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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sharron L. Gebhardt, Regulatory Specialist, Records and Information Management Team, Minerals Revenue Management, MMS, at telephone (303) 231-3211, fax (303) 231-3781, e-mail sharron.gebhardt@mms.gov, or P.O. Box 25165, MS320B2, Denver Federal Center, Denver, Colorado 80225-0165.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: All correspondence, records, or information received in response to this Notice are subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act. All information provided will be made public unless the respondent identifies which portions are proprietary. Please highlight the proprietary portions, including any supporting documentation, or mark the page(s) that contain proprietary data. Proprietary information is protected by the Federal Oil and Gas Royalty Management Act of 1982 (30 U.S.C. 1733), the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552 (b)(4)), the Indian Minerals Development Act of 1982 (25 U.S.C. 2103) and Department regulations (43 CFR 2).

Dated: September 12, 2003.

Lucy Querques Denett,

Associate Director for Minerals Revenue Management.

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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

33 CFR Part 147

[CGD08-03-028]

RIN 1625-AA76

Safety Zone for Outer Continental Shelf Facility in the Gulf of Mexico for Green Canyon 645

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard proposes the establishment of a safety zone around a petroleum and gas production facility in Green Canyon 645 of the Outer Continental Shelf in the Gulf of Mexico while the facility is being constructed and after the construction is completed. The construction site and facility need to be protected from vessels operating outside the normal shipping channels and fairways, and placing a safety zone

around this area would significantly reduce the threat of allisions, oil spills and releases of natural gas. The proposed rule would prohibit all vessels from entering or remaining in the specified area around the facility's location except for the following: An attending vessel; a vessel under 100 feet in length overall not engaged in towing; or a vessel authorized by the Eighth Coast Guard District Commander.

DATES: Comments and related material must reach the Coast Guard on or before November 25, 2003.

ADDRESSES: You may mail comments and related material to Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District (m), Hale Boggs Federal Bldg., 501 Magazine Street, New Orleans LA, 70130, or comments and related material may be delivered to Room 1341 at the same address between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The telephone number is (504) 589-6271. Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District (m) maintains the public docket for this rulemaking. Comments and material received from the public, as well as documents indicated in this preamble as being available in the docket, will become part of this docket and will be available for inspection or copying at the location listed above during the noted time periods.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lieutenant (LT) Kevin Lynn, Project Manager for Eighth Coast Guard District Commander, Hale Boggs Federal Bldg., 501 Magazine Street, New Orleans, LA 70130, telephone (504) 589-6271.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Requests for Comments

We encourage you to participate in this rulemaking by submitting comments and related material. If you do so, please include your name and address, identify the docket number for this rulemaking [CGD08-03-028], indicate the specific section of this document to which each comment applies, and give the reason for each comment. Please submit all comments and related material in an unbound format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying. If you would like to know they reached us, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard or envelope. We will consider all comments and material received during the comment period. We may change this proposed rule in view of them.

Public Meeting

We do not plan to hold a public meeting. However, you may submit a request for a meeting by writing to Commander, Eighth Coast Guard

District (m) at the address under **ADDRESSES** explaining why one would be beneficial. If we determine that a public meeting would aid this rulemaking, we will hold one at a time and place announced by a later notice in the **Federal Register**.

Background and Purpose

The Coast Guard proposes the establishment of a safety zone around a petroleum and gas production facility in the Gulf of Mexico: Holstein, Green Canyon Block 645 (GC 645), located at position 27°19'17" N, 90°32'08" W. The proposed safety zone would be in effect while the facility is being constructed and after the construction is completed.

This proposed safety zone is in the deepwater area of the Gulf of Mexico. For the purposes of this rule it is considered to be in waters of 304.8 meters (1,000 feet) or greater depth extending to the limits of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) contiguous to the territorial sea of the United States and extending to a distance up to 200 nautical miles from the baseline from which the breadth of the sea is measured. Navigation in the area of the proposed safety zone consists of large commercial shipping vessels, fishing vessels, cruise ships, tugs with tows and the occasional recreational vessel. The deepwater area of the Gulf of Mexico also includes an extensive system of fairways. The fairways nearest the proposed safety zone include the East-West Gulf of Mexico Safety Fairway and Louisiana Offshore Oil Port (LOOP) Shipping Safety Fairway. Significant amounts of vessel traffic occur in or near the various fairways in the deepwater area.

BP Exploration & Production Inc., hereafter referred to as "BP" has requested that the Coast Guard establish a safety zone in the Gulf of Mexico around the Holstein construction site and for the zone to remain in effect after construction is completed.

The request for the safety zone was made due to the high level of shipping activity around the site of the facility and the safety concerns for construction personnel, the personnel on board the facility after it is completed, and the environment. BP indicated that the location, production level, and personnel levels on board the facility make it highly likely that any allision with the facility during and after construction would result in a catastrophic event. The Holstein will be a high production oil and gas spar drilling facility, capable of producing approximately 100,000 barrels of oil per day and 90 million cubic feet of gas per