrail
 388 McGrail
 389 McGrail
 390 McGrail
 391 McGrail and Bouma
 392 Bouma
 393 Bouma and Rezak
 394 Bouma and Rezak
 395 Rezak
 396 Rezak
 403 Rezak
 404 Rezak
 405 Rezak
 406 Rezak and Bouma
 407 Bouma
 408 McGrail
 409 McGrail
 410 McGrail
 411 Sidner and Rezak
 412 Sidner and Rezak

South Marsh Island, South Addition

161 Alderdice
 162 Alderdice
 163 Alderdice
 169 Alderdice
 170 Alderdice
 171 Alderdice
 172 Alderdice
 173 Alderdice
 176 Alderdice
 177 Alderdice
 178 Alderdice
 179 Alderdice
 180 Alderdice
 185 Alderdice and Parker
 186 Alderdice and Parker
 187 Alderdice and Parker

386 Bouma

Block Bank

South Marsh Island, South Addition

188 Alderdice and Parker
 193 Parker
 194 Parker
 195 Parker
 196 Parker
 197 Parker
 200 Parker
 201 Parker
 202 Parker
 203 Parker
 204 Parker

Eugene Island, South Addition

335 Fishnet
 355 Fishnet
 356 Fishnet
 381 Jakkula
 382 Jakkula
 383 Jakkula
 390 Jakkula
 391 Jakkula
 397 Jakkula

Ship Shoal, South Addition

325 Ewing
 326 Ewing
 327 Ewing
 328 Ewing
 329 Ewing
 334 Ewing
 335 Ewing
 336 Ewing
 337 Ewing
 338 Ewing
 339 Ewing
 348 Ewing
 349 Ewing

Block Bank

Ship Shoal, South Addition

350 Ewing
351 Ewing
352 Ewing
353 Ewing
356 Ewing
357 Ewing
358 Ewing
359 Ewing

975 Jakkula
976 Jakkula
977 Jakkula

Mississippi Canyon

316 Sackett

South Timbalier, South Addition

314 Diaphus
315 Diaphus
316 Diaphus
317 Diaphus

West Delta, South Addition

147 Sackett
148 Sackett

Green Canyon

4 Jakkula
5 Jakkula
6 Jakkula
7 Jakkula
49 Jakkula
50 Jakkula
90 Sweet

Ewing Bank

903 Ewing
932 Jakkula
933 Jakkula
944 Ewing
945 Ewing
947 Ewing

Block Bank

Ewing Bank

Western Gulf of Mexico

The Topographic Features Stipulation affects a total of 200 blocks in the Western Gulf.

<i>Block</i>	<i>Bank</i>	<i>Block</i>	<i>Bank</i>
North Padre Island, East Addition		High Island, South Addition	
A-30	Dream	A-465	Claypile
A-31	Dream	A-486	Stetson
A-40	Dream	A-487	Stetson
A-41	Dream	A-488	Stetson
A-72	Blackfish Ridge	A-501	Stetson
A-83	Mysterious	A-502	Stetson
A-84	Mysterious	A-503	Stetson
Mustang Island		A-512	Stetson
A-3	North Hospital	A-513	Stetson
A-4	North Hospital and	A-514	Stetson
Hospital		A-527	Stetson
A-9	Southern	A-528	Stetson
A-16	Southern	A-529	Stetson
Mustang Island, East Addition		A-534	32 Fathom
A-54	Small and Big Dunn Bars	A-535	32 Fathom
A-61	Baker	A-573	West Flower Garden
A-62	Baker	A-578	Applebaum
A-86	Baker and South Baker	A-579	Applebaum
A-87	Baker and South Baker	A-580	Applebaum
A-95	South Baker	A-589	Applebaum
A-117	Aransas and North	A-590	Applebaum
Hospital		A-591	Applebaum
A-118	Aransas	A-596	West Flower Garden
A-136	Aransas, Hospital, and N.	High Island, East Add., South Ext.	
Hos.		A-311	29 Fathom
A-137	Hospital	A-312	29 Fathom
High Island, South Addition		A-327	29 Fathom
A-446	Claypile	A-328	29 Fathom
A-447	Claypile	A-329	29 Fathom
A-448	Claypile	A-330	29 Fathom
A-463	Claypile	A-331	29 Fathom
A-464	Claypile	A-332	29 Fathom
		A-340	Coffee Lump
		<i>Block</i>	<i>Bank</i>

High Island, East Add., South Ext.

A-346 MacNeil
 A-347 MacNeil
 A-348 MacNeil
 A-349 MacNeil
 A-350 MacNeil
 A-351 MacNeil & E. Flower
 Garden
 A-352 E. Flower Garden &
 MacNeil
 A-353 East Flower Garden
 A-354 East Flower Garden
 A-355 East Flower Garden
 A-358 Coffee Lump
 A-359 Coffee Lump
 A-360 Coffee Lump
 A-361 Coffee Lump & W. Fl.
 Garden
 A-362 West Flower Garden
 A-363 West Flower Garden
 A-364 East and West Flower
 Garden
 A-365 East Flower Garden
 A-366 East Flower Garden
 A-367 East Flower Garden
 A-368 East Flower Garden,
 Rankin, and MacNeil
 A-369 MacNeil and Rankin
 A-370 MacNeil and Rankin
 A-372 Rankin and MacNeil
 A-373 East Flower Garden,
 Rankin, and MacNeil
 A-374 East Flower Garden
 A-375 East Flower Garden
 A-376 East Flower Garden
 A-377 East and West Flower
 Garden
 A-378 West Flower Garden
 A-379 West Flower Garden
 A-380 West Flower Garden
 A-381 West Flower Garden
 A-382 West Flower Garden
 A-383 West Flower Garden
 A-384 West Flower Garden
 A-385 West Flower Garden

Block Bank

High Island, East Add., South Ext.

A-386 East and West Flower
 Garden
 A-387 East Flower Garden
 A-388 East Flower Garden
 A-389 East Flower Garden
 A-390 East Flower Garden &
 Rankin
 A-391 Rankin
 A-392 Rankin
 A-393 Rankin
 A-394 East Flower Garden
 A-395 East Flower Garden
 A-396 East and West Flower
 Garden
 A-397 West Flower Garden
 A-398 West Flower Garden
 A-399 West Flower Garden
 A-400 West Flower Garden
 A-401 West Flower Garden
 A-402 West Flower Garden
 A-403 East Flower Garden

East Breaks

121 Applebaum
 122 Applebaum
 123 Applebaum
 124 Applebaum
 165 Applebaum
 166 Applebaum
 167 Applebaum
 168 Applebaum
 173 West Flower Garden
 217 West Flower Garden

Garden Banks

26 McGrail
 27 McGrail
 28 McGrail
 29 McGrail

30	Rezak and Sidner		
<i>Block</i>	<i>Bank</i>	128	Parker
		133	West Flower Garden
		134	West Flower Garden
Garden Banks			
31	Rezak and Sidner	<i>Block</i>	<i>Bank</i>
33	Rezak and Sidner		
61	Geyer	Garden Banks	
62	Geyer		
63	Geyer	135	West Flower Garden
70	McGrail	136	West Flower Garden
71	McGrail	138	East Flower Garden
72	McGrail	139	East Flower Garden
73	McGrail	140	East Flower Garden
74	Sidner	141	Rankin
75	Sidner	142	Rankin
76	Sidner	144	Bright
77	Sidner	145	Bright
81	Parker	146	Bright
82	Parker	148	Geyer
83	Parker	149	Geyer
84	Parker	150	Geyer
85	Parker	151	Geyer
95	East Flower Garden	152	Geyer and Elvers
96	East Flower Garden	153	Elvers
97	East Flower Garden &	154	Elvers
Rankin		155	Elvers
98	Rankin	177	West Flower Garden
102	Bright	178	West Flower Garden
103	Bright	179	West Flower Garden
104	Geyer	180	West Flower Garden
105	Geyer	192	Geyer
106	Geyer	193	Geyer
107	Geyer	194	Geyer
108	Geyer and Elvers	195	Geyer
109	Elvers	196	Geyer and Elvers
110	Elvers	197	Elvers
119	Sidner	198	Elvers
120	Sidner	237	Geyer
121	Sidner	238	Geyer
126	Parker	239	Geyer
127	Parker		

The Topographic Features Stipulation

(a) No activity including structures, drilling rigs, pipelines, or anchoring will be allowed within the listed isobath ("No Activity Zone") of the banks as listed above.

(b) Operations within the area shown as "1,000 Meter Zone" will be restricted by shunting all drill cuttings and drilling fluids to the bottom through a downpipe that terminates an appropriate distance, but no more than ten meters, from the bottom.

(c) Operations within the area shown as "1 Mile Zone" will be restricted by shunting all drill cuttings and drilling fluids to the bottom through a downpipe that terminates an appropriate distance, but no more than ten meters, from the bottom. (Where there is a "1 Mile Zone" designated, the 1,000 Meter Zone in paragraph (b) is not designated.)

(d) Operations within the area shown as "3 Mile Zone" will be restricted by shunting all drill cuttings and drilling fluids from development operations to the bottom through a downpipe that terminates an appropriate distance, but no more than ten meters, from the bottom.

The banks of the Central Gulf are:

BANK NAME	ISOBATH (METERS)	BANK NAME	ISOBATH (METERS)
McGrail Bank	85	Parker Bank	85
Bouma Bank	85	Fishnet Bank ²	76
Rezak Bank	85	Jakkula Bank	85
Sidner Bank	85	Sweet Bank ¹	85
Sonnier Bank	55	Rankin Bank	85
Sackett Bank ²	85	29 Fathom Bank	64
Ewing Bank	85	Bright Bank	85
Diaphus Bank ²	85	Geyer Bank ³	85
Alderdice Bank	80	MacNeil Bank ³	82

¹ Only paragraph (a) of the stipulation applies.

² Only paragraphs (a) and (b) apply.

³ Western Gulf of Mexico bank with a portion of its "3 Mile Zone" in the Central Gulf of Mexico.

The banks of the Western Gulf are:

BANK NAME (METERS)	ISOBATH (METERS)	BANK NAME	ISOBATH
<i>Shelf Edge Banks</i>		<i>Low Relief Banks²</i>	
West Flower Garden Bank ¹ (defined by ¼ ¼ ¼ system)	100	Mysterious Bank	74, 76, 78,
East Flower Garden Bank ¹ (defined by ¼ ¼ ¼ system)	100	Blackfish Ridge	70
MacNeil Bank	82	Big Dunn Bar	65
29 Fathom Bank	64	Small Dunn Bar	65
Various		32 Fathom Bank	52
Rankin Bank	85	Coffee Lump	
Claypile Bank ³	50	<i>South Texas Banks⁴</i>	
Geyer Bank	85	Dream Bank	78, 82
Elvers Bank	85	Stetson Bank	62
Bright Bank ⁵	85	Southern Bank	80
McGrail Bank ⁵	85	Hospital Bank	70
Rezak Bank ⁵	85	Aransas Bank	70
Sidner Bank	85	South Baker Bank	70
Parker Bank	85	Baker Bank	70
Applebaum Bank	85		

¹ Flower Garden Banks - In paragraph (c), a "4 Mile Zone" rather than a "1 Mile Zone" applies.

² Low Relief Banks - Only paragraph (a) applies.

³ Claypile Bank - paragraphs (a) and (b) apply. In paragraph (b) monitoring of the effluent to determine the effect on the biota of Claypile Bank shall be required rather than shunting.

⁴ South Texas Banks - Only paragraphs (a) and (b) apply.

⁵ Central Gulf of Mexico bank with a portion of its "1 Mile Zone" and/or "3 Mile Zone" in the Western Gulf of Mexico.