

# Public Meeting

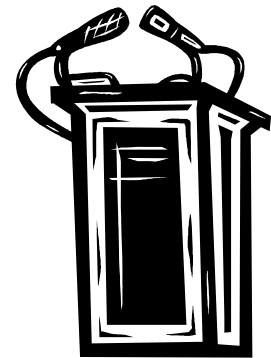
## Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

### Proposed Geological and Geophysical Activities in the Mid- and South Atlantic OCS Planning Areas



## Public Meeting Schedule

- |                     |                |
|---------------------|----------------|
| • Jacksonville, FL  | April 16, 2012 |
| • Savannah, GA      | April 18, 2012 |
| • Charleston, SC    | April 20, 2012 |
| • Norfolk, VA       | April 24, 2012 |
| • Annapolis, MD     | April 25, 2012 |
| • Wilmington, DE    | April 26, 2012 |
| • Wilmington, NC    | April 26, 2012 |
| • Atlantic City, NJ | April 27, 2012 |



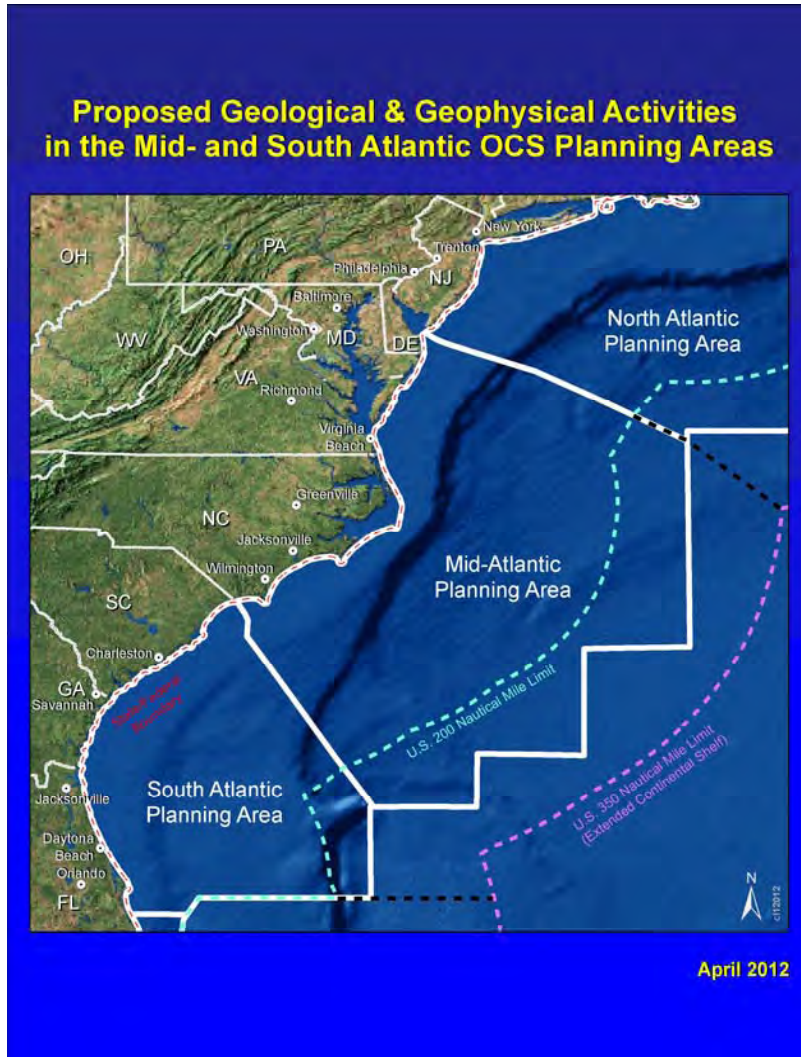
# Purpose of Today's Meeting

- We have distributed a Draft Programmatic EIS for a 60-day comment period.
  - The Notice of Availability for the Draft Programmatic EIS was published in the *Federal Register* on March 30, 2012.
- We are here today to record and collect your comments on the Draft Programmatic EIS to assist in preparing the Final Programmatic EIS.
- Public input is an important part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process.



- Assess the potential environmental impact of various types of G&G activity conducted on the Mid- and South Atlantic OCS
- Evaluate mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate impacts on affected resources
- Provide information and an analysis of impacts for BOEM and other agencies before decisions to authorize G&G activities





Authorize G&G activities required to support all three programs managed by BOEM in the Mid- and South Atlantic OCS Planning Areas (the area of interest [AOI])

- Oil and gas
- Renewable energy
- Marine minerals (sand)



- Geological
  - Coring
  - Shallow test drilling
  - Deep stratigraphic tests
- Geophysical
  - 2- and 3-dimensional seismic
  - Controlled source electromagnetic surveys (CSEM)
  - High-resolution geophysical surveys
    - Multibeam echosounder, sidescan sonar, and boomers
  - Gravity and magnetic surveys (sea and airborne)



- Routine Operations

- Active acoustic sound sources
  - Seismic airgun surveying
- Electromechanical sound sources
- Aircraft traffic and noise
- Drilling and coring
  - Operational wastes
- Seafloor disturbances
  - Bottom sampling
  - Drilling and coring, including discharges
  - Placement of anchors, cables, and sensors
- Onshore base support services
- Vessel traffic, noise, exclusion zones, and wastes
- Trash and debris

- Accidental Events

- Fuel spills



- Benthic Communities
- Fish and Fisheries (commercial and recreational fisheries, essential fish habitat)
- Marine Mammals
- Sea Turtles
- Coastal and Marine Birds
- Protected Species (among above)
- Socioeconomic Issues
  - Archaeological resources
  - Marine protected areas
  - Recreational resources
  - Human resources and land use
  - Other marine uses



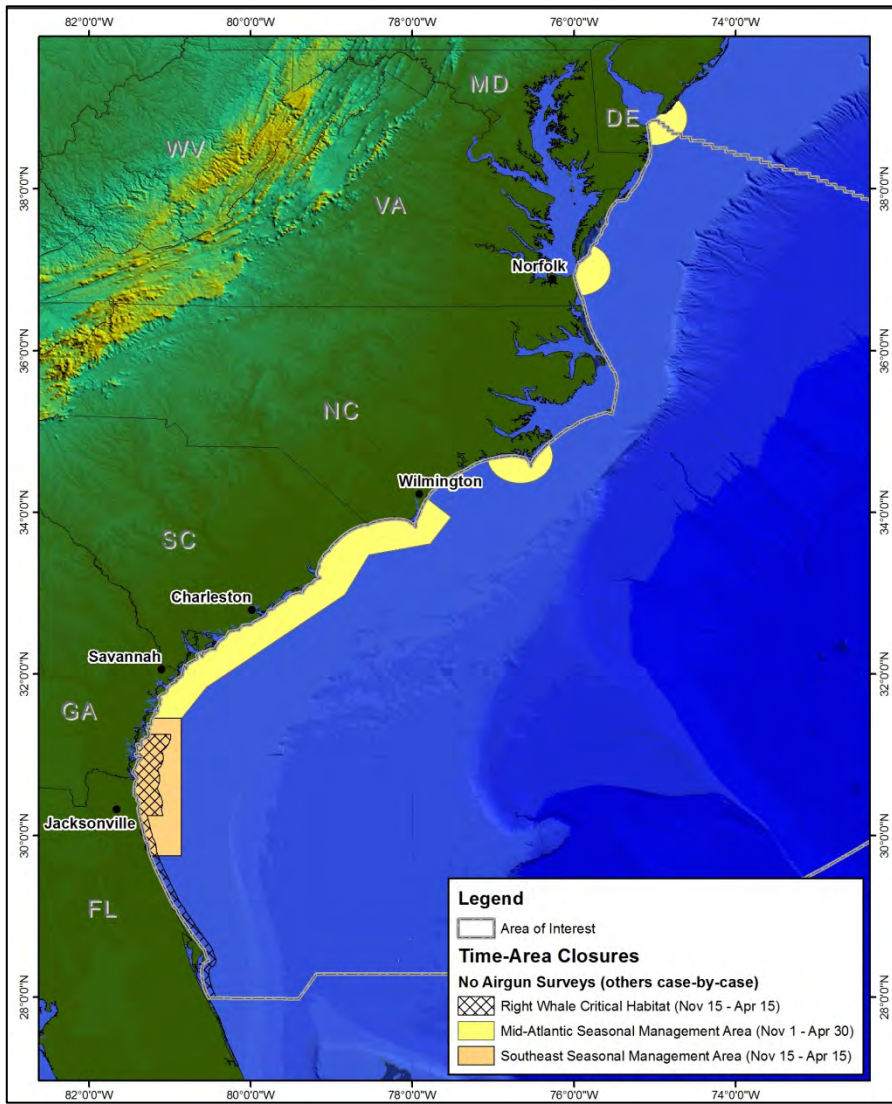


- Alternative A (Proposed Action)
  - Time/area closure for Northern Right Whales' seasonal management areas (SMA's)
  - Notices to Lessees and Operators (NTL's), with some modifications, based on BOEM/BSEE current practices in Gulf of Mexico that include the following:
    - Mitigation measures and protected species observers (NTL 2012-Joint-G02)
    - Vessel strike avoidance (NTL 2011-Joint-G01)
    - Marine trash and debris awareness (NTL-2012-BSEE-G01)
- Alternative B
  - All mitigations in Alternative A
  - Expanded time/area closures for Northern Right Whales' SMA's
  - Closure area for nesting sea turtles – central Florida
  - Separation between simultaneous seismic surveys
  - Required passive acoustic monitoring
- Alternative C
  - No Action for Oil and Gas G&G Activity, *Status Quo* for Renewable Energy and Marine Mineral G&G Activities



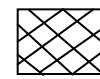
- Alternative A (Proposed Action) – Allow all G&G activities in the AOI from shore out to 350 nmi, with mitigations that include the following:
  - Entire AOI; survey protocols for active acoustic sound sources (airguns and electromechanical sources [high-resolution geophysical surveys])
  - Time/area closure for Northern Right Whales' SMA's
    - Mid-Atlantic SMA from November 1 to April 30
    - Southeast SMA from November 15 to April 15
  - SMA's; no airgun use during closure periods; other survey types on a case-by-case basis
  - Guidance for vessel strike avoidance and marine debris awareness
  - Avoidance and reporting for sensitive benthic communities and archaeological resources
  - Military/NASA coordination
  - Passive acoustic monitoring recommended



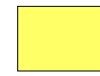


## Time-Area Closures

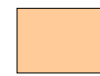
### No Airgun Surveys (others case-by-case)



Right Whale Critical Habitat  
(Nov 15 – Apr 15)



Mid-Atlantic Seasonal Management  
Area (Nov 1 – Apr 30)

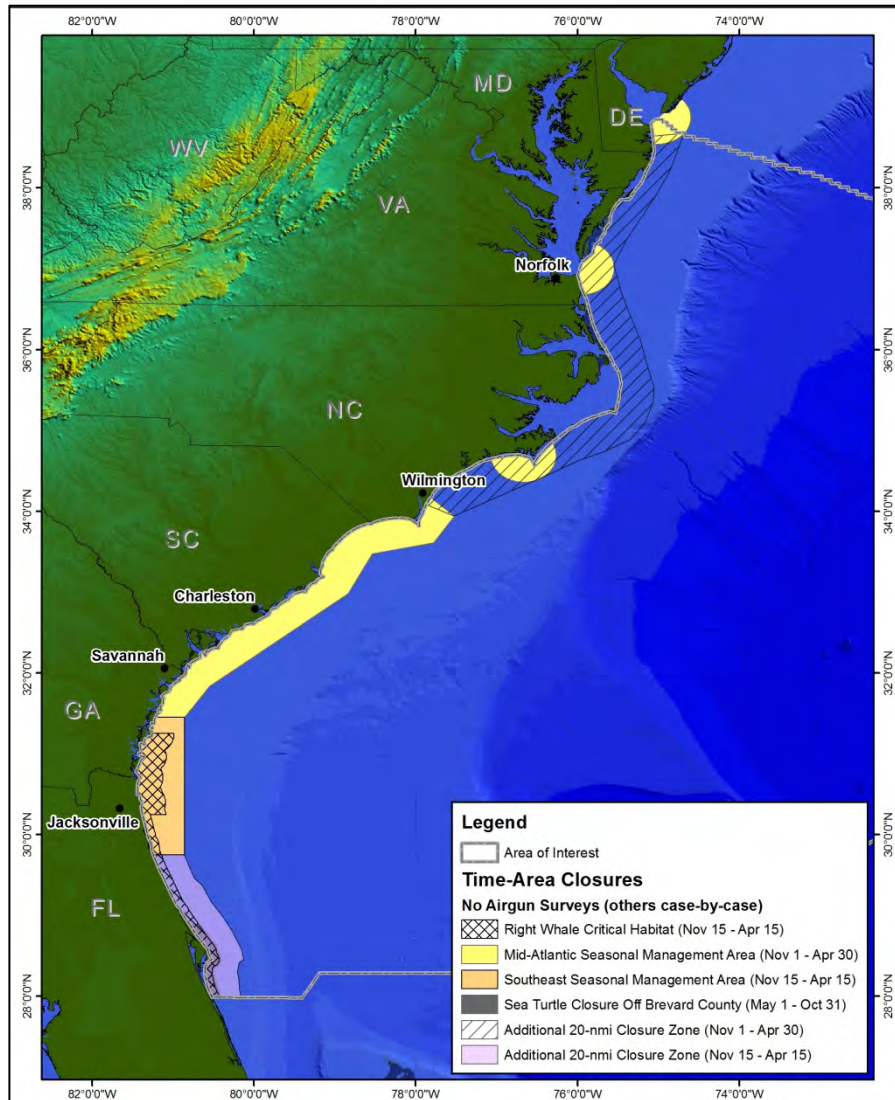


Southeast Seasonal Management  
Area (Nov 15 – Apr 15)



- Alternative B: Allow all G&G activities in the AOI from shore out to 350 nmi, with mitigations that include the following:
  - All mitigations that are part of Alternative A
  - Expanded time/area closures for Northern Right Whales' SMA's
    - Additional closure zone; shore out to 20 nmi to close gaps in the Mid-Atlantic SMA – November 1 to April 30
    - Additional closure zone; shore out to 20 nmi south of Southeast SMA – November 15 to April 15
  - Time/area closure for sea turtles during nesting season
    - Off Brevard County, Florida – May 1 to October 31
  - 40-km (25-mi) separation distance between simultaneously operating deep-penetration seismic airgun surveys
  - Seismic-survey protocol includes required passive acoustic monitoring



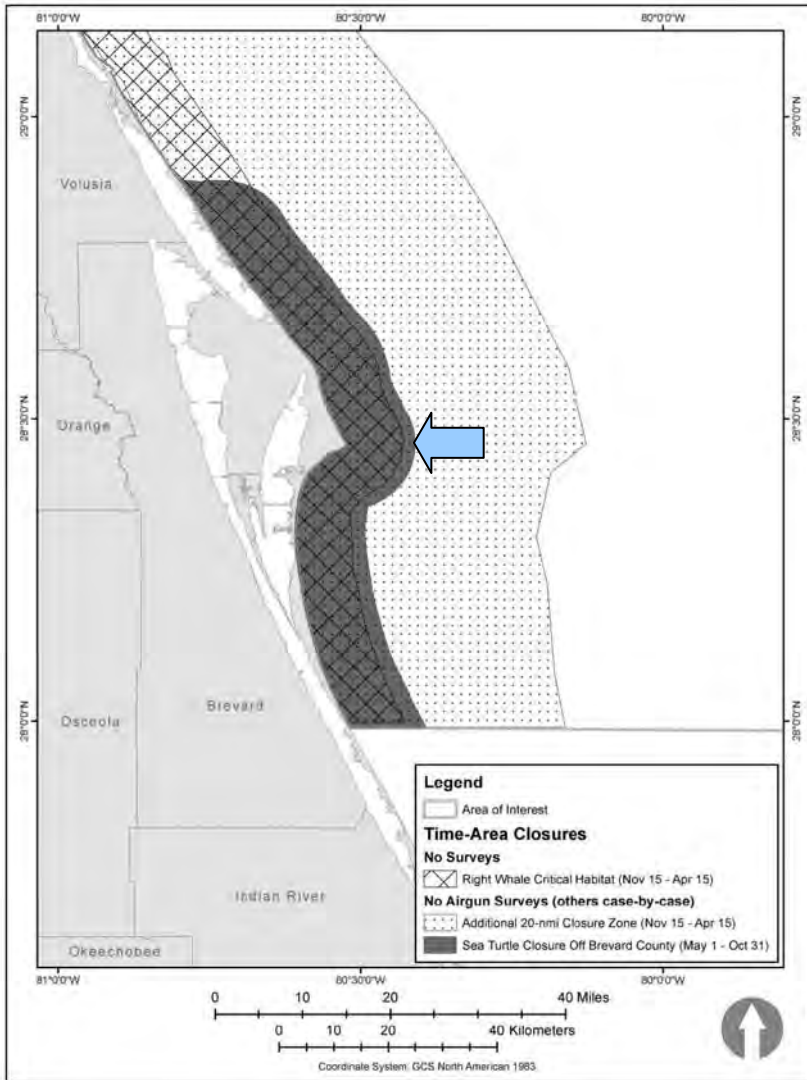


## Time-Area Closures

### No Airgun Surveys (others case-by-case)

-  Right Whale Critical Habitat (Nov 15 – Apr 15)
-  Mid-Atlantic Seasonal Management Area (Nov 1 – Apr 30)
-  Southeast Seasonal Management Area (Nov 15 – Apr 15)
-  Sea Turtle Closure Off Brevard County (May 1– Oct 31)
-  Additional 20-nmi Closure Zone (Nov 1 – Apr 30)
-  Additional 20-nmi Closure Zone (Nov 15 – Apr 15)





- Time/Area Closure for Sea Turtles off Brevard County, Florida
  - During the nesting season from May 1 to October 31



- Alternative C (No Action) – defined as follows:
  - No Action for the oil and gas program
    - Permitting for prelease G&G exploration would not occur
  - *Status Quo* for the renewable energy and marine mineral programs
    - Activity authorized by these programs would occur on a case-by-case basis, as they do now



# Example of Impacts – Airguns

| Resource                    | Alternative A       | Alternative B    | Alternative C |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Benthic Communities         | Negligible          | Negligible       | N/A           |
| Marine Mammals              | Moderate            | Moderate         | N/A           |
| Sea Turtles                 | Negligible-Moderate | Negligible-Minor | N/A           |
| Marine and Coastal Birds    | Negligible-Minor    | Negligible-Minor | N/A           |
| Fisheries Resources and EFH | Minor               | Minor            | N/A           |
| Commercial Fisheries        | Minor               | Minor            | N/A           |
| Recreational Fisheries      | Negligible-Minor    | Negligible-Minor | N/A           |





- Consultations Required by Law for Protected Species and Conducted during NEPA Evaluation
  - Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act
  - Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act
  - Marine Mammal Protection Act



# Next Steps – Project Schedule

| ID | Task Name                             | Apr 2012  | May 2012 | Jun 2012                               | Jul 2012 | Aug 2012 | Sep 2012                               | Oct 2012 | Nov 2012 | Dec 2012 |  |
|----|---------------------------------------|---|----------|--|----------|----------|--|----------|----------|----------|--|
|    |                                       |   |          |  |          |          |  |          |          |          |  |
| 1  | Public Comment Period                 | [Blue bar covering Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec] |          |  |          |          |  |          |          |          |  |
| 2  | Revise to Final PEIS                  |   |          | [Blue bar covering Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep] |          |          |  |          |          |          |  |
| 3  | Review, Approve, Print & Publish FEIS |   |          |  |          |          | [Blue bar covering Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec] |          |          |          |  |
| 4  | Environmental Consultations           | [Blue bar covering Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec] |          |  |          |          |  |          |          |          |  |
| 5  | Record of Decision                    |   |          |  |          |          |  |          |          |          |  |



- Comment period closes on May 30, 2012.
- Comments collected at this meeting may be
  - Oral comments – 3-minute maximum
  - Written comments – leave at the registration table
- Comments may be emailed to [GGEIS@boem.gov](mailto:GGEIS@boem.gov).
- A copy of the Draft Programmatic EIS can be found at <http://www.boem.gov/Oil-and-Gas-Energy-Program/GOMR/GandG.aspx>.
- Label and mail “Comments on the G&G Draft Programmatic EIS”

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