

## Minerals Management Service

### Modification to the Bid Adequacy Procedures

**AGENCY:** Minerals Management Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notification of procedural changes.

**SUMMARY:** The Minerals Management Service (MMS) has modified its existing bid adequacy procedures for ensuring receipt of fair market value on Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) oil and gas leases. This procedure eliminates in Phase 1 the number of bids rule, which effectively allowed for immediate acceptance of high bids on confirmed or wildcat tracts receiving three or more bids.

**DATES:** This modification is effective March 29, 1996.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. Marshall Rose, Chief, Economic Evaluation Branch; Minerals Management Service; Mail Stop 4220, 381 Elden Street, Herndon, Virginia 22070-4817; telephone: (703) 787-1536.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Previous changes in the February 1983 bid adequacy procedures were made in February, March, and July 1984, May 1985, and May 24, 1991 (56 FR 23978). The following complete set of bid adequacy procedures incorporates those earlier changes and this most recent change.

The MMS uses a two-phase process to determine bid adequacy. In Phase 1, we classify tracts into two groups: drainage and development or wildcat and confirmed. The MMS also identifies nonprospective tracts, i.e., those tracts judged not to be located on a viable prospect. All legal high bids<sup>1</sup> on such nonprospective tracts are accepted. The MMS passes the high bids on all other tracts directly to Phase 2 for further evaluation. Phase 1 is conducted tract-by-tract and is generally completed within 2 weeks of the bid opening.

Phase 2 applies criteria designed to further determine bid adequacy on a tract-specific basis. Prospective wildcat and confirmed tracts that are not accepted in Phase 1 may receive further mapping and/or analysis in Phase 2. Subsequently, MMS reviews the viability determinations of these tracts. Those wildcat and confirmed tracts later determined to be nonviable can be eliminated from the set of tracts undergoing a full-scale MONTCAR evaluation and the high bids on them

<sup>1</sup> "Legal high bids" means those high bids which comply with MMS regulations and the Notice of Sale.

accepted. The remaining tracts, including all drainage and development tracts, receive further evaluation by comparing the high bids with the Mean Range of Values (MROV) and the Adjusted Delay Value (ADV). In addition, if in the judgment of the Regional Director a tract is or may be subject to drainage, the relevant costs due to delays associated with bid rejection are considered in computing the ADV.

All drainage and development tracts which received three or more adjusted bids<sup>2</sup> and prospective wildcat and confirmed tracts which received two or more adjusted bids will be compared with the Geometric Average Evaluation of Tract (GAEOT). For drainage and development tracts, the GAEOT will not be used when the high bid is equal to or less than one-sixth of the MROV.

The MMS conducts most evaluations based upon data and analysis available at the time of the sale. However, we may gather additional data and perform further analyses after the sale at the discretion of the Regional Director to ensure a fair return to the Government.

The MMS normally completes the bid adequacy recommendations for acceptance/rejection developed in Phase 2 sequentially over a period ranging between 14 and 90 days after the sale. Upon acceptance, the high bidders must pay the balance of the bonus bid (80 percent) along with the first year's annual rental within 15 days. The MMS returns the deposits, with interest, on all rejected high bids.

Dated: March 22, 1996.

Thomas Gernhofer,

*Associate Director for Offshore Minerals Management.*

[FR Doc. 96-7645 Filed 3-28-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-MR-M

## National Park Service

### Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve; Meeting

**ACTION:** Public meeting for Draft Barataria Boundary Study and the availability for public review of the study.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that the Draft Barataria Boundary Study has been completed by the National Park Service and will be available for public

<sup>2</sup> Anomalous bids are not included in the bid number in Phase 2. Anomalous bids include all but the highest bid submitted for a tract by the same company, bidding alone or jointly, and the lowest bid on a tract when it is less than one-eighth of the next lowest bid. The "one-eighth rule" can exclude no more than one bid for a given tract.

review from April 1, 1996 through May 1, 1996. Copies of the draft study can be obtained from the National Park Service at the following address: National Park Service, Denver Service Center, Attn. Ann Van Huizen, 12795 West Alameda Parkway, Denver, Colorado 80227-0287. Telephone: (303) 969-2451. All written comments on the draft study should be addressed to the National Park Service, attention Ann Van Huizen, at the above address and must be postmarked no later than May 1, 1996. Additional notice is hereby given that three public meetings will be held in Louisiana, on the dates and at the locations and times provided in this Notice, to receive public comment on the draft study. The draft study will also be available for public review at the Preserve headquarters between the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Central Standard time.

### DATES:

April 9, 1996, From 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the University Center, Room 211B, University of New Orleans, New Orleans, Louisiana

April 10, 1996, From 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., West Bank Regional Library, 2751 Manhattan Blvd., Harvey, Louisiana

April 10, 1996, From 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., Environmental Education Center, Barataria Preserve Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park, and Preserve, Highway 45, Marrero, Louisiana.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mr. Roberts Belous, Superintendent, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, 365 Canal Street, Suite 3080, New Orleans, Louisiana 70130-1142, (504) 589-3882, extension 128).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The boundary for the Barataria Preserve Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve was established through congressional legislative action in 1978. During the intervening years there have been significant changes in land uses along this area not currently part of the park that could merit inclusion. The analysis in the Draft Barataria Boundary Study will provide objective information for consideration in any future action by the Department of Interior or the U.S. Congress to revise the park's original legislative boundary.

Dated: March 21, 1996.

Frank Catroppa,

*Superintendent, Gulf Coast System Support Office.*

[FR Doc. 96-7676 Filed 3-28-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-70-M