



MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #IV.G

DATE: JANUARY 22, 2018

TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: 2019-2024 NATIONAL OCS OIL AND GAS LEASING DRAFT PROPOSED PROGRAM

Background

The U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), via the Florida State Clearinghouse Project SAI#: FL201801108234C, is seeking a request for comments on their 2019-2024 Oil and Gas Leasing Program. Comments are due February 8, 2018. This proposed "program" consists of 47 potential lease sales, 14 of which are located in the South Atlantic, Straits of Florida, and Gulf of Mexico offshore planning areas. This program is part of President Trump's America-First Offshore Energy Strategy which was outlined in Executive Order 13795.

The proposed plan does not include any in-depth consideration of the environmental impacts of the project. Rather, the plan depends on "environmental sensitivity scores" without mention of the inputs or confidence interval related to the scores. The plan states that the Gulf of Mexico region received a high sensitivity score within this index. Further, the plan admits that oil and gas exploration "will never be totally risk-free" and mentions improvements made to safety since the devastating 2010 *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill without going into detail regarding enforcement of those improvements.

On January 9, 2018 Governor Rick Scott requested that Florida be exempt from this offshore drilling plan and Interior Secretary Zinke conceded to the request. Scott cited potential impacts to tourism as his primary reason for requesting the exemption. Regardless of Florida's exemption from this plan, deleterious impacts from offshore drilling in neighboring states' waters still put Florida at risk. The Loop Current in the Gulf of Mexico skirts the coast of Southeast Florida and would bring with it any pollution associated with offshore drilling (drilling mud, produced water, and potential oil spills). Furthermore, the Gulf of Mexico is a breeding ground for many commercially and recreationally important fisheries to the Florida economy including large sportfish like Marlin, Sailfish, and Tuna. Work by the Deep Pelagic Nekton Dynamics of the Gulf of Mexico (DEEPEND) have found negative trends in deep-water predatory fish since the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill. Regardless of our exemption, impacts from this project will still reach Florida.

Recommendation

Forward a letter to the Florida State Clearinghouse stating the South Florida Regional Planning Council remains opposed to Offshore Drilling.



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Rick Scott
Governor

Carlos Lopez-Cantera
Lt. Governor

Noah Valenstein
Secretary

Memorandum

TO: State Agencies and Interested Parties
FROM: Shana Kinsey-Carlsen
SUBJECT: 2019-2024 Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Program - Draft Proposed Program and Programmatic EIS
DATE: January 9, 2018

The U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) recently released the Draft Proposed OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2019-2024 (DPP) and a Notice of Intent (NOI) to develop a draft Programmatic EIS (DPEIS) for the Program. This is the first major step in developing the new 5-Year Program. The Federal Register Notice and the DPP map and summary Factsheet are attached.

Currently, BOEM is working under the approved 2017-2022 Oil and Gas Leasing Program. However, as directed in Executive Order 13795 and Secretary's Order 3350, BOEM is initiating a process to develop a new National OCS Program for 2019-2024, that if approved, will supersede the 2017-2022 Program.

The DPP can be found at: <https://www.boem.gov/NP-Draft-Proposed-Program-2019-2024/>
More detailed maps can be found at: <https://www.boem.gov/National-Program-Learn/#regionalmaps>

The DPP sale schedule includes 47 potential lease sales in 25 of 26 OCS planning areas around the country which includes South Atlantic, Straits of Florida, and Eastern Gulf of Mexico Planning Areas. The Lease Sale Schedule can be found at: <https://www.boem.gov/NP-DPP-Lease-Sale-Schedule-2019-2024/>

Gulf of Mexico Planning Areas

The DPP includes 10 proposed lease sales (2 each year) in the three Gulf of Mexico (GOM) planning areas that are not under congressional moratorium; BOEM proposes two lease sales for the portions of Central and Eastern Gulf of Mexico Planning Areas that will no longer be under moratorium in 2022.

Atlantic Planning Areas

There are 3 proposed lease sales in the South Atlantic Planning Area (2020, 2022, and 2024).

Straits of Florida Planning Area

There is one proposed lease sale in 2023 for the Straits of Florida Planning Area.

Public Meeting

There will be a public meeting regarding the proposed DPP and to receive scoping comments regarding the Programmatic EIS in Tallahassee, FL on February 8, 2018 from 3-7pm at the Four Points by Sheraton Tallahassee Downtown. <https://www.boem.gov/National-Program-Participate/>

The DEP, Florida Coastal Office is coordinating the State's response to the request for comments on the DPP and NOI. Comments should be received by our office no later than **Monday February 12, 2018**. Please contact Shana Kinsey-Carlsen (Shana.Kinsey@dep.state.fl.us) if you have questions. Thank you for your assistance.