

has up to 60 days to approve or disapprove the information collection but may respond after 30 days. Therefore, to ensure maximum consideration, OMB should receive public comments by October 10, 2003.

Public Comment Policy: MMS practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review during regular business hours. Individual respondents may request that their home address be withheld from the record, which will be honored to the extent allowable by the law. If you wish your name and/or address to be withheld, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. However, anonymous comments will not be considered. MMS will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

MMS Information Collection Clearance Officer: Jo Ann Lauterbach, (202) 208-7744.

Dated: July 9, 2003.

John V. Mirabella,

Acting Chief, Engineering and Operations Division.

[FR Doc. 03-22973 Filed 9-9-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-MR-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Minerals Management Service

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment Request

AGENCY: Minerals Management Service (MMS), Interior.

ACTION: Notice of extension of an information collection (1010-0006).

SUMMARY: To comply with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), we are inviting comments on a collection of information that we will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval. The information collection request (ICR) concerns the paperwork requirements in the regulations under 30 CFR part 256, "Leasing of Sulphur or Oil and Gas in the Outer Continental Shelf."

DATES: Submit written comments by November 10, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Mail or hand carry comments to the Department of the Interior; Minerals Management Service; Attention: Rules Processing Team; Mail Stop 4024; 381 Elden Street; Herndon, Virginia 20170-4817. If you wish to e-

mail comments, the address is: rules.comments@mms.gov. Reference "Information Collection 1010-0006" in your e-mail subject line and mark your message for return receipt. Include your name and return address in your message.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Arlene Bajusz, Rules Processing Team, (703) 787-1600. You may also contact Arlene Bajusz to obtain a copy, at no cost, of the regulations that require the subject collection of information.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: 30 CFR Part 256, Leasing of Sulphur or Oil and Gas in the Outer Continental Shelf.

OMB Control Number: 1010-0006.

Abstract: The Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Lands Act, as amended (43 U.S.C. 1331 *et seq.* and 43 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*), authorizes the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) to prescribe rules and regulations to administer leasing of the OCS. Such rules and regulations will apply to all operations conducted under a lease. Operations on the OCS must preserve, protect, and develop oil and natural gas resources in a manner that is consistent with the need to make such resources available to meet the Nation's energy needs as rapidly as possible; to balance orderly energy resource development with protection of human, marine, and coastal environments; to ensure the public a fair and equitable return on the resources of the OCS; and to preserve and maintain free enterprise competition. The Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 (EPCA) prohibits certain lease bidding arrangements (42 U.S.C. 6213 (c)).

The Independent Offices Appropriations Act of 1952 (IOAA), 31 U.S.C. 9701, authorizes Federal agencies to recover the full cost of services that provide special benefits. Under the Department of the Interior's (DOI) policy implementing the IOAA, MMS is required to charge the full cost for services that provide special benefits or privileges to an identifiable non-Federal recipient above and beyond those that accrue to the public at large. Instruments of transfer of a lease or interest are subject to cost recovery, and MMS regulations specify filing fees for these transfer applications.

The MMS uses the information required by 30 CFR part 256 to determine if applicants are qualified to hold leases in the OCS. Specifically, MMS uses the information to:

- Verify the qualifications of a bidder on an OCS lease sale. Once the required information is filed with MMS, a qualification number is assigned to the

bidder so that duplicate information is not required on subsequent filings.

- Develop the semiannual List of Restricted Joint Bidders. This identifies parties ineligible to bid jointly with each other on OCS lease sales, under limitations established by the EPCA.

- Ensure the qualification of assignees. Once a lease is awarded, the transfer of a lessee's interest to another qualified party must be approved by an MMS regional director.

- Obtain information and nominations on oil and gas leasing, exploration, and development and production. Early planning and consultation ensure that all interests and concerns are communicated to us for future decisions in the leasing process.

- Document that a leasehold or geographical subdivision has been surrendered by the record title holder.

- Verify that lessees have adequate bonding coverage. Respondents must submit their bonds certification forms: "Form MMS-2028, Outer Continental Shelf Mineral Lessee's and Operator's Bond," and Form MMS-2028A, "Outer Continental Shelf Mineral Lessee's and Operator's Supplemental Plugging & Abandonment Bond." The MMS uses these documents to hold the surety liable for the obligations and liability of the principal/lessee or operator.

We will protect information from respondents considered proprietary under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) and its implementing regulations (43 CFR part 2) and under regulations at 30 CFR parts 250, 251, and 252. No items of a sensitive nature are collected. Responses are mandatory or required to obtain or retain a benefit.

Frequency: The frequency of reporting is annual and on occasion.

Estimated Number and Description of Respondents: Approximately 130 Federal OCS oil and gas or sulphur lessees, as well as the affected States and local governments.

Estimated Reporting and Recordkeeping "Hour" Burden: The currently approved annual reporting burden for this collection is 16,329 hours. The following chart details the individual components and respective hour burden estimates of this ICR. In calculating the burdens, we assumed that respondents perform certain requirements in the normal course of their activities. We consider these to be usual and customary and took that into account in estimating the burden.