



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Nikki R. Haley
Governor of South Carolina
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Governor Haley:

Enclosed for your review is the 2017–2022 Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Proposed Program (Proposed Program). Section 18 of the OCS Lands Act, 43 U.S.C. §1344, requires the Secretary of the Interior to prepare, periodically revise, and maintain a national oil and gas leasing program. The Five-Year OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program is commonly known as the Five-Year Program. The Five-Year Program is a schedule of proposed lease sales determined to “best meet national energy needs for the 5 year period following its approval or reapproval.” The current Five-Year Program became effective on August 27, 2012, and will expire on August 26, 2017.

After a robust public comment process, the Mid- and South Atlantic Program Area lease sale proposed for 2021 in the Draft Proposed Program (DPP) has been removed from the Proposed Program for a number of reasons, including strong local opposition, conflicts with other ocean uses, and current market dynamics that limit the need for production resulting from one lease sale in the Atlantic. Therefore, the Proposed Program includes 13 potential lease sales in 4 program areas in all or parts of 6 OCS planning areas. This includes 10 sales in the combined Gulf of Mexico Program Area, and one sale each in the Chukchi Sea, Beaufort Sea, and Cook Inlet Program Areas offshore Alaska.

We received comments from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC). Topics raised by the DHEC that were relevant to OCS Lands Act Section 18 were included in the analyses that I considered in making my decision to remove the Atlantic sale from the Proposed Program. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) will consider information provided by you and other states in formulating the Proposed Final Program.

I look forward to your comments on the Proposed Program and continuing to work with you in this process. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Ms. Abigail Hopper, BOEM Director, at (202) 208-6300 or Abigail.Hopper@boem.gov.

Sincerely,

Sally Jewell

Enclosure