In Reply Refer To: GM 623E

MAR 0 4 2015

The Honorable Nikki Haley
Governor of South Carolina
Columbia, South Carolina 29211

Dear Governor Haley:

I am writing to inform you about an outreach initiative for geological and geophysical (G&G) permitting activities offshore the Atlantic Coast. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is undertaking public open house informational meetings on the Mid- and South Atlantic Coasts. The meetings will provide stakeholders an overview of the G&G permitting process and an opportunity to learn and comment on BOEM's geological and geophysical activities on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf (OCS).

In July 2014, BOEM issued a Record of Decision (ROD) establishing the highest practicable level of mitigation measures and safeguards to reduce or eliminate impacts to marine life while setting a path forward for appropriate G&G survey activities off the Mid- and South Atlantic Coasts to update data on the region's offshore resources that are over 30 years old.

This decision issued by BOEM does not authorize any G&G activities, but rather it establishes a framework for additional mandatory environmental reviews for site-specific actions and identifies broadly applicable measures governing any future G&G activities in the region.

Since the issuance of the ROD, nine companies have submitted G&G permits in the Atlantic. BOEM is currently in the process of reviewing those permits. Before the permits can be issued, careful environmental analysis is done to ensure the safety of the marine ecosystem.

BOEM will hold public open house meetings in March and April 2015 to provide stakeholders an overview of the G&G permitting process and to provide stakeholders an opportunity to learn and comment on BOEM's geological and geophysical activities on the Atlantic OCS. The following public open house meetings are planned for the G&G permitting process:

> **Norfolk, Virginia:** Tuesday, March 31, 2015, DoubleTree by Hilton, 1500 North Military Highway, Norfolk, Virginia 23502; two meetings, one meeting from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. EDT and the second meeting from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. EDT;

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Annapolis, Maryland: Wednesday, April 1, 2015, DoubleTree by Hilton, 210 Holiday Court, Annapolis, Maryland 21401; two meetings, one meeting from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. EDT and the second meeting from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. EDT;

Dover, Delaware: Thursday, April 2, 2015, Hilton Garden Inn, 1706 North Dupont Highway, Dover, Delaware 19901; two meetings, one meeting from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. EDT and the second meeting from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. EDT;

Wilmington, North Carolina: Tuesday, April 7, 2015, Hilton Wilmington Riverside, 301 North Water Street, Wilmington, North Carolina 28401; two meetings, one meeting from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. EDT and the second meeting from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. EDT;

Charleston, South Carolina: Wednesday, April 8, 2015, Embassy Suites North Charleston-Airport/Hotel & Convention, 5055 International Boulevard, North Charleston, South Carolina 29418; two meetings, one meeting from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. EDT and the second meeting from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. EDT; and

Savannah, Georgia: Thursday, April 9, 2015, Hilton Garden Inn Savannah Midtown, 5711 Abercorn Street, Savannah, Georgia 31405; two meetings, one meeting from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. EDT and the second meeting from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. EDT.

For further information on the Atlantic G&G permitting process, please visit our website at http://www.boem.gov/Atlantic-G-and-G-Permitting/.

For further information on the outreach and G&G permitting processes, please email us at boematlggoutreach@boem.gov.

In accordance with our policy of consultation and coordination with your office on a frequent basis, you or your designee is invited to meet with us to discuss the outreach initiative or the G&G permitting process. Arrangements may be made by contacting Tershara Matthews at 504-736-2676.

Sincerely,

John L. Rodi
Regional Director